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THE NARCOTICS SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

REPORT OF A SPECIAL STUDY MISSION

BY

HON. LESTER L. WOLFF

NEW YORK



JULY 26, 1973

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FOREWORD

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C., July 26, 1973.

This report has been submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs by Hon. Lester L. Wolff who conducted a special study mission between January 24 and February 2, 1973.

The findings in this report are those of Hon. Lester Wolff and do not necessarily reflect the views of the membership of the full Committee on Foreign Affairs.

THOMAS E. MORGAN, *Chairman.*

(III)

FOREWORD

This report has been submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs by Hon. Lester L. Wolf who conducted a special study of the findings in this report and those of Hon. Lester Wolf and do not necessarily reflect the views of the membership of the full Committee on Foreign Affairs.

THOMAS E. ALDRICH, Chairman.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Hon. THOMAS E. MORGAN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: There is transmitted herewith a report of a study mission conducted by the undersigned, a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, between January 24, 1973, and February 2, 1973, as a follow-on investigation to a similar mission undertaken one year earlier.

The circumstances described in this report are those that existed at the time of the investigations. I am happy to report that there is growing evidence that the situation is changing and that the governments in the area, particularly Thailand and Burma, are making considerable progress in their fight against narcotics trafficking, although much remains to be accomplished.

The purpose of the study mission was to gather information regarding international narcotics traffic, specifically about the illicit flow of heroin which is smuggled into the United States from the Far East.

Among those with whom I have met in connection with this inquiry, were U.S. narcotics control officials responsible for monitoring the situation in France, Turkey, Thailand, South Vietnam, Hong Kong, Japan, and the Philippines. Numerous other U.S. diplomatic and military personnel were also consulted. In addition, foreign law enforcement officials as well as other foreign sources provided much useful information.

I want to express my thanks and appreciation to the Departments of State and Defense for the advice, cooperation, and assistance extended to me by their representatives at home and abroad. I should also like to express my appreciation to the many agents of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, with whom I have met frequently over the past year both in the United States and overseas. They have consistently supplied me with accurate, factual, and self-critical appraisals of the international trafficking picture.

It is my hope that this report will be of value to the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Congress as we work to solve the heroin problem in the United States.

LESTER L. WOLFF,
Member of Congress.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dr. J. H. Brown, Jr.,
Director, Bureau of Education,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst., and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

The Bureau of Education is very anxious to receive information from all sources regarding the progress of the various educational movements in the different countries of the world, and it is with pleasure that I am enabled to inform you that your letter has been received and is being given the consideration it deserves.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours very truly,
J. H. Brown, Jr.

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PREFACE

If it is not already the Nation's No. 1 crime and health problem, heroin addiction is rapidly gaining that dubious distinction.

It is estimated that there are over 500,000 heroin addicts in the United States today; about half that number live in the New York metropolitan area. Narcotics addiction is believed responsible for at least half, perhaps as much as three-quarters of all street crimes committed in this country. Last year, more than 1,100 deaths in New York alone were blamed on narcotics. The majority of these deaths were among young people under the age of 23.

Heroin is refined from the opium poppy which is not grown in the United States. Therefore, all of the heroin used in this country must be smuggled into the country. The United States must therefore rely upon the cooperation of other nations, particularly the producing nations, in preventing the drug from entering the United States.

The most effective recognized method to combat heroin addiction, failing the elimination of domestic demand, is to cut off the supply at its source. To reach this critical goal, it is necessary to study international narcotics traffic in detail—pinpointing opium-producing nations, analyzing the degree of cooperation extended in efforts to inhibit the illegal international flow of drugs, determining the method of shipment and identifying the operators, routes, dealers, as well as political leaders and law enforcement officials who may be involved.

Based on an understanding of the mechanism of the traffic, the U.S. Government must mount a determined and unified effort to stamp out the ever-increasing trade in heroin.

The task cannot be accomplished by the United States alone. Because the problem of narcotics abuse is no longer confined to the United States, international awareness and a desire to cooperate have increased significantly. However, more active cooperation and vigorous law enforcement are required to effectively restrict heroin traffic.

In its work in international organizations, as well as in its bilateral dealings with friendly foreign countries, it is imperative that the U.S. Government stress the need to control the source of the heroin supply.

Here at home, immediate action must be taken to commit increased resources of men, money, and materiel to this fight. While recognizing the necessity of helping those already addicted to heroin, the U.S. Government must now take strong and definitive action to halt the traffic in heroin to protect present and future generations of Americans from the infectious scourge of heroin dependence.

The seriousness of the heroin problem cries out for a massive effort. That plea must be heard.

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

The major share of opium produced in Southeast Asia is grown in the triborder area of Burma, Thailand, and Laos known as the "Golden Triangle." It is estimated that as much as 700 tons of the 990-1,410 tons of illicit opium grown in the world are cultivated in this region.

Estimates for production of opium in the area are—

Burma: 200-400 metric tons.

Thailand: 130-200 metric tons.

Laos: 100-120 metric tons.¹

Golden Triangle opium is known to be the major source of heroin entering Vietnam and is becoming a major resource for the illicit market in the United States.

Despite greater efforts at enforcement and control, refining operations, particularly of the white No. 4 heroin used by American addicts, appear to be increasing. It is believed that at least two dozen clandestine labs have been operating in the triborder area, with at least half of them concentrating solely on the production of No. 4 heroin.

Although the traffic in this area really knows no borders, the most useful way in which to analyze the situation is country by country.

BURMA

The Burmese situation is perhaps best described by superlatives, for it produces the greatest amount of opium in the Golden Triangle, and the United States has less influence upon Burma than upon any other country in Southeast Asia.

Poppy cultivation in Burma is entirely uncontrolled. Insurgency is a major problem for the Burmese, and estimates place the amount of territory under insurgent control at more than 30 percent. Meanwhile, opium has historically been a major cash crop in Burma, and much of it is consumed locally. However, the growth in opium production in recent years indicates an increasing export of Burmese opium into the illicit markets in Thailand and Hong Kong.

There is increasing optimism, however, that the operations of the major Burmese traffickers are being disrupted. For example, Lo Hsing-han, described by many as the "kingpin of the heroin traffic in Southeast Asia," was captured by Thai authorities on July 17, 1973, after having been driven into Northern Thailand by Burmese military forces. Simultaneously, his brother, who is reputed to have operated Lo Hsing-han's heroin laboratories is believed to have been captured by the Burmese in Burma. This is the kind of cooperative action that is required if the international effort against narcotics is to be successful.

Inherent in the Burmese opium trade is the illicit traffic in armaments in Southeast Asia. From the inception of U.S. military sales and military assistance programs in that region, substantial amounts of arms, ammunition, and equipment have fallen into the hands of indigenous insurgent groups in the various countries of the area. This

¹ Little is known of opium production in Laos. The Communists control some producing areas and military operations have disrupted some of the Meo and Yao tribesmen who traditionally grow opium.

was of great assistance to opium traffickers and has been an irritant to Burmese-U.S. relations.

