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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

FACT SHEET

WHITE PAPER ON DRUG ABUSE

The President today has directed that the Report of the Domestic Council's Drug Abuse Task Force be made public.

Background

President Ford, last April, called for an in-depth review of the Federal Government's entire drug abuse prevention program. To accomplish this mission, a Domestic Council task force, consisting of senior representatives of 12 Federal departments and agencies, was created and charged with responsibility for preparing a comprehensive report to the President.

The specific objectives of the review were to:

- . Assess the effectiveness of current drug programs and policies;
- . Determine if the Federal drug strategy, priorities and organizational structures are appropriate to meet current needs;
- . Examine the need for, and structure of, a drug management and coordination mechanism in the Executive Office of the President.

That report, the "White Paper on Drug Abuse", has been completed and presents the task force's extensive findings and recommendations in detail.

Highlights and Recommendations of the Task Force

The task force strongly endorses the concept of a Federal program which balances the effort to reduce the supply of drugs with an effort to reduce the demand for drugs, and it recommends that this concept should continue to be the cornerstone of the Federal strategy for containing drug abuse.

In addition to confirming the validity of this fundamental strategy, the White Paper contains numerous programmatic recommendations based on the following themes:

- . We must be realistic about what can be achieved and what the appropriate Federal role is in the war against drugs. We must be prepared to continue our efforts and commitment to contain the problem at a minimal level. We must also recognize that the Federal Government cannot do the job alone. Only through the combined efforts of the Federal, State and local governments, private individuals and business, and a variety of local organizations, working together, can we hope to ultimately succeed.

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- . Not all drug use is equally destructive and we should give priority in our treatment and law enforcement efforts to those drugs which pose the greatest risks to the individual and to society, as well as to compulsive users of drugs of any kind. The highest risk drugs are heroin, amphetamines, particularly when taken intravenously, and barbiturates when taken in combination with other drugs.
- . Supply reduction is broader than law enforcement and we should utilize a variety of approaches and tools to reduce the supply of illicit drugs.
- . Federal law enforcement efforts should focus on the development of major conspiracy cases against the leaders of high-level trafficking networks and should move away from "street-level" activities.
- . The current treatment focus of demand reduction efforts should be supplemented with increased attention to prevention and vocational rehabilitation.
- . Neither successful prevention nor successful rehabilitation is drug specific. Both should be closely integrated with other, comprehensive social programs.
- . The success program managers have in enlisting the support and cooperation of foreign governments, and State and local governments and private organizations domestically, is greatly enhanced when our national leaders clearly manifest their commitment to combatting drug abuse.

Finally, the White Paper observes that there is a significant need to better coordinate and manage the Federal drug program and to more effectively mobilize and utilize all the resources available, and it makes a number of recommendations to accomplish these objectives.

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