

## Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control

The narcotics policy of the Philippines is one of prohibition of their habitual use. It contrasts in the narcotics policy of the United States and is in general contradiction of the narcotics policies of most governments, which seek to regulate the habitual use of drugs without prohibiting. When Acting Governor Eugene A. Tammore was at Malacañan and a League of Nations narcotics committee visited the islands collecting data, that committee received a shock when it found the islands' narcotics policy really working; not of course perfectly, not to the exclusion of all abuses, but with, on the whole, such eminent success that little fault could be found.

On the contrary, what the committee learned was calculated to disturb the complaisance of governments addicted to regulatory policies; he more so because the Philippines might grow opium, if they cared to, while they lie adjacent to the great opium countries of the world and are a convenient target for the illicit introduction of drugs to the use of their inhabitants. Now, twice a year, the league gets formal reports from the Philippines on consumption of narcotics here; these consistently add to the argument that upright governments can, by prohibition, control the habitual use of narcotics enough to minimize the evils of it. So why any other policy in any government? The obvious answer must be, because many governments are commercially interested in opium and the opium traffic, which therefore they regulate and tax.

It has been attempted to show that the Philippines are not successful in enforcing their nar-

cotics policy, of prohibition, but such attempts have failed; at Geneva the Philippines furnish no ground giving support to the regulatory-taxing policy, but tend to shame it in the eyes of the world.

Dope Drug Purchases First Half of 1931 and 1933

| General Class  | 1931<br>Grams | 1933<br>Grams |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Cocaine.....   | 2,894.96      | 2,000.80      |
| Codaine.....   | 5,252.71      | 4,056.38      |
| Heroin.....  | 1,320.60      | 1,621.00      |
| Laudnum.....   | 1,931.50      | 1,277.25      |
| Opium and derivatives.....   | 11,596.46     | 15,868.50     |
| Pantopon.....  | 426.29        | 545.26        |
| Morphine and derivatives.....  | 1,858.43      | 1,042.70      |
| Styptine.....  | 951.91        | 253.59        |
| "Totals.....   | 26,232.86     | 26,065.48     |
| Totals of all narcotic drugs released by internal revenue bureau: all local purchases including those of government offices..... | 32,370.55     | 32,037.29     |

As the total legitimate trade in all narcotics shows actual decrease in the first half of this year compared with the first half of 1931, while the population of the islands materially increased, it is unnecessary to look farther to see that so

far as the field extends outside of smuggled narcotics that can't be traced, use of narcotics in the Philippines is declining.

There used to be in Manila a doctor who was an amoralist. Rather accounted a good fellow than a bad one, he seemed unable to distinguish between right and wrong and was always thought to administer morphine to people habituated to its use, especially to Chinese whom it served in lieu of opium. He was cunning in ways to evade the law and no air-tight case was ever made against him, but after the internal revenue collector's patience was exhausted the genial doctor's clinic, as he styled it grandiloquently, was closed and he was threatening to have the law on the collector when he died. Such abuses do occur, despite the fact that all opiates dispensed by wholesalers and importers are only sold on permits approved at the internal revenue bureau showing amounts and names of purchasers as well as the specific character of the drug purveyed.

But these records also reveal abuses and set the police or constabulary on hot trails of crime in the making.

"Regarding narcotics," writes Chief of Police Columbus E. Platt of Manila, "there are four clinics in the city where morphine injections are administered to drug addicts. These clinics have been raided, arrests made, and several of the persons apprehended have been convicted. As to smuggling of narcotics, there have been rare cases since 1931."

While criminal administration of morphine does take place and is not altogether preventable, police vigilance keeps it at least within very restricted limits except perhaps among Chinese who now resort to morphine as cheaper and less noticeable to the authorities than use of opium. Morphine is more easily smuggled into a country

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than opium is, undoubtedly considerable quantities are smuggled into the Philippines to satisfy the demands of Chinese for opiates; trade both licit and illicit in morphine will be encouraged by countries such as India, Manchuria and Jehol where governments and private interests derive revenue from opium culture and the opium trade. Banned by the law of the islands, habitual use of opium and opiates fails to fasten itself upon the Philippine people—fails of becoming a widespread vice—and the Philippines present a contrast with surrounding countries in this respect as striking as though they were on another part of the globe. While this situation is in part due to a virtue in the people themselves, who like nothing that does them physical harm, tobacco excepted, it is also directly attributable to the rigid laws that recognize no legitimate use of narcotic drugs outside the uses of medicine and science. In short, the islands' prohibitory policy does prohibit. The more the League of Nations invest-

igates and compares, the more it must admit this fact; and so, it would seem, the league must in time come around to the same opinion and abandon defense of regulatory-taxing narcotic policies that can't in point of fact be successfully defended.

Nations that tolerate such policies are enforcing an annihilating curse on the peoples compelled to submit to their laws. Such nations appear at councils for the mitigation or suppression of the opium vice with soiled hands. Opium can be, as it is in these islands, a state monopoly in the sense that all legitimate traffic in it is state controlled; and it can easily be grown and manufactured only for medicine and science, so that no more than dribbles ever reach the illicit trade. The Philippines exemplify these facts. It is the ban of the law that helps make habitual use of narcotics abhorrent to the Philippine people, the public has been morally armed against it.

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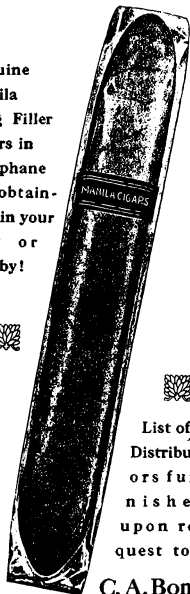
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