Narcotics traffic along the Burmese border with Laos and Thailand is virtually uncontrolled and efforts at suppression are hindered by a lack of communication. Moreover, Burma's nonalignment policy, its distrust of foreigners, and the insurgency problem all combine to hamper efforts at even minimal narcotics control. While the United States does maintain diplomatic relations with Burma, it has little influence. There are no economic or military assistance programs for Burma and Burmese-U.S. diplomatic relations are cordial but restrained.²

While there has been little overt cooperation in combating the narcotics problem, however, it is possible that international efforts and public attention will compel the Burmese to take more effective action against the skyrocketing opium production within their borders. There is growing addiction in Burma although it is not yet a serious problem. This situation, combined with Burmese concern about becoming the focus of international attention as a source nation, has led the Burmese Government to adopt a more cooperative attitude, at least toward the United Nations.

U.S. officials in Burma have reportedly been active in supplying the Burmese Government with information on narcotics production and addiction in Burma in an attempt to persuade the Burmese of the importance of the problem and the Burmese contribution to the growth of this international menace.

This bilateral exchange should continue. However, much more must be initiated to insure that the massive Burmese supply of opium does not grow to an even greater proportion of the traffic in the Golden Triangle and that poppy cultivation does not increase to fill the demand created by strong enforcement measures in other areas. International organizations must step up their efforts to induce the Government of Burma to cooperate.

It is well for Burma to remain unaligned. In spite of the capture of Lo Hsing-han, that Government should restrain the production of the opium that finds its way into illicit channels.

LAOS

U.S. efforts to secure the active cooperation of the Laotian Government to halt the production of and trafficking in opiates appear to be meeting with some limited success.

Laos has traditionally been both a producing and shipping nation for heroin going to Vietnam and other areas of the Far East. Opium cultivation appears to have been reduced significantly by the continued strife in the northern growing areas, while increased control and enforcement efforts seem to have forced some traffickers to shift their refining operations to Thailand or Burma.

On November 15, 1971, opium production, use, and dealing were finally made illegal in Laos. Obviously this alone did not end the problem, but it did create an atmosphere which has resulted in sharply increased enforcement efforts.

The U.S. mission has emphasized the very direct link between cooperative efforts to deal with the narcotics trade and continued U.S.

² Information has been received that in an effort to cooperate with U.S. narcotics officials, Burma has requested a number of helicopters from the United States because this was the only method of surveillance of the remote isolated "growing" areas. After a series of negotiations the Burmese withdrew the request.

assistance programs in Laos. Unfortunately, while the Government of Laos has been receptive, it is handicapped because it controls neither the entire country, nor the nonduty activities of certain high-ranking military commanders.

For some time it has been acknowledged that ranking Lao military officers have been involved in drug smuggling and efforts to enforce antinarcotics laws among military personnel have not been entirely successful.

Significantly, the new narcotics enforcement agency in Laos does have joint military and civilian staffing which may prove to be more effective against the military involvement in the drug traffic. U.S. officials should continue to press in the strongest way for more stringent customs control over all military aircraft and personnel. Only in this way can the continued involvement of the Laos military in the transport of narcotics be stopped.

In addition to training and equipping this new narcotics investigative unit, the United States has also provided similar training to Laotian customs personnel. American advisers are also working with Laotian authorities on drug education and rehabilitation projects.

Because of the uncertain internal and external situation faced by Laos, the ultimate success of this drug suppression effort cannot be predicted. However, at least a start has been made and U.S. agencies are beginning to receive the degree of cooperation that is necessary if the goal of halting the production and flow of opium and heroin from Laos is to be attained. Every effort should be made to insure the continuance of this cooperation.

THAILAND

In many ways, Thailand is the key to the narcotics traffic in Southeast Asia. In addition to being an opium-producing nation with an annual production estimated at between 130 and 200 metric tons annually, Thailand continues to serve as the major conduit for the flow of opium and its derivatives to the illicit market in Vietnam, Hong Kong, and ultimately the United States.

In the northwestern area of Thailand, around Chiang Mai, quantities of opium are grown and harvested annually. Some of the opium is refined into heroin in clandestine laboratories located along the Thai-Burmese border, while some of it is transported south to Bangkok for refining or shipping to the refineries in Hong Kong.

Virtually every form of transport imaginable is used to get the opium or heroin to the south for further shipment. Mule caravans, trucks, cars, and even planes are being used. American officials state that Thai police interceptions of opium caravans are few and far between; partly because of a lack of expertise and partly because of an unwillingness on the part of some officials to exert the effort necessary to intercept the smugglers; although a National Broadcasting Co. camera crew—nonprofessionals in narcotics control—were able to locate, follow, and film a relatively large opium caravan in Thailand as recently as 1972.

While part of the enforcement problem can be attributed to lack of manpower, funds, and expertise, much of the blame seems more properly attributable to corruption and a lack of cooperation among middle and lower echelon law enforcement officials.

There has been a great deal of surface public activity on the narcotics front during the past year in Thailand. This was in part a response to an amendment which I offered to the Foreign Assistance Act last year. The amendment would have suspended all economic and military assistance to Thailand because of its lack of effective action to stop the production of and trafficking in opiates. There are encouraging indications that this situation may be changing and I have not reintroduced this amendment. Hopefully, it will be unnecessary.

While there was an increase in the number and quantity of seizures of narcotic drugs in Thailand during the past year, there are two factors that make the effectiveness of the Thai effort more apparent than real. First, most of the recent seizures have resulted from information provided by American—not Thai—agents, and second, the increase in seizures has not kept pace with the increased volume of heroin traffic in and through Thailand.

Upon returning from my previous study mission, I named Thailand as the major conduit for opium and heroin traffic in Southeast Asia. Responding to my statement the following day, Gen. Prapass Charusathiara, Deputy Chairman of the ruling National Executive Council and Commander in Chief of the Army called it “unfounded slander” and went on to say that “we [the Thais] can almost boast there is no poppy cultivation in Thailand.”³

Five days later, on March 7, 1972, the Associated Press reported from Bangkok: “The Thai Government burned 26 tons of opium Tuesday night and officials said it was a rebuttal to a New York Congressman’s charge that Thailand isn’t doing enough to stop illegal drug traffic.”

It is estimated that if this raw opium had been refined into heroin it could have supplied nearly half the U.S. “market” for almost a full year.

