

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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Oral Question (0-8/82)

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with debate pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure  
to the Commission of the European Communities

by Mrs SQUARCIALUPI, Mr BONACCINI, Mr CERAVOLO, Mrs CINCIARO  
RODANO, Mr FERRERO, Mr CAROSSINO and Mr PAPAPIETRO

Subject: Production and exportation by Community countries of  
acetic anhydride used for the production of heroin.

The report of the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board for 1981 frequently mentions the problem of acetic anhydride, a chemical substance produced in the countries of Western Europe that is used by clandestine laboratories to extract heroin from the opium poppy and asserts that:

- acetic anhydride is produced in substantial quantities, particularly in Western Europe, and is exported, free from any control, even by countries acquainted with the catastrophic effects of heroin;
- 90% of all acetic anhydride seized in the near and Middle East, East Asia and Southeast Asia originated from one firm in one Western European country;
- where checks have been made on the destination of acetic anhydride, these have resulted in important discoveries of clandestine laboratories.

The UN International Narcotics Control Board therefore calls on the various governments to study the problem of acetic anhydride in order to find a rapid solution.

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In particular it calls for:

- (a) more effective measures to reduce exports of acetic anhydride to regions where the opium poppy is illicitly cultivated and/or where clandestine laboratories are presumed to operate;
- (b) close monitoring of the movement of acetic anhydride in order to intervene in the event of orders from suspicious sources;
- (c) scrupulous application of the United Nations 1971 Convention and measures to prevent the diversion of psychotropic substances from licit trade, especially those listed in Schedule II;
- (d) the compilation of basic lists of the main chemical products and agents used in the illicit manufacture of drugs and psychotropic substances for regular submission to police, customs and other control authorities;
- (e) the conclusion of international agreements to provide prompt exchanges of information on unjustified requests for acetic anhydride.

In view of the present drug phenomenon in the countries of the European Community and the hundreds of heroin victims, can the Commission state:

- .. To what extent the countries of the European Community are involved in supply acetic anhydride to the clandestine drug market?
- .. Whether and how it intends to respond to the United Nations invitation to the whole international community but in particular to the countries of Europe?