

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 1976

## Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

In accordance with the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith propose rescission of \$250,000 provided in the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1976, for establishment of the Office of Drug Abuse Policy (ODAP) in the Executive Office of the President. When I signed into law P.L. 94-237, the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act Amendments of 1976 which extended necessary appropriation authorizations for Federal drug abuse prevention and treatment programs, I expressed my opposition to establishing ODAP. I stated that "I thoroughly agree with the position of the Congress on the importance of a well coordinated Federal drug abuse program. I have consistently held, however, that such coordination can best be carried out by existing departments and agencies, without an additional agency for that purpose." Accordingly, I am recommending to the Congress that it rescind the \$250,000 appropriated for ODAP.

This new Office is a relatively minor item in terms of dollars and staff size. The Director of ODAP is to "make recommendations to the President with respect to . . . drug abuse functions and . . . (to) coordinate the performance of such functions by Federal departments and agencies." ODAP represents an unnecessary expense for the taxpayer and adds to the Federal bureaucracy. Furthermore, I believe the establishment of this Office is an encroachment on my responsibilities as Chief Executive to organize the Executive Office of the President to carry out, as effectively as possible, the programs and laws which are established by Congress.

Since I have taken office, it has been my consistent objective to place the responsibility for governmental action with the Cabinet officers and their respective agencies. The Office of Drug Abuse Policy flies in the face of this objective, and adds to the bureaucracy a redundant layer that will have no direct management responsibilities. The drug abuse area -- including treatment, enforcement, and international narcotics control -- already has the necessary coordinating mechanisms and resources to accomplish its objectives. Likewise, I already have Cabinet officers, agency heads, and others to provide me advice on drug abuse matters. I do not need another Office with two officials with salaries of \$42,000 (ODAP Director) and \$39,900 (ODAP Deputy Director) to duplicate their work. Lastly, the annual preparation of the budget provides an effective process for identification and resolution of Executive Branch policy issues.

The attached chart displays the following coordinating mechanisms that already exist for Federal drug abuse treatment, law enforcement, and international activities:

- Domestic Council
- Drug Abuse Cabinet Committees
- National Security Council
- Office of Management and Budget

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The Cabinet Committees will assure that various Federal agencies' efforts are integrated into an effective overall program but will keep responsibility for specific program management with the appropriate agencies. The Congressional committees can call upon the heads of the Cabinet Committees or agencies with drug abuse responsibilities to testify concerning my Administration's policies whenever there is a need. I see no need for one more drug abuse spokesperson.

Administration Drug Abuse Initiatives to Date. During my Administration, the following initiatives have been taken demonstrating the priority I have placed on drug abuse:

- I launched a complete review of Federal drug abuse policies, and then endorsed the resultant White Paper on Drug Abuse.
- I have requested funding for fiscal year 1977 totaling over \$780 million for Federal drug abuse programs to maintain existing programs and to implement the major recommendations of the White Paper, e.g., additional community treatment capacity and better targeting of law enforcement efforts at high level traffickers.
- I have met with the heads of the governments of Turkey, Mexico and Colombia to strengthen and improve our international drug abuse efforts.
- I transmitted a drug abuse message to the Congress on April 27, 1976, which included, among others, proposals for strengthening law enforcement efforts.
- The Cabinet officers have placed priority attention on strengthening their drug abuse organizations.

Future Actions. My Administration plans to strengthen its efforts against the drug abuse problem.

- The Cabinet Committee for Drug Law Enforcement has held its first meeting and the Cabinet Committee on Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be fully operational within a month. The Office of Management and Budget and the agencies involved will provide the necessary support to the Cabinet Committees.
- Over the next month, Cabinet officers will contact the Congressional committees with drug abuse responsibilities to discuss the agenda from the Cabinet Committees.
- The agencies affected by the recommendations of the White Paper will provide me with a full status report when they submit their budget requests for fiscal year 1978 this September.

In summary, the Office of Drug Abuse Policy is an example of unnecessary growth in the Federal bureaucracy, and should not be established. It is the responsibility

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of public officials to guard against the unwarranted or inefficient use of public funds. I am, therefore, asking that the Congress rescind the funds for the Office of Drug Abuse Policy.

The details of the proposed rescission are contained in the attached report.

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GERALD R. FORD

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
July 1, 1976

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