Within a few weeks of this spectacular and highly publicized burning, which was always reported to be a Thai-initiated and sponsored action, I received reports that the material destroyed in the blaze was not entirely opium. My congressional office staff attempted repeatedly to check out these reports with a number of the U.S. Government departments and agencies involved. In each case, assurances were given that the material destroyed was opium which the Thai Government secured in exchange for resettlement land and other considerations to the Chinese Irregular Forces who turned over the opium.

On July 31, 1972, syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, citing a classified weekly narcotics intelligence report circulated by the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs made similar allegations—that perhaps as little as 20 percent of the 26 tons burned were actually opium. According to Mr. Anderson’s associate, Les Whitten, the report was from an informant who had been used on many previous occasions by the BNDD who was considered reliable. Mr. Whitten also indicated the material in these “summaries” was used by many of the agencies responsible for monitoring international narcotics traffic.

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs held a press conference, including a movie of the destruction of the 26 tons, the day

³ The U.S. Cabinet Committee for International Narcotics Control estimates that opium production in Thailand could be as much as 200 tons per year.

after the column appeared in order to refute the charges. In addition to film, two BNDD representatives who witnessed and tested the material burned were also present at the meeting. A transcript of the Deputy Director's statement appears in Appendix 1.

A member of my office staff attended the conference and inquired about the cost of the destruction. This triggered for the first time a response that revealed that approximately \$1 million of American AID funds had been transferred to BNDD and then to the Thai Government ostensibly to get the Chinese Irregular Forces out of the opium growing business and to help them resettle. In return the Chinese agreed to turn over 26 tons of opium. As it turned out the United States paid \$1 million for the opium.

This transaction did not become public knowledge until several weeks had passed during which time U.S. officials claimed that the opium burning was possible because of large seizures made by the Thai Government. Not an inkling was given of the U.S. participation in the buy until the BNDD was pressed by my staff.

Many questions still surround this preemptive buy decision. First of all, was the material that was bought and destroyed actually opium? Despite all of the denials, a reasonable doubt still remains. In fact, I have still not been afforded the opportunity to see the intelligence report quoted by columnist Anderson, despite BNDD's public confirmation that "the weekly summary" does exist.

Second, what was the intent of this decision? As explained by the Department of State in a letter that appears in Appendix 2, the opium was bought as part of a resettlement project for the so-called Chinese Irregular Forces (CIF), remnants of the old Third and Fifth Kuomintang (KMI) armies that fled China in 1949. The CIF have traditionally been the center of the Southeast Asian drug traffic and operate outside the effective control of the national governments involved.

My most recent investigation indicates that despite the guarantees reportedly made under the terms of the agreement discussed in the letter, the evidence suggests that large elements of the CIF are still engaged in illegal production of and trafficking in opiates. In fact, the surplus of No. 4 heroin resulting from the reduced market in Vietnam because of the U.S. troop withdrawal has precipitated an even greater effort by the CIF to set up links with the Corsican syndicates to get the opium into the illicit world market.

Third, perhaps the ultimate irony in an ill-conceived and unsuccessful effort, was a discovery made by a staff survey team of the Foreign Affairs Committee, reported earlier this year, that a 27th ton of opium was turned back by the authorities at the time of the turnover because there was no prior authorization to pay for it, coupled with a fear that further negotiations might result in the collapse of the entire deal. Unfortunately, this incident is representative of the errors in judgment that occur because U.S. officials, particularly in the field, have, for too long, been unwilling to insist on exerting what influence they have to convince the Thai Government that it must take more positive action to stop illegal trafficking in narcotics.

Instead, the U.S. Government has awarded an "achievement" plaque to Director General of Police Prasert Ruchirawongse to "encourage cooperation." The award is another example of public relations fluff which does not close down the traffic or increase coopera-

tion. It only contributes to an atmosphere of "easy mark" response to a serious problem.

U.S. Ambassador to Thailand Leonard Unger explained the presentation of the plaque as well as other matters in a letter to me dated May 5, 1972. Furthermore, in testimony before a congressional inquiry last June, Nelson Gross, at that time Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State and Coordinator of International Narcotics Matters stated: "Based on all intelligence information available, the leaders of the Thai Government are not involved in the opium or heroin traffic, nor are they extending protection to traffickers * * * Police General Prasert, head of the Thai National Police * * * has stated publicly that he would punish any corrupt official."

It is interesting to note that General Prasert was reportedly involved in narcotics dealing himself and was therefore recently removed from office. Similarly, Colonel Pramuan Vanigblandu was relieved of his job as Deputy Commander of the Crime Suppression Division of the National Police in October 1972, for his role in drug dealing. This high level corruption clearly refutes the oft-repeated contention that policy level officials in Thailand have not been involved with or have not extended protection to those engaged in the illegal trafficking in narcotics.

It is worth pointing out that even Secretary of State William P. Rogers did not seem to appreciate the dimensions of this problem. For example, on March 21, 1972, he told the Foreign Affairs Committee drug hearings on the Foreign Assistance Act of 1972, in response to one of my questions on official corruption: "In terms of the Thai Government, we have been getting cooperation from them. They resent it when American officials criticize their officials without opportunity to be heard or anything * * * I would appreciate it, when you have information of this kind, let us have it privately * * * I do think in these cases if we could work quietly, it would be better. It does cause difficulty with other governments".

Meanwhile, much more recently, there was another example of the failure of the United States to gain, working "quietly," the cooperation of Thai officials on the vital drug question. For some time, American officials have been developing a plan for an aerial photographic survey of Thailand to evaluate opium production and to assist with planned efforts for crop substitution.

Last October, the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok was given Washington approval to secure Thai agreement to conduct an aerial survey of the Thai poppy growing area. Meanwhile, here in the United States, U.S. AID entered into discussions with Teledyne Geotronics, a California-based survey firm that maintains an office in Bangkok, about handling the mission provided the Thai Government approved the plan. The decision to use civilian rather than military planes was probably correct in that the Burmese border area would be a prime area for the reconnaissance work.

According to information I received on this matter, for 4 months, Thai officials "passed the poppy" among themselves on the decision whether to allow the survey to take place. By that time, it was February and the rainy season was beginning and the poppy season was over. In effect, the delay and foot dragging of uncooperative Thai officials precluded the usefulness of the mission until it was impossible

to use aerial detection, and the State Department was forced to release Geotronics from its commitment.

This project had been considered a vitally important part of the long range antinarcotics effort in Thailand. It seems incomprehensible that if the U.S. Embassy had pressed strongly for this survey it would not have been approved immediately. This case certainly does not speak well of the type of cooperation the United States is receiving in its efforts to assist Thailand.

One of the key elements essential to halt the flow of heroin and opium from Thailand is the interruption of the Thai trawler sealift.

According to reliable sources, about a dozen trawlers currently operate year-round transporting opium, morphine base, and heroin principally from the port of Bangkok to Hong Kong and also to Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines for further processing and onward movement.

