

FOREWORD

As in the case of mixed agonist-antagonist narcotic analgesics (see Vol. 14/Nos. 3, 4 of this journal) the Committee on Problems of Drug Dependence* (CPDD) organized, as an adjunct to its Annual Scientific Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, June 6–7, 1984, a symposium to discuss the scientific evidence on the abuse liability of 28 stimulants and hallucinogens under consideration by the World Health Organization (WHO) for international control.

Presentations at the symposium were followed by an open discussion the tapes of which were edited by Dr. J.H. Woods and Mr. Ed Kaim and returned to the participants for comments and final editing. While the tone has not been changed markedly by editorial revision there has been a remarkable increase in the quality of the discussions.

In the process of becoming a WHO Collaborating Centre and to meet its new responsibilities in this respect, CPDD convened in September 1984 at the University of Michigan a 'Consensus Committee'. This ad hoc committee had participated in the preceding symposium. They reviewed the scientific data available to them on the 28 compounds and with reference to the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and its Commentary by A. Lande**. The report of the Consensus Committee was reviewed by the entire membership of CPDD and submitted to WHO.

*The CPDD evolved from a committee, founded in 1929, of the National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council. In the mid-1970's CPDD was incorporated as an independent not-for-profit organization.

CPDD is an international organization of 29 individuals with interest and expertise in the chemical (medicinal, synthetic and neurochemical), behavioral, social and clinical aspects of substance abuse. Membership consists of two types: the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. The Board of Directors is composed of one representative nominated by each of 13 scientific and professional societies whose interests include the substance abuse field, but which is not their main focus. The Executive Committee is responsible for the direct day to day operation of all activities of CPDD. Its 16 members are elected from a slate of individuals with expertise in a variety of disciplines concerned with the use of dependence-producing drugs, such as chemistry, pharmacology, medicine, psychology and sociology. One member of the Executive Committee must represent the public sector (typically a legal expert).

CPDD has three major functions: sponsorship of an annual scientific meeting; a scientific advisory role to academic, governmental, international and industrial agencies or institutions regarding drug abuse related issues; and, finally, the development of methods and facilities for the scientific assessment of the abuse liability of pharmaceuticals and other substances so as to provide a base of scientific knowledge for advice to the various institutions dealing with these issues.

**United Nations Publication E/CN.7/589 (1976).

The Committee on Problems of Drug Dependence thought it would be helpful to all parties concerned, WHO, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, pharmaceutical companies, and the academic community to have an open forum for discussion of the complex issues that go into decision-making on the international control of dependence-producing substances. To the extent pertinent information is made more open to the scrutiny of all, decisions to control substances with abuse liability may be more informed. In this spirit the proceedings of the Symposium and the report of the Consensus Committee are reproduced in this special issue.

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