

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

28050

May 8, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: General Haig 

SUBJECT: Status of Opium Control in Turkey 

You asked for views on the idea Secretary Connally mentioned for a pre-emptive purchase of the Turkish opium crop this year.

Actually, the Turkish government has already launched a major effort to buy up this year's crop to keep it out of illegal channels. We have offered to help financially, but the Turkish government has so far preferred to foot the bill itself. Our Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs feels that the Turkish collection effort this year will be a major improvement over last year's and regards it, in prospect at least, as satisfactory.

Secretary Rogers mentioned in Ankara our willingness to participate in an international pre-emptive purchase program such as that described by Secretary Connally. The Turkish leaders appear to feel that such a program by outsiders would cause political problems, increase resistance to their collection program, and stimulate rather than control illegal production by increasing the financial advantage to the grower.

In addition to working with the Turkish government on this program to buy up the crop, we are also urging passage of a licensing bill and complete elimination of production. The prospects for both improved sharply as a result of the change of government in March. Ambassador Handley and Secretary Rogers have both urged Prime Minister Erim to announce in June that opium production will not be allowed anywhere in the fall of 1972. The Prime Minister has replied that he feels it necessary to provide the Turkish farmer with some alternative crop or agriculturally based industry if he is to do this and has asked us to work with him. This is a significant invitation, and the bureaucracy is already working on proposals to make to the Turks.

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