These trawlers are capable of carrying more than 3 metric tons of morphine base, heroin or opium. While it is possible that not all of this material is refined into No. 4 heroin for shipment to the United States, the seizure of just one trawler load would be the equivalent of about 6 percent of the annual consumption of heroin.

According to informed sources, increasingly reliable informants are available to point out the opium-carrying trawlers and more effective sophisticated detection devices are also available to help identify the trawlers. Despite these developments, success in choking off this major part of the Southeast Asian narcotics flow continues to elude U.S. antinarcotics officials.

Poor management, leaks, or bad intelligence is the only explanation for this lack of success, since the devices and personnel appear to be of superior quality. Trawler traffic must be halted if the narcotics traffic is to be interrupted. The situation could be improved by taking more stringent action to secure and seal off the area surrounding Bangkok. More effective customs, task force searches, and tough enforcement measures are the basic tools. With a military government in control in Thailand, there is simply no adequate explanation for the continued high rate of traffic in opium and its derivatives crossing Thailand for transshipment.

One final aspect of the drug situation in Thailand deserves mention. The United States still maintains a large military and diplomatic presence in Thailand, estimated at well in excess of 40,000 persons.

Despite that presence, drugs of all types, particularly marihuana and heroin, are readily available throughout Thailand, and widely used by American personnel. Reports indicate that heroin can be bought within 100 yards of Udorn Air Force Base and is readily available to American school-age dependents in Bangkok. U.S. authorities in Thailand should be pressing for more effective programs designed to eliminate drug abuse among U.S. personnel and their dependents. If strong action is not taken there will be a repeat of the narcotics abuse problems that the United States experienced in Vietnam.

In summary, the Government of Thailand should be the most effective in Southeast Asia in its efforts to end the flow of opium and its derivatives through Thai borders and ports—it is not.

Despite governmental cooperation with the United States and the United Nations in antidrug programs, corruption and indifference,

particularly among low and middle working, and occasionally high level Thai officials, and the traditional importance of opium as a cash crop, the antinarcotics effort in Thailand has been relatively disappointing.

Far more direct and firm pressure must be exerted by our Government to achieve the meaningful cooperation which will sever the "Thai Connection."

OTHER ASIAN NATIONS

VIETNAM

Vietnam is not a producer of opium; however, halting the flow of narcotics in South Vietnam is difficult because the drug traffic is restricted to heroin which is much more easily smuggled than opium.

Despite a late start, American pressure for cooperation from the Saigon government to halt what was fast becoming a military addiction problem of epidemic proportions did meet with some success. A substantial commitment of resources has been made by the Thieu government to reduce the availability of drugs in Vietnam and to interrupt the flow of drugs across its borders.

According to Vietnamese officials, the commitment of manpower to narcotics control programs has increased from 68 agents in 1968 to 388 at the beginning of 1973. The best available information suggests there are no heroin refineries currently operating in South Vietnam.

Cooperation between Vietnamese narcotics officials and U.S. narcotics agents appears to be excellent. Increased efforts by the Saigon BNDD to control opiate trafficking has yielded some important seizures. However, much remains to be accomplished before the situation in South Vietnam becomes satisfactory. When offenders are apprehended and sentenced they are "sprung" quickly and the anti-narcotics officials must seek new convictions. Unless this is corrected no amount of real effort by enforcement officers will work.

Recent seizures of heroin and morphine base in Vietnam is directly traceable to Thailand. According to information I received, the vast majority of the impounded drugs bore identification markings of Thai processing labs.

Two other aspects of the Vietnamese narcotics situation should be noted. First, heroin addiction among native Vietnamese is on the increase. Second, despite the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, the street price of heroin has remained fairly stable.

Apparently a market for heroin still exists, and may even rise again in Vietnam. This will allow established transit routes and marketing practices to remain the same unless there is a continued cooperation effort at stringent control.

The U.S. Embassy must press the South Vietnamese to maintain their strong enforcement efforts and encourage that Government to keep convicted offenders in prison. As with other Southeast Asian countries, the United States should draw a clear and close connection between ongoing aid programs and drug suppression. Everything possible should be done to insure that present results will continue and improve in the future.

KOREA

The narcotics problem in Korea continues in the "nonemergency" category, partly because of tough local narcotics laws and enforcement. The situation, however, should be monitored closely.

Drug abuse in Korea seems limited to foreigners, particularly American military personnel and dependent children. While marihuana use is widespread, abuse of amphetamines and barbiturates is the most serious abuse problem. Barbiturates are readily available in Korea and some reports indicate that as many as 25 percent of all servicemen under the age of 25 use them regularly.

The United States seems to be getting excellent cooperation from Korean authorities in prevention and control efforts. For example, the Government has fully cooperated with Army requests for overflights to monitor poppy growth. On the basis of information secured from these flights, Korean authorities have destroyed opium fields and arrested the growers. One important footnote is the continued high incidence of drug abuse among American servicemen. Stricter controls must be instituted to cut this down.

The importance of preventing Korea from becoming a narcotics transit route requires that at least one full-time BNDD agent should be assigned to the U.S. Embassy in order to monitor the situation. Currently, one of the agents assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo monitors the situation on a part-time basis.

PHILIPPINES

One year ago, I warned that the Republic of the Philippines was becoming a new transit route for heroin produced in the Golden Triangle and would become a processing center in its own right.

My most recent inspection indicates this is becoming a reality. The many islands are difficult to patrol, local corruption is endemic, and smuggling is a major industry, resulting in a shift of some Southeast Asian drug operations from Hong Kong to Manila.

These facts have been recognized by the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and its regional office has been transferred from Tokyo to Manila.

High quality No. 4 heroin is readily available and inexpensive in the Philippines. Local refineries have not taken hold as yet because smuggling heroin itself is so easy. However, a real crackdown on Golden Triangle refineries could precipitate the opening of heroin labs in this nation.

The current martial law situation in the Philippines has lessened the visibility of corruption. However, all available evidence indicates corruption remains almost as widespread as before. It does seem that now, however, a smaller segment of officialdom is reaping the profits.

Despite talk of cooperation and stiff new drug laws, enforcement seems as lax as ever. No major seizures have been reported and, as noted above, narcotics are readily available.

JAPAN

Narcotics in Japan, as in Korea, seems to be under control. However, careful monitoring is essential to insure that Japan's potential as a transit route is not utilized.

Japan has always cooperated fully with the United States in narcotics operations and drug abuse among both U.S. personnel and the Japanese people is low. The absence of drug users, drug production,

and government corruption all make Japan a force but not a problem in controlling narcotics traffic in the Far East.

The one area in which the United States must enlist Japanese assistance is their production and exportation of acetic anhydride, a chemical essential to the heroin-refining process. While the volume of production and the worldwide legitimate demand for this chemical is great, its value in refining illicit opium necessitates monitoring.

