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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Elimination of Turkish Opium Production

In the light of my discussions with Prime Minister Demirel and Foreign Minister Caglayangil in Ankara on April 22, it was agreed at the meeting of the Task Force on Heroin Suppression on May 6 that additional bilateral pressure on Turkey to eliminate all opium production could well be counterproductive. Since the Turkish officials had indicated that they could move faster on a multilateral basis, the Task Force also agreed to suggest to Turkey that the subject be raised in some international forum either due to be convened or capable of being convened at an early date. After preliminary soundings by Ambassador Handley in Ankara, I met with the Turkish Foreign Minister here in Washington on May 13. We agreed that the best way of getting the problem considered soon in a multilateral context would be to convene an ad hoc meeting of the Committee on the Challenges of a Modern Society. We have, accordingly, proposed the following scenario to Ankara and USNATO:

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1. One member of CCMS, or a group of members acting in concert, would request an ad hoc meeting some time in June of CCMS at senior level to consider ways of stimulating early international action on the drug problem. Two countries we have in mind to make this proposal are Germany and The Netherlands, both of which have increasing problems with drug consumption and addiction. A joint approach, on the other hand, might be made by the three Benelux countries.

2. Alternatively, Brosio could circulate a paper on his own initiative stating that his attention had been called to the problem and proposing the convening of CCMS to deal with it.

3. At the CCMS meeting, members would consider how each could contribute immediately and in the long run to a solution of the problem, e.g., by the exchange of information on control, treatment and rehabilitation and by instituting more standardized and strict controls on the movement of drugs, including tighter customs procedures and stiffer penalties for traffickers. As its contribution to solving the problem, Turkey could announce the steps it plans to take toward further restricting and--hopefully--eliminating opium crops (as to the latter possibility, see below).

4. Recognizing the limitations of CCMS for dealing with a worldwide problem, members would also discuss ways of including the many non-NATO countries that are major producers or consumers of narcotics. This might be done either through an established forum such as the UN or one of its specialized agencies or through convoking a special ad hoc meeting of all the countries concerned. In either case, the CCMS would throw its weight behind the holding of a large international meeting as early as autumn of this year.

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It is barely possible that Turkey could be induced at the CCMS meeting to announce that it will, as a humanitarian gesture and example to the rest of the world, eliminate all future opium production effective with the 1971 crop (the next normal planting season would be in the autumn of 1970). Its more likely offer, however, would be to couple stricter internal controls with an additional reduction in the number of provinces where opium poppies can legally be grown, perhaps reducing legal production to the single province of Afyon. In justifying some continued production, Turkey can be expected to point to the fact that some legal opium production is still necessary for the manufacture of such useful drugs as morphine. They would also be likely to argue that so long as opium production is legal anywhere, illicit production will move to other countries even if Turkey is eliminated as a source.

In order, therefore, to maximize pressure on Turkey to set a good example at the CCMS or, failing that, at the international conference to follow, the U.S. should be prepared to urge a complete cessation of all opium production anywhere in the world. This, in turn, requires that the U.S.

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Government itself agree on the necessity of this step. Given the differences among medical men on the continuing need for opiates, the possible opposition of drug firms, and the fact that India is the largest producer, this will not be easy.

I accordingly urge that the Task Force meet at an early date to develop a policy on this issue. Anticipating such a meeting, I have asked Bob Finch for the advice of HEW as to how to surmount the domestic obstacles to a worldwide prohibition of opium production and expect soon to be hearing from him on the matter.

Elliot L. Richardson

Copies to: The Honorable Robert H. Finch
The Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan