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INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL DRUG STRATEGY

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today made the following statement in the House of Commons:

"Mr. Speaker, on Monday, my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare, announced the National Drug Strategy, which sets a uniquely Canadian course in dealing with the problems proposed by drug abuse and illicit trafficking. It recognizes the excellent work done by the RCMP, Customs and Excise, and other law enforcement agencies, in preventing the importation and trafficking of drugs.

In general, the programmes of the Strategy are directed at solving domestic problems. However, illicit trafficking is an international industry, and it is clear that Canada cannot solve our drug abuse and trafficking problems in isolation.

Many of the drugs consumed in Canada, such as cocaine and heroin, are brought into our country illegally by well-organized trafficking networks based overseas. In 1985, the RCMP and Customs seized 62 kgs. of heroin, 109 kgs. of cocaine and 19,000 kgs. of hashish. These are the last statistics available, and probably understate the dimensions of the problem today. Furthermore, Canadian territory often serves as a transit point for narcotics being sent by these trafficking networks to other countries. In addition, illicit psychoactive substances are produced in Canada to feed the terrible addictions of citizens of other countries. Clearly, we must act to stem this traffic, not only because Canadians are its victims, but also because we have a role to play as responsible citizens of the world.

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