Perhaps the best way to accomplish this, as suggested in a State Department letter to me dated April 4, 1973, Appendix 3, is to share information secured by antinarcotics authorities among the heroin-producing nations and Japan. Hopefully, continued representations by our Government will result in some monitoring of this chemical and eliminate its shipment to the heroin labs of the Far East.

HONG KONG

The British Crown Colony of Hong Kong is in many ways the center of the Far Eastern narcotics traffic. In addition to being an importer-exporter of opium and its derivatives, it also serves as a consumer and processor, not to mention being the financial center for traffickers.

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs maintains an office in Hong Kong. However, the staffing of the office is nowhere near adequate to deal with the problem in Hong Kong. Until recently, U.S. agents of the highest caliber were not receiving the type of cooperation from British officials that would yield the most effective results. And while it is understandable that the British have reservations about American interference in enforcement matters, the U.S. consul general must continue to exert every effort to gain the wholehearted cooperation of the authorities in Hong Kong in the mutually beneficial effort to stop the production of and trafficking in narcotics throughout Southeast Asia.

In recent months, Hong Kong authorities have made several notable seizures. Their narcotics bureau is of very high quality. Despite these positive facts, however, the availability of No. 4 heroin seems to be on the increase. According to some reports at least a dozen secret heroin refineries are operating day and night to keep the market supplied. Many so-called chemists have been identified as drug traffickers and their movements are being monitored. But the refining process can be so easily set up and is so highly mobile that apprehension and prosecution is difficult.

Another problem confronting both the United States and British narcotics enforcement agents is the massive air and sea traffic crisscrossing Hong Kong daily. There are more than 7,000 oceangoing vessels entering the port each year and some 30,000 smaller boats including junks of varying description operating in the general vicinity. Over 1 million airline passengers move through Hong Kong each year, with both air and sea cargo totaling millions of tons. Clearly the magnitude of the traffic makes even normal customs operations exceedingly difficult.

A particularly disturbing development in the Hong Kong narcotics situation is the recent increase in addiction among American servicemen in the colony on leave. According to the most recent reports I received on this serious matter, there were nine military drug-related

deaths in the most recent 6-month period, compared to one such death in the previous 18 months. In addition, there are an average of at least one-half dozen overdose cases per month where treatment has been successful in preventing deaths. With 50,000 sailors and marines visiting Hong Kong annually, American efforts to halt drug traffic must be stepped up.

The Thai trawlers described earlier are another important aspect of the Hong Kong drug picture. It is estimated these trawlers bring about 50 tons of opium and its derivatives to Hong Kong from the Golden Triangle. In some cases, these trawlers offload their deadly cargoes in Chinese Communist waters adjacent to the colony. In other instances, the opium is dropped in offshore waters for future pickup by other vessels. As the United States begins to work more closely with the People's Republic of China, the monitoring of these waters should be one of the highest priority items to be discussed.

An effective antinarcotics enforcement drive in Hong Kong would unquestionably have a constricting effect on the supply of heroin in the United States.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

I have found no hard evidence that the PRC is involved in the international opium trade. A special report by the Strategic Intelligence Office of the BNDD recently stated:

"Not one investigation into heroin traffic in the area during the past 2 years indicates Chinese Communist involvement. In each case the traffickers were people engaged in criminal activity for the usual profit motive. Where the origin of the heroin could be traced, it was to refineries owned by private consortiums."

However, the rumor mills are constantly fueled by reports of PRC involvement in heroin and cross border activity of hill people.

CONCLUSIONS

The virulent growth of the narcotics scourge has reached such great proportions that immediate action must be taken if we are to control this menace. Control of drug abuse in this country rests on a major constriction at the source of the supply which continues to overwhelm drug abuse law enforcement efforts. We have initiated only a limited assault upon the sources of opium and its derivatives, which reflects negatively upon the extent of our commitment to this battle. Our own half-hearted exertions have prompted Southeast Asian officials to ignore BNDD and customs agents when they request assistance in antinarcotics efforts. Combined, these postures have allowed the level of international narcotics traffic to rise precipitously. This passivity cannot continue, for each day the drug epidemic in this country continues to find new victims.

We can no longer accept foot dragging at any level in this country; nor can we accept refusals by Southeast Asian governments to cooperate in this effort. The United States has freely given men and money in the past when the security of other nations has been threatened, and we now ask their help in return to combat a threat to our own national security—the drug culture.

Excuses given by some American officials that Southeast Asia's local restrictions hamper our own antinarcotics activities are not valid when explaining failure to stem the drug traffic. America's drug problem is getting worse instead of better. Drug abuse and drug-related deaths are a frightening fact of life in this country. Many foreign nations consider this deadly traffic solely an American problem because they have low user populations of their own. Asian nations in particular have forced America to carry the entire burden of attack. Unless these countries join our struggle against this peril, Asia itself ultimately will be faced with a user population rivaling our own and they will be less able to deal with that problem than we are now.

Because no opium is grown in the United States, it must be imported from producing nations to fill the American addict's demand for heroin. Southeast Asia and the subcontinent are well suited for this production with a favorable climate, unstable central governments, and a vast unskilled work force; hence their cooperation is essential. Without coordinated efforts to constrict the supply of opium, narcotics use will continue and expand beyond any possibility of containment by responsible officials. The nations of Southeast Asia must be convinced of the import we attach to the severity of this problem.

However, we can expect wholehearted cooperation from these countries only if we marshal every possible means at hand which can effectively halt the deadly flow of narcotics into this country. A killer is on the loose in Southeast Asia. Anything less than total cooperation from drug producing nations threatens the life of every young Ameri-

can. If that killer were one man, the United States would enlist every international means necessary to find him and bring him to justice. We would utilize every domestic resource that would help in our search. Opium derivatives are far more dangerous than one man, or even an army of murderers, for they threaten the American way of life and the American future. The time has long since passed for any halfway efforts on our part, or on the part of opium producing and transshipping nations; the stakes are too high.

Our first and most effective weapon is American manpower. If we can send over 500,000 men to South Vietnam to protect the right of self-determination for a nation of 18 million people who are not our own citizens, why is it that we send only 26 BNDD agents and six customs agents to all of Southeast Asia to fight the most fearful enemy ever faced by this Nation? American hopes to rid our country of narcotics abuse are pinned to 32 dedicated men, for we expect them to protect over 200 million Americans from opium production totaling over 1,400 tons each year. Can we really ask these men to carry alone the burden of a drug war which constantly threatens the internal security and well-being of the United States? Clearly, their combined efforts, no matter how skillful, can accomplish no more than minimal obstruction of the opium trade.

