

Europe faces growth of Dope, Inc.

Drug traffic from the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong into Europe has not generally been at the same epidemic levels as into the U.S., but market analysts for "Dope, Incorporated," the network which runs the \$200 billion-a-year world drug business, are stepping it up. As a result, drug consumption and all that accompanies it, is on the rise across the Continent.

In Italy, more than 100 young people have died from heroin overdoses, impurities or dirty needles so far in 1979. This is up from the 43 deaths that occurred in all of 1978. Renalto Altissimo, the Liberal Health Minister in the national coalition government, has officially proposed a "humanitarian" solution: stopping accidental deaths by having the state administer the heroin business. He would have the national government deal out free heroin to certified addicts, whose fix would be paid for by the national treasury.

The heroin business is booming so fast that there is

now a mafia war for its control. Eight persons were shot to death in a Milan bar on the evening of Nov. 2 in a massacre whose main target was Antonio Prudente, a rising Milan mafia boss who specialized in drugs and kidnapping. The other victims were friends or business associates of Prudente, and the bar was a known mafia meeting place.

The Pot Party

The Radical Party, a collection of freaks who for years espoused the cause of every social deviation imaginable, have taken up the banner of marijuana decriminalization for "humanitarian" reasons similar to Altissimo's. They are outraged that Italian youth are jailed for smoking "harmless" marijuana and hashish, and are staging "smoke-ins" in the piazzas of every major city. In last summer's elections, after years of oblivion, the Radicals ran a well-funded media campaign and landed

'Society cannot compete with drugs'

The following is excerpted from the article, "No Society Can Compete With the Immediate Pleasure of Drugs," by Dr. Gabriel Nahas, which appeared in the Oct. 2 issue of the Italian newspaper, La Stampa.

Today the hypothesis is that narcotics, acting on the neuro-physiological mechanisms of the brain's rewards system, provoke bio-chemical alterations associated with sensations of pleasure which are transmitted to the central nervous system: the chronic use of a drug could thus compromise the free play of mental faculties and condition a behavior oriented to rewards and the attainment of "chemically provoked" pleasure.

The stimulation of the centers of pleasure and well-being is associated also with the creative force, to mystical experience, to discovery, to all the activ-

ities which ennoble man. One understands, therefore, what danger drugs represent: they permit man to obtain an internal satisfaction without the effort of conquest. The adolescent whose pleasure center is stimulated prematurely by drugs—before, that is, he has been able to discover other sources of pleasure—is particularly vulnerable.

A real trap, which the youth cannot comprehend and whose consequences he cannot foresee: the centers of well-being will be constantly less stimulated by the same doses of drugs; little by little a tolerance to narcotics is developed, leading to the use of stronger and stronger doses; the same mechanism leads toward heavier drugs. The brain centers, finally, saturated with drugs, can no longer respond to physical or intellectual excitement.

It is obvious that, under such conditions, only the prevention of drug addiction is an effective safeguard for society and the individual. No society can compete with the immediate satisfactions produced by narcotics. Here is the great danger of drugs: to remove man from the tasks that can give him a similar reward at the price of an effort.