

DRUGS MEETING, TUESDAY 4 JUNE

The Home Office brief contains 7 sets of proposals. You can prompt much more action. What each Department or Authority proposes is summarised below.

Annex A: Customs

More staff posts, technical aids (electronic sensors of ascetic acid and heat images, X-ray equipment and urine testers) and more sniffer dogs.

We recommend that you welcome these proposals, not least the excellent sniffer dogs. Customs apprehend and seize 90% of all drugs taken, but this is probably only 15% of all the illicit drugs brought to this country. This leaves the police with a massive task. The Customs Annex fails to make the crucial concession that their computerised intelligence based on the CEDRIC Unit should be amalgamated with the police Intelligence Unit (the CDRU). The staff should be consulted about this proposal.

Annex B: Police

Increase the manpower of Regional Crime Squads, and strengthen the computerised Central Intelligence Unit. Police are particularly under strength in this area in London.

Int. Liaison.
I understand that the one officer posted in Karachi has produced, in one year, intelligence leading to 31 arrests and the seizure of 105 kilos of heroin. Customs now want 7 more intelligence officers (1 more in Pakistan, 2 in South America, 2 in the Caribbean, 1 in India and 1 in Cyprus) plus back-up staff.

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We recommend that you support the proposal to strengthen the Intelligence Unit, which should be amalgamated with CEDRIC. Every effort should be made to ensure regular meetings and close liaison with Customs. Some increased manpower in London, through redeployment and making up to full establishment, is essential.

Annex C: NHS

A few more psychiatrists, increased residential rehabilitation, and daytime counselling. Reissue of informative literature.

We recommend that the greatest emphasis on the NHS work should be in pump-priming such places as the excellent Suffolk House, rather than brand new 100% public sector NHS clinics. This Annex fails to note that urgent research is being conducted into the viability of the total abstinence methods.

Annex D: Ministerial Group, DHSS and HO in the Lead

Continue the information and "propaganda" campaign, which is due to finish next year.

We recommend that a more conscious and vigorous exercise be undertaken to harness private concerned bodies. For example, the YMCA, which reaches 800,000 young people, has produced its own excellent video against drug abuse. Other

bodies - such as the Salvation Army and Narcotics Anonymous - could happily help with this campaign of information.

Annex E: DES

Mr Ulrich favours low-key proposals to co-ordinate in-service training, local information and booklets for teachers.

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We recommend that you strongly encourage DES to wage a more vigorous campaign on aversion therapy lines in schools.

Annex F: International Assistance, HO to administer (ODA not involved)

Projects proposed in drug producer countries in Latin America and UK dependent territories for crop substitution.

We recommend that £1.5 million sent to South America, where the cocaine industry is in the order of \$50 billion, is too small to achieve anything. However, if it brought co-operation and intelligence from the extensive United States drug enforcement network, it would be worthwhile. We consider it most important that you persuade HO and FCO that we need an Extradition Treaty with Pakistan. That country produces 90% of all heroin that comes to this country, and is harbouring a fugitive from British justice - a Mohammed Iqbal, one of Britain's biggest heroin dealers.

Annex G: Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

Suggests better security for controlled drugs.

We recommend that you agree.

Other Essential Matters

1. Forfeiture legislation. We recommend that you make this Government legislation. I have spoken to the Lord President, who says "Please let the Prime Minister know that although there is no place in the Legislative Programme at the moment during the next Session, this measure is so important that I imagine we could find a place for it". The press in recent weeks all continue to give this proposal maximum publicity. Edward Gardner QC and John Wheeler report that there is strong back-bench feeling that this must be Government legislation, not a Private Member's Bill. It could be very short.

2. Tranquillisers and sedatives addiction. Although prescriptions for tranquillisers have fallen from 22.7 million in 1976 in England and Wales to 18 million in 1983, with a comparable fall in Scotland, it is conservatively estimated that there are half a million patients addicted to these drugs. In my straw poll of 2 dozen addicts, most had abused tranquillisers and sedatives. This is confirmed by experts. Addicts questioned admitted deceit in fooling GPs, and most

addicts mixed these pills with alcohol or illicit drugs.
These drugs have a depressive effect.

We recommend that you take up the question of
tranquillisers and sedatives with Norman Fowler.

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