The first priority of the Congress should be the authorization of increased funding to train manpower for antinarcotics activities overseas and the BNDD agent training program should be expanded. This course, which consists of a 300-hour academic curriculum, covers all elements of special agent duties and is reinforced by over 300 hours of practical field exercises, undercover surveillance and raid techniques. It should be made available to foreign antinarcotics officials on a large scale. The Congress has recently approved President Nixon's reorganization of Federal narcotics law enforcement efforts, and the Drug Enforcement Administration was created on July 1, 1973. In a concerted effort to curtail opium and heroin production overseas, full funding for manpower training and DEA operations is of paramount importance. In my judgment, in the past, BNDD and Customs have always been inadequately funded, given their wide-ranging responsibilities.

The first priority of DEA should be a new survey to determine the precise numbers of trained narcotics agents and customs officials necessary to deal most effectively with illicit drug traffic in each Southeast Asian nation. A further goal of this survey should be to establish the manpower-dollar ratio which will be most effective in stemming the massive illicit opium and heroin exports which originate in Southeast Asia and the subcontinent. It is obvious, in a critical transshipment area such as Hong Kong, that two BNDD agents and one secretary are simply unable to realistically impede the volume of drug traffic which passes through there each day. Deployment of more trained agents and effective utilization of increased expenditures can be facilitated through the rigorous implementation of bilateral narcotics control agreements which the United States has signed with a number of Asian nations over recent years. These agreements deal specifically with coordinated drug abuse law-enforcement efforts. They should enable us to request cosigners to accept our personnel

and provide a vehicle for the exercise of supervision and support for their own local efforts.

Once we have established the optimum number of agents, Congress will have the responsibility of appropriating funds necessary to establish a comprehensive training program for the expansion of a trained corps of new agents. We should be prepared to expend an effort similar to that we introduced into our military training programs. An increased number of agents can do little if their training is incomplete and does not include all facets of narcotics law enforcement. However, time is of great importance, for each year the opium harvest grows larger and the traffic becomes more difficult to contain. If we can train a good fighting man for a shooting war in 13 weeks, surely we should be able to achieve an effective fighting man for the "shooting-up" war.

While DEA can pinpoint those areas in Southeast Asia most in need of newly trained agents, it is clear that a concentrated effort must be directed toward points of transit throughout the world. International air and sea ports handle thousands of cargo tons daily with minimal supervision and inspection. This provides excellent cover for clandestine export activities. Huge quantities of opium and heroin are regularly smuggled through these transit points by traffickers who run little risk of being caught given the current level of antismuggling operations. In addition, trawlers, junks, and other nondescript craft carrying opium and heroin ply the rivers and harbors of Southeast Asia, furnishing a means of transport, which because of their number, is virtually impossible to limit.

A maximum effort must also be made by our newly organized DEA to locate and, with the aid of local authorities, shut down opium refineries which are scattered throughout several of these nations. These portable workshops, resembling in many ways a streetcorner hawker operation, are easily set up and dismantled using minimal time and space and are therefore extremely difficult to locate. Because of its bulk, it is easier to handle when it has been refined into morphine base. Ten pounds of opium produces 1 pound of morphine base. It is therefore logical that the trafficker will do his refining as rapidly as possible to facilitate easier handling of the finished product.

On a larger scale, the attention of Congress and President Nixon, as well as DEA, should be directed toward two specific areas of overseas antinarcotics effort. First, we must be unceasingly aware of the flexibility of drug traffickers in locating new sources of narcotics to fill the gaps created by increasing American success in controlling this traffic. Asia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India are all well suited by climate, labor-intensive economies and experience as growers of licit opium to become major targets of the illicit market.

The potential for the illicit market is intensified in Pakistan and Afghanistan because both nations lack control over tribal areas where there is centered opposition to the governments of those countries. President Nixon should assure these nations of our support for their efforts to halt illicit opium production, and encourage the substitution of other crops to replace poppy cultivation. These nations should be made aware that they pose a serious threat to international narcotics control efforts. We must encourage their governments to join efforts in effecting controls necessary to close in on the offenders.

Second, the Congress and President Nixon must support increased expenditures for international drug abuse law enforcement program

administered through AID. Here at home, we spend a billion dollars on drug abuse and astronomical sums on the crime associated with drugs, while the executive branch programed only \$42.5 million on international narcotics control activities in fiscal year 1974. AID funding for narcotics control enforcement efforts must be substantially increased to combat a drug flow valued over \$5 billion.¹

AID's request for antinarcotics efforts in fiscal year 1974 includes a decrease of more than \$1.5 million from fiscal year 1973 authorization for Southeast Asia. At the very least, funding for our international narcotics control programs should be increased to \$50 million, with the added funding channeled toward the Golden Triangle.²

U.S. military support to Southeast Asia greatly exceeds that which is devoted to the antinarcotics effort in that area. Troop levels exceed 40,000, while antinarcotics personnel is less than 50. The following chart details U.S. military and antinarcotics effort commitments in Southeast Asia and demonstrates the inequities in the allocations.

[In millions of dollars]

	Military assistance fiscal year 1974 ¹	Agency for International Development international narcotics control ²			Military personnel Dec. 31, 1972 ¹	BNDD agents ³	Customs agents ⁴
		Fiscal year 1973	Fiscal year 1974	Net decrease			
Thailand.....	55.762	1.871	1.114	0.643	43,000	13	2
Japan.....	0	0	0	0	20,000	2	6
South Korea.....	238.789	0	0	0	38,000	1	0
Philippines.....	19.269	.300	.265	.035	15,000	5	1
Special fund:							
Vietnam.....	1,559.600	.500	.185	.318	24,000	3	1
Laos.....	311.200	2.079	1.500	.579		2	1
Total.....	2,284.620	4.750	2.961	1.565	138,000	26	11

¹ Department of Defense.

² AID budget presentation, fiscal year 1974.

³ Justice Department.

⁴ Bureau of Customs.

The United States plans to spend a total of \$1,114,000 in Thailand—\$643,000 less than last year's budget request—to handle an annual opium output presently estimated at 200 tons with a potential street value of more than \$17.2 billion. In addition, since Burma is not an AID recipient and since Thailand is the transshipment nation for Burma's annual production of 400 tons, this \$1.1 million is expected to fund controls for Burmese and Thai production. The combined output of these two nations—approximately 600 tons—is 10 times the amount necessary for enough heroin to supply American addicts for 1 year. In the war on drugs, we can hardly expect significant results when our commitment is insignificant.

President Nixon, former New York Police Commissioner Patrick Murphy, and many local law enforcement officials have stressed the importance of getting at the supply of drugs before it enters American

¹ The U.S. will spend slightly over \$3 million in Southeast Asia, \$15 million to subsidize Turkish farmers who no longer grow poppies, almost \$10 million on other opium-producing nations, and \$5 million for the United Nations Special Fund on Narcotics Control. Another \$9.7 million of the A.I.D. appropriation is "unprogramed" to provide flexibility in operations which are vital to successful antinarcotics work.

