

To summarize, despite an effective control of manufacture and legitimate trade, and despite also the much stricter supervision on the part of the authorities, the *illicit* traffic in opium has not appreciably diminished and is aided considerably by clandestine manufacture in a growing number of countries in east and west.

The efforts of the League are being redoubled to establish a systematic organization of the campaign against the evil. Under the 1931 Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs, the contracting States (fifty-five in number) are bound to communicate to each other, through the Secretary-General, particulars of important cases of illicit traffic. This information is carefully studied by a Sub-Committee set up by the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, and known as the Seizures Sub-Committee.

Long and interesting discussions by members of the Fifth Committee disclosed a refreshing determination on the part of those countries which are chiefly affected to use their utmost endeavours to abolish the traffic. The deliberations of the Committee culminated in a recommendation for adoption by the Assembly of the following resolution:—

“The Assembly—

“Noting the decision, adopted by the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs at its twenty-first session (18th May to 5th June, 1936), and approved by the Council on 19th September, 1936, to continue the studies and the collection of documentary material relating to the control of the cultivation of the opium poppy with a view to convening at as early a date as possible a conference for the purpose of drawing up a convention for the limitation of this raw material;

“Considering that the limitation of raw materials constitutes a decisive step in the campaign of the League of Nations against the abuse of narcotic drugs and a logical and necessary crowning of its efforts;

“Recommends that all Governments shall furnish the Advisory Committee with every possible assistance in its preparatory work, and particularly in the collection of the necessary information;

“Invites the Governments of the producing countries to communicate, before 31st January, 1937, the information requested in the questionnaire addressed to them by the Advisory Committee;

“Notes the decision of the Advisory Committee, as recorded in its report to the Council, to examine at its next session the question of the creation of a Preparatory Committee for the purpose of establishing the principles which might serve as a basis for a convention;

“Expresses the hope that the Advisory Committee will consider the possibility of holding preliminary conferences as soon as practicable—one conference to be attended by representatives of the countries producing raw opium, which export this product to drug-manufacturing countries, and by representatives of these manufacturing countries; the other to be attended by representatives of the countries producing raw opium which export this product to countries which have established a monopoly in respect of opium for smoking, together with the representatives of the monopoly countries;

“Recommends that a general conference should meet as soon as practicable after these preliminary conferences;

“Recommends that the preparatory work of the Advisory Committee and of the Secretariat shall be proceeded with as quickly as possible and should not be hampered by budgetary considerations.”

The Fifth Committee recommended the following Resolution to the Assembly in regard to illicit traffic:—

“The Assembly—

“Noting with keen satisfaction the conclusion of the Convention of 1936 for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs;

“Considering that the universal application of the Convention is a necessary condition of its efficacy;

“Recommends all Governments to take as soon as possible all such steps as may be necessary for the ratification of this Convention in order that it may promptly have its full effect.”

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN (AND SUPPRESSION OF OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS).

By reason of the non-existence in New Zealand of any organized system of white-slave traffic the Dominion is not directly affected by this problem. Other parts of the world are not, however, so fortunate, and in the Far East in particular this social evil is seriously prevalent.

In its discussions the Committee recorded with satisfaction that international legislation in this field is continuing unhampered by the political, social, and economic difficulties with which the world is faced. The 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children has been ratified or definitely acceded to by no less than forty-eight countries, and the 1923 International Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications by forty-four countries, in addition to colonies, mandated territories, &c. To the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age, concluded at Geneva in 1933, ratification or adherence has been given by seventeen countries. In other cases (and New Zealand is one of them) delay in ratifying is due, as the Committee states not to lack of sympathy with its objects, but to the necessity for bringing existing national legislation into formal agreement with the terms of the Convention. The Committee records the hope that further ratifications and accessions will soon be effected, as the full value of a Convention of this type depends largely on its universal application.