

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DELEGATION FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

for the relations with  
THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

16th Meeting

Washington D.C.

INFORMATION NOTE

on drugs

10 January 1980



## D R U G S

In May 1979 Mr GILMAN, a member of the United States House of Representatives, wrote to the Secretariat of the European Parliament, stating that he was anxious to know what action the European Community and the European Parliament had taken in the field of combatting drug traffic and abuse.

Stressing the urgent need to take measures to deal with this problem, which did not affect the United States and the European Community alone, he proposed that the subject be included on the agenda of the next meeting of the delegations from the European Parliament and the United States Congress.

Following this request, inquiries have been made to find out what the European Community has done in this field. It transpires that owing to the absence of a legal basis (since combatting drug traffic is not explicitly mentioned in the provisions of the Treaty), there has been no Community action as such to combat the traffic in drugs. Proposals referring to the need for Community action in this field have certainly been put forward, in particular on the initiative of the Committee on Social Affairs of the European Parliament. Other initiatives have been launched within the Council of Europe, but it cannot be said that there has really been Community effort to tackle this serious problem.

The main action is being taken at national level. Indeed, the effort to combat drug traffic is essentially a penal matter and remains within the scope of national sovereignty. Attempts at Inter-State cooperation have been made at this level following an initiative by President POMPIDOU in 1971.

In conclusion, the main role of the Community Institutions - on the basis of Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, since it may be considered that the drug question is a social problem, and that the effort to combat drug traffic contributes to the improvement of living conditions, one of the objectives laid down in the preamble to the Treaties - should be to inform the public of the risks of drug abuse and the dangers which drugs represent. The institutions should also stimulate action by the national governments, so as to give fresh impetus to inter-State cooperation in this field.



It could be proposed, in conjunction with Mr GILMAN, who has suggested including this item on the agenda, that a resolution be drafted for the delegation to forward to Parliament on its return. This joint resolution should stress the urgent need to establish a genuine policy on drugs and strengthen cooperation, not only between the Member States of the Community but also with the United States. The resolution might incorporate the points suggested by President POMPIDOU for strengthening cooperation between States in this field, which could be widened to include cooperation with the United States. The main aspects of the action proposed were a strengthening of the police and customs effort, by means of frequent meetings, the defining of a common policy for combatting the illicit traffic in drugs, the setting up of specialist regional laboratories responsible for devising and applying practical measures, in particular on the standardizing of expert evaluation methods, and finally joint research into better methods of prevention and treatment, whilst equalizing the penalties imposed as far as possible.

At the same time, the parliamentary Committee on Social Affairs or Public Health could arrange a hearing on this subject. In addition, Parliament should follow closely the results of measures to combat drug traffic.

-----