² The Foreign Affairs Committee increased the authorization for international narcotics control from \$42.5 million to \$50 million in the fiscal year 1974 Mutual Developmental and Cooperation Act. This increase was based upon the recommendation contained in this report.

borders. In his 1971 message to the Congress on June 17, 1971, on the Federal drug effort, President Nixon said:

* * * it is clear that the only really effective way to end heroin production is to end opium production and the growing of poppies.

Commissioner Murphy detailed the difficulties faced by the street policeman dealing with the drug epidemic in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, saying:

What I do want to establish is that local police agencies cannot—I repeat cannot—effectively stem the flow of narcotics into our cities, much less into the veins of hundreds of thousands of young people. Only the national government can make truly effective strikes toward breaking the chain of distribution that leads from the poppy fields of the middle east and Indo-China into the bodies of wretched victims here in the United States * * *

* * * Once opium poppies have been harvested abroad and placed into the channels of illegal trade five—or ten—thousand miles from our shores, the battle is already lost and thousands of American addicts are already doomed to a life of continuing misery, and often agonizing death.

Despite this fine rhetoric, we continue to place primary emphasis on internal efforts at control when we are daily confronted with unmistakable evidence that this approach can yield only limited success.

Control of drug abuse in this country rests on a major constriction of the supply, but our assault has been halfhearted. The risks faced by unscrupulous growers, refiners, exporters, shippers, and corrupt officials have been negligible. So long as those risks remain small, anyone interested more in money than morality is hardly threatened if he chooses to try his luck in this dirty business.

Trained manpower and adequate funding, backed up by a total commitment by this Nation, can win this war. It is unlikely any American will deny his support for a total effort to wipe this menace from our society, and it is this support which will ultimately yield success.

APPENDIX 1

STATEMENT OF ANDREW C. TARTAGLINO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS, BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Yesterday morning, the Jack Anderson column said the U.S. Government and Thai authorities were victimized into believing that 26 tons of opium were burned and that what was alleged to be opium was nothing more than cheap fodder mixed with 20 percent opium.

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs has the major share of the responsibility for coordinating this matter with the Thai authorities, and we feel it necessary to respond.

The allegations in the article are totally inaccurate. Neither the Thai nor U.S. Government was duped with regard to the operation. The burning of the 26 tons of opium took place on March 7, 1972. The opium was contained in 319 sealed burlap bags, each weighing about 190 pounds. The bags contained 20 opium balls which were wrapped in leaves, paper, or plastic.

Contrary to what Mr. Anderson reports, the Thai Government did test the opium before buying it. And our chemist tested it before it was burned. There is no question: It was opium.

Mr. William T. Wanzeck, the BNDD Regional Director in Southeast Asia for the past 6 years, was present for the burning. He took the samples which were analyzed by Mr. Joseph E. Koles, a senior forensic chemist with the Bureau. There was no question in either man's mind that the sacks contained anything other than opium. Both officials also examined the security arrangements made by the Thai authorities and were highly impressed by the entire operation. Messrs. Wanzeck and Koles are here today and will be available to respond to your questions in their areas of responsibility, as will I.

As for Mr. Anderson, if the allegations which appeared in his column had been checked with the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, we would have offered the same evidence we are giving you here today.

The Thai Government has stepped up its antidrug activities and is serious in its efforts to shut off the flow of drugs from Southeast Asia to the United States. The fact sheet which you were given with my statement attests to their diligence.

We didn't ask you to come here today just to listen to what we had to say. We also have something to show you. Please bear with us for these brief excerpts taken from hundreds of feet of film shot during the burning operation.

With the facts that we have set forth here today, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs calls on Mr. Anderson to correct the multitude of errors in his article. The American public is entitled to the factual version. Equally as important, Thailand, with its integrity at stake, is entitled to a clearing up of these irresponsible charges.

The maximum success of this joint effort is based on mutual respect and trust which has developed between the United States and Thai narcotic teams.

To allow such misinformation to go unchallenged would be to damage the Thai-United States crackdown on the flow of narcotics into the illicit world market, most particularly into this country. To allow it to go uncorrected is up to Mr. Anderson.

FACT SHEET—ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN THE JACK ANDERSON COLUMN OF
MONDAY, JULY 31, 1972, AND THE REBUTTAL

ALLEGATION

FACT

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| <p>(1) "The real story is that Thailand and, indirectly, the United States were hornswoggled into believing that 26 tons of opium were burned, when, in fact, most of it was cheap fodder."</p> <p>(2) "Instead of loading raw opium, they pushed 100 mules with fodder, other plant matter, chemicals, and about 20 percent opium."</p> <p>(3) "In all, the cagy dope peddlers passed off 5 tons of opium as 26 tons and pocketed more than \$2 million from the fantastic hoax."</p> <p>(4) "Either through corruption or stupidity, the Thai officials failed to test the huge mounds of 'opium' before they soaked it with gasoline and put it to the torch."</p> <p>(5) "Only as the smell of burning molasses wafted through Chiang Mai did the Thais suspect they had been had. Then, it was too late to do anything but cover up their goof."</p> <p>(6) "And cover up they did. They hastily recruited gangs of workers to bury the 'hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of fodder and opium ashes."</p> | <p>(1) Test materials taken at random from the 319 bags scientifically proved the content was, in fact, crude opium.</p> <p>(2) The BNDD forensic chemist, Joseph E. Koles, reports that the Thai opium samples contained no more debris and other plant material than is normally contained in balls of crude opium. The debris present came from the scraping of poppy pods during the extraction of the crude opium.</p> <p>(3) Each of the 319 bags was tested and found to contain opium. There was no hint of any adulteration to the bags. The tests would have disclosed it. There was no \$2 million transaction and no hoax.</p> <p>(4) The film bespeaks the fact that each of the bags of opium was tested, both by the Thai Government and by a senior forensic chemist from BNDD.</p> <p>(5) There was no smell when the opium was being burned due to the tremendous heat. However, opium does have a distinctively sweet odor which both BNDD representatives recognized during the sampling.</p> <p>(6) A military bulldozer was used to scoop out a large trench prior to the burning. There was so little residue, however, that it could have been shoveled into a much smaller hole. No gangs had to be hastily recruited to bury the leftovers.</p> |
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APPENDIX 2

HON. LESTER L. WOLFF,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. WOLFF: Thank you for your letter of August 2, 1972. As you know, our Government has been working closely with the Royal Thai Government to stimulate increased activity in the narcotics control field. We feel that significant actions have taken place since Secretary Rogers and Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman signed the memorandum of understanding in September 1971. In view of your interest in Thai drug control efforts, I am taking the liberty of enclosing a chronological summary of Thai actions in the drug field over the past year.

