

During the past year and a half, I have become personally aware of the problem, as the agency's Commissioner. For example, our agents may find two individuals in the same room, one possessing LSD—an extremely dangerous drug, and one of the most dangerous drugs I have ever studied—and the other possessing marihuana. Our BDAC agents would seize the LSD under the executive seizure provisions of the drug abuse control amendments, but the person possessing the drug would not be subject to prosecution under the Federal statute. His companion, however, would be taken into custody and be liable to a felony conviction under the laws governing the possession of marihuana, a drug which is less potent than LSD.

This is why I consider the penalties to be inconsistent and why I believe that this inconsistency prevents full and effective protection of the public interest in the matter of abused drugs of any kind.

Let me emphasize again that I have never advocated the legalization of marihuana. Rather, I have raised the question of the severity of the penalties attached to possession of marihuana and I suggest that the Congress might also wish to review these penalties in the light of enforcement experience throughout local, State, and Federal Government and as the results of drug research may dictate.

In closing, I would like to summarize some of the tasks we are performing and the goals toward which we are striving in dealing with the problem of drug abuse in a comprehensive manner. Among these, I would include—

(1) a continuing concentration of enforcement activities against the illicit manufacturers and distributors of dangerous drugs;

(2) an increased exchange of information with State and local police and health agencies, as well as with similar international agencies, to strengthen enforcement programs and to broaden the total understanding of the scientific and social data upon which these programs must be based;

(3) the continuation and expansion of the research effort to fill the gaps in our knowledge that I noted a moment ago; and

(4) effective assistance to educators and journalists to support their effort to bring factual drug knowledge to the public, who ultimately must determine the nature and direction of our control programs.

The cooperation of many agencies, at all levels of government, is required in carrying out these broad assignments. The Food and Drug Administration will give its best efforts in this cause, I assure you.

Thank you.

I will be happy, Mr. Chairman, to answer any questions you or other members of the committee may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Dr. Goddard.

I do have one or two questions, and I would like to say for the benefit of the committee that I hope that after questions have been asked, they will not be repeated by the members of the committee. I hope that we get the questions asked and answered by noon, in the hopes that we can finish this morning.

Dr. Goddard, to clarify some of your statements, do you favor eliminating any of the penalties presently prescribed by law for the