

28 Statement on Establishing the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement. *January 28, 1972*

DRUG abuse—as I said 7 months ago—is America's "public enemy number one." It is an all-pervasive and yet an elusive enemy. I am convinced that the only effective way to fight this menace is by attacking it on many fronts—through a balanced, comprehensive strategy.

For the past 3 years, this Administration has been working to carry out such a strategy. We have moved to eliminate dangerous drugs at their source, to cut their international flow, to stop them from entering our country, and to intercept them after they do. We have been educating our people to understand the drug problem more completely. We have expanded significantly our efforts to prevent drug addiction and to treat and rehabilitate those who have become drug-dependent.

A NEW INITIATIVE

Today our balanced, comprehensive attack on drug abuse moves forward in yet another critical area as we institute a

major new program to drive drug traffickers and drug pushers off the streets of America.

I have signed today an Executive order [11641] establishing a new Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement in the Department of Justice. This Office will marshal a wide range of government resources—including new authorities granted in the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970—in a concentrated assault on the street-level heroin pusher. Working through nine regional offices, our new program will use special grand juries to gather extensive new information concerning drug traffickers and will pool this intelligence for use by Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies. It will draw on the Department of Justice and the Department of the Treasury to assist State and local agencies in detecting, arresting, and prosecuting heroin traffickers.

I am pleased to announce that the new Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement will be headed by Myles J. Ambrose, who has been serving as our Commissioner of

Customs. Mr. Ambrose will also serve as my own Special Consultant for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, advising me on all matters relating to this important subject.

PROGRAMS ALREADY IN OPERATION

This effort to meet the drug menace directly on the streets of America—an effort which I promised in my message on the State of the Union—complements our other drug-related initiatives.

—*The Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention*, established on an interim basis last June and headed by Dr. Jerome Jaffe, is already beginning to have an impact in the fields of drug abuse education, treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention. The Office is working to coordinate programs which are spread through nine Federal agencies and to develop a national strategy to guide these efforts. Drawing on private and public expertise, the Special Action Office has spurred new research, gathered valuable information, planned for a new drug training and education center, and helped in setting up a major program to identify and treat drug abuse in the armed services.

The Special Action Office—which has already done so much—can do much more if the Congress will promptly give it the authority and the funds I have requested for it.

—*The Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control*, established last September and chaired by Secretary Rogers, is taking the lead in our efforts to fight the international drug traffic and to eliminate drugs at their source. We have appointed Narcotics Control Coordinators in all affected American embassies around

the world and have been working closely with other governments to strengthen drug control efforts. We were especially gratified when Turkey announced last summer a total ban on the growing of the opium poppy.

—Drug dependence in the Armed Forces and among veterans is being reduced considerably by *expanded drug treatment and rehabilitation programs in the Department of Defense and in the Veterans Administration*. Drug identification and detoxification programs, which began in Vietnam, have been expanded to include all military personnel in the United States who are being discharged, sent abroad, or are returning from overseas duty. In the year ahead the Veterans Administration will offer treatment and rehabilitative service to an estimated 20,000 addicts. It will expand its drug dependence units by as many as 12, creating a total of up to 44 such units.

—We have also been moving ahead with a range of other activities. The Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970—which I proposed in July of 1969—was passed by the Congress and signed into law in October of 1970. The model State narcotics legislation which I also recommended has been adopted by 26 States and is being considered in 15 others.

Tens of thousands of teachers, students, and community leaders have been trained under our National Drug Education Training Program. A new National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information has been established. Some 25 million pieces of drug education information have been distributed by the Federal Government. We have established a Federal Drug Abuse Prevention Coordinating Committee at the interagency level and a number

of White House conferences on drug abuse have been conducted.

In addition, the Federal Government is carrying out a number of major research programs to help us better to identify and analyze drugs and more fully to understand how they are moved about the country and around the world. I have also recommended the creation of a United Nations Fund for Drug Control—to which we have already contributed \$1 million and pledged \$1 million more—and have recommended several steps to strengthen international narcotics agreements.

In the enforcement field, the number of authorized new positions in the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and in the Bureau of Customs has jumped by more than 2,000 in the past year alone. We are expanding our program to train State prosecutors to handle cases under the newly enacted Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act. We are stepping up the work of the Joint State-Federal Narcotics Task Force in New York City.

It is estimated that the amount of heroin which will be seized in the current fiscal year will be more than four times what was seized in fiscal year 1969. Since that time, the number of drug-related arrests has nearly doubled.

OVERALL EXPENDITURES

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of our stepped-up campaign against drug abuse lies in the budget figures for various aspects of our effort. In the last 3 years, for example, Federal obligations for drug treatment and rehabilitation have increased *nearly sevenfold*, from \$28 million to \$189.6 million, and we have proposed

a further increase of \$40.6 million for next year. Obligations for research, education, training, and prevention activities have also grown *nearly sevenfold*, from \$17.5 million in fiscal year 1969 to \$120.5 million this year, and our new budget calls for a further increase of \$14.5 million.

This means that we will be obligating more than eight times as much for treatment, rehabilitation, research, education, training, and prevention in the coming fiscal year as we were when this Administration took office.

As far as law enforcement obligations relating to drug abuse are concerned, the level has increased more than eightfold in our first 3 years in office—from \$20.2 million to \$164.4 million. We plan to increase this figure by another \$64.6 million next year to the \$229 million level.

A BALANCED AND COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

The central concept behind all of these programs is that our overall approach to the drug menace must be balanced and comprehensive—fighting those who traffic in drugs, helping those who have been victimized by drugs, and protecting those who have not yet been threatened. The new initiative I have launched today in the area of law enforcement is aimed against those who would profit from the misery of others. It will confront the street-level heroin pusher with a dedicated group of lawyers and investigators intent upon exposing and eliminating retail sales of heroin. At the same time, however, we must be sure that we have sufficient treatment facilities to handle any increase in the number of addicts seeking treatment because of the disruption of heroin trafficking. The Special

Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention, which helped in the development of this new law enforcement program, has assured me that we will be able to meet an increased demand in the treatment field if the Congress passes its new legislation.

Drug abuse, as I said in my message on the State of the Union, saps our Nation's strength and destroys our Nation's character. The Federal Government cannot meet this menace alone—but it can take a strong leadership position. I believe we have developed a Federal pro-

gram for combating drug abuse which is both firm and compassionate. With the cooperation of the Congress, the State and local governments, and the American people, that program will continue to grow in effectiveness.

NOTE: On the same day, the White House released a fact sheet and the transcript of a news briefing on the new drug abuse law enforcement program. Participants in the news briefing were John N. Mitchell, Attorney General, and Myles J. Ambrose, Special Assistant Attorney General, Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, Department of Justice.