As for the burning of 26 tons of opium by the Thai Government on March 7, 1972, that action was an indication of their willingness to take significant steps to eliminate illicit drug trafficking in their country. In early 1972, the Thai Government embarked upon a comprehensive land resettlement project for two large groups of so-called Chinese irregular forces. These forces, in return for assistance in settling permanently, agreed to abandon their traditional involvement in the illicit drug trade and surrendered to the Thai Government all opium which they had (some 26 tons) at the time of the agreement.

The Government of Thailand is contributing \$850,000 to the resettlement project, and the U.S. Government up to \$1 million. Our contribution involved the transfer by AID of \$1 million to BNDD as the executory agency for U.S. participation in support of this project. This action was taken pursuant to section 481 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended. That section states, in part: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law the President is authorized to furnish assistance to any country or international organization, on such terms and conditions as he may determine, for the control of the production of, processing of, and traffic in, narcotic and psychotropic drugs. In furnishing such assistance the President may use any of the funds made available to carry out the provisions of this Act."

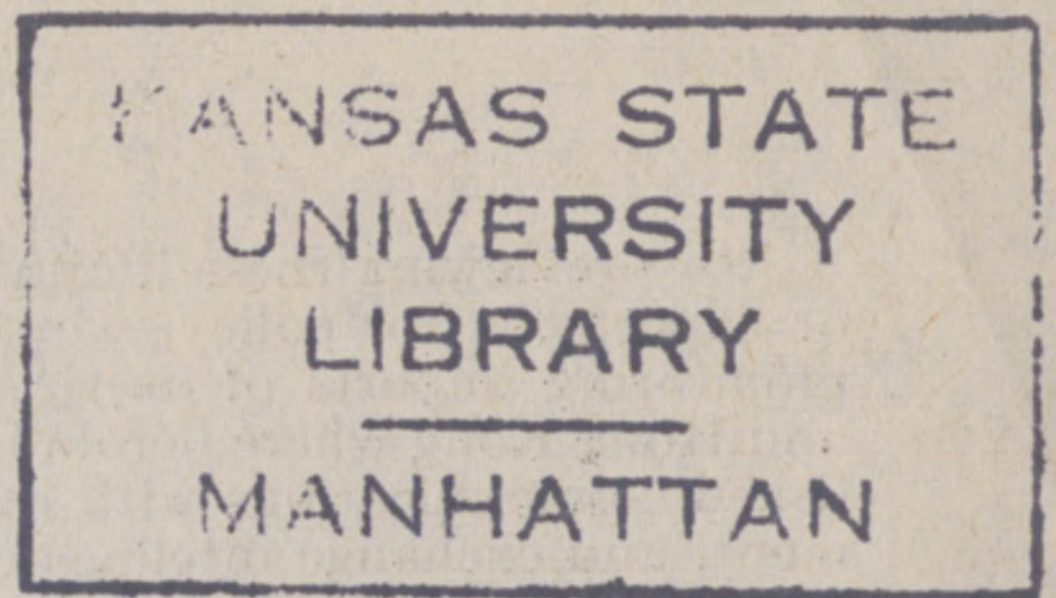
In March, the 26 tons of opium that were surrendered to the Thai Government by the Chinese irregular forces were destroyed in the presence of Thai officials as well as two U.S. BNDD officials. One of the U.S. officials present was a chemist who analyzed each of the sacks for morphine content. He found that all of the samples contained unadulterated gum opium typical of the opium found in the area.

We feel that U.S. support for the resettlement project is warranted. The project provides the Chinese irregular forces in question with an accepted legal status in north Thailand, and it offers them an economic alternative to illicit drug trafficking. Since these groups traditionally have been among the major traffickers in Southeast Asia, we are hopeful that this agreement will help reduce the flow of drugs through Thailand. Also, it should contribute to a stabilization of the security situation in what is a troubled and lawless area of Southeast Asia. Moreover, as a result of this project, 26 tons of opium, a portion of which might have otherwise entered the international trade, were summarily eliminated.

I hope that this information will be of assistance to you. If I can be of any further assistance, do not hesitate to write me again.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. ABSHIRE,
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations.



APPENDIX 3

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, March 15, 1973.

HON. WILLIAM P. ROGERS,
*Secretary of State, Department of State,
Washington, D.C.*

Dear MR. SECRETARY: The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention the existence of a situation in Japan which facilitates the processing of heroin in Southeast Asia—heroin which ultimately finds its way to the United States.

A staff report entitled "The U.S. Heroin Problem and Southeast Asia" released by the Committee on Foreign Affairs on January 11, 1973 states that Japan is a major producer of acetic anhydride, an essential chemical used in the conversion of morphine base into heroin. Noting that the Japanese Government presently neither restricts, controls, nor monitors the chemical's export, the report recommends that the U.S. Government should request the Japanese Government to establish controls and restrictions on the export of acetic anhydride.

As you are aware, the "Golden Triangle" region of Southeast Asia produces the bulk of the world's illicit opium. That opium, however, could not be converted to heroin without the use of acetic anhydride, a chemical whose major regional supplier is a friend and ally of the United States. Given the disastrous effect heroin addiction has had on our urban areas, it would not seem unreasonable for our government to insist that Japan make an effort to control its export of this vital substance.

We would appreciate your reaction to this recommendation.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT N. C. NIX,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs.
LESTER L. WOLFF.
MORGAN F. MURPHY.
ROBERT H. STEELE.
ALPHONZO BELL.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D.C., April 4, 1973.

HON. ROBERT N. C. NIX,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs,
Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Further to my letter of March 27, 1973, I would like to comment about the suggestion contained in your letter of March 15, 1973 (also signed by four of your colleagues) concerning Japan's establishing controls over the production and exportation of acetic anhydride. These comments are made on the basis of a report from our Embassy in Tokyo and the Department's own inquiries into the subject. I am sending this reply to each of the signers of the letter.

It is true that Japan does not control the production or exportation of acetic anhydride. Because less than 1 percent of Japan's acetic anhydride production is exported, Japanese officials are reluctant to impose burdensome controls. As a matter of fact, for similar reasons the United States imposes no specific controls on the exportation of this product. Acetic anhydride is freely exportable from the United States except as part of the general prohibition on exports to North Korea, North Vietnam, Cuba, and southern Rhodesia.

Acetic anhydride is a common chemical, produced in large volume and so much in demand for legitimate purposes such as textile manufacturing and photo developing that attempts by industrial countries to control the trade would be difficult if not impracticable. France has attempted such controls without success.

Illegal consumers of acetic anhydride in Asia could elude export controls by making fake statements of destination or by arranging one or more transshipment points along the busy trade routes of the region.

If I can be of any further assistance to you in this matter do not hesitate to write me again.

Sincerely yours,

MARSHALL WRIGHT,
Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations.