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18 FEB 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Article Appearing in Underground Newspaper THE STAFF

1. The Office of Security has received a copy of an underground newspaper called THE STAFF. Its address is 6472 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, California. Information concerning THE STAFF is attached. In this newspaper, there is an article entitled "CIA Poppies Make Kiddies Mummies" by Don Strachan. The article is a rehash of the article in EARTH by Peter Dale Scott. We may hear more regarding this article which is attached.

2. In one corner of the article it states that EARTH Magazine is working with San Francisco attorney Ron Leachman in preparing a suit against Air America alleging negligence on the part of the company and its Board of Directors for allowing its facilities to be used for the trafficking of opium. The attached is being forwarded for information.

Special Assistant to the
Deputy Director for Support

Att.

cc: Deputy Director for Support
Chief, FE Division
Chief,
General Counsel
Legislative Counsel
DD/S
Assistant to the Director

SA-DD/S/ (18 Feb. 72)

Distribution:

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the STAFF

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CIA poppies make kiddies mummies

RON STRACHAN

George Orwell wrote, 1949, in an era that was ignorant ecology. Thus he was able to fantasize a whole proletarian segment of the population that was immune to the doomsday games of the main characters of the State and its minions.

Today we know better that we are all One. When Montrose Chemicals dumps DDT by the ton into Los Angeles Harbor, the brown pelican lays eggs without shells and passes from the parade. When consumptive Americans build and drive — what, 80 million? — cars, the ground is pumped hollow and its contents dispersed into the air. When capitalism becomes the system under which goods are distributed, men cease to be brothers and their minds turn from co-operation to crime and warfare as ways of relating to each other.

Thus it comes as no surprise that the March issue of *Earth* magazine documents that the CIA has been involved in opium traffic in Southeast Asia for the past 20 years.

And it is understandable that ripples from this innocent exploitation of southeast Asian growers and pickers have washed back home. Overcrowded Veterans' Hospitals are turning junkie ex-GIs away and strung-out adolescents wander vacantly under neon lights. They must pay with tortured and shortened lives — smack presently takes more 18- to 35-year-olds than war, cancer or cars — while some of us feel it so far only in the \$2.5 billion junkies steal annually to feed their habits, in vice squad and hospital budgets.

The most incriminating article in *Earth* is by Prof. Peter Dale Scott, a friend of Allen Ginsberg. Ginsberg's own researches into CIA opium traffic were

published in last May's *Ramparts*, and he recently updated it on the Dick Cavett show.

Scott's article traces how certain Wall Street interests that controlled the CIA in its early days used it to set up far Eastern fronts for financial operations. One of these front companies — Civil Air Transport (CAT), later known as Air America — supplied arms and other supplies to the Nationalist Chinese troops of General Li Mi in Burma.

Li Mi and his troops long ago eased up on their fighting and turned to the more lucrative business of opium farming. Moreover, in order to maintain political links with secret Chinese societies and keep them hostile to Mao's revolution, they look over the opium traffic in northern Thailand and Laos. Air America continued to make "supply runs" flying opium and its derivative, heroin, around the world.

To second Scott's researches, *Earth* held a press conference last week at which Enrique B. del Rosario, a former "civilian aide" to Continental Air Services in Thailand and Laos, reported seeing opium loaded aboard Air America planes in Laos and Thailand. Del Rosario stated that he had seen cultivated opium fields planted by Meo tribesmen. He said that the opium was later harvested, labeled "miscellaneous" cargo, and loaded into Air America planes at military bases.

Scott's article asserted that in 1955 alone 200 to 400 tons of opium were harvested in the Burma-Laos-Thailand "fertile triangle," and only 100 tons of it were consumed in Thailand. He quotes Eliot Marshall's estimate in *The New Republic* that 26 percent of all the smack in the U.S. comes from there.

"Up until about 1964, however, the United States... complained officially and ostentatiously to the UN Narcotics Commission about 'Yunnan opium,' brand '909' morphine, and heroin from the Chinese mainland" as part of Peking's "20-year plan to finance political activities and spread addiction," Scott writes, while documenting that indeed many of the profits from smack sale went to finance the Nationalist China lobby in Washington which, until last year, successfully barred American recognition of the largest country in the world.

Scott is careful not to blow up the "personal venality of a US construction official or of pilots dabbling in opium on the side" into a blanket condemnation of the CIA. "The CIA as an agency, it is true, cannot be identified with the narcotics trade any more than can the whole of the Kuomintang," he writes, and he admits that "the embarrassing links between Air America and CATCL (Air America) have

been diminished in the last five years.

"But," he concludes, "the opium-based economy of Laos is still being protected by a coalition of opium-growing CIA mercenaries, Air America planes and Thai troops." And *Earth* editor James Goode angrily points out how corruption abroad has brought disaster back home:

"The CIA helped put our kids in Vietnam and CIA heroin traffic turned them on to smack," he said at the press conference. "And we're paying the CIA \$6 billion a year for these services."

Scott's article, although unfortunately peppered with rumors, "it is claimed's" and "said to be's," like most muckraking exposes is unassailably documented and almost unreadably intricate. Its basic premise seems sound. Anyway, I believe it, if only because it fits the zeitgeist. As they say at another of those untrustworthy three-letter institutions — IBM — information overload equals pattern recognition. The amount of official skulduggery to hit the fan in recent years is such that once someone suggests that the CIA is trafficking smack, I'd be surprised to learn it was not so.

To me, the most enlightening comment on the CIA's workings appears in a companion article in *Earth*, "The Selling of the CIA," by Victor Marchetti, a former executive assistant to the number two man in the CIA. "It's interesting how the CIA liberals justify murder," he writes. "They hire the guy who hires the guy who actually commits the act, but they pretend they had no part in it."

This indirect inhumanity is most certainly a national, and maybe a human, failing. It's been reiterated over and over in connection with the Vietnam war: we are all guilty if we so much as participate in the economic system or pay our taxes. Capitalism: the economy is dependant on the war; crime: capitalism teaches the competitive ethic; war: the extension of crime by legal means.

It's so easy to lose sight of connections. When I was a kid, as simple a thing as an ice cream cone brought instant joy. It doesn't now, and what does? Almost nothing, unless I'm stoned or feeling really good. I do notice that if I get up briskly in the morning, do my yoga, keep busy and alert and exercise my mind, I have a general feeling of well-being; and that if I'm sluggish and lazy I become despondent and depressed. But I discover this only through reflection in tranquility; I can't feel the direct connection. Shrinks call this losing touch with your feelings, but if it's a mental problem we all share the sickness. It comes, I suppose, partly from aging, partly from cultural demands for insensitivity.

So it goes in our relations with each other. We're rude to the waitress without thinking that she'll go home pissed and holler at her kid who will beat up his brother who will... We drive cars and complain about the pain in our lungs. We commit petty larceny from our employer who after all is exploiting us anyway. But we draw lines, however jagged and arbitrary they may be.

The only difference I can see between these irregular moral boundaries and the immorality of the millionaire opium czars who feel no compunctions about poisoning and murdering their fellow men in order to keep up their consumptive and tyrannical habits is that the villains have questioned the capriciousness and hypocrisy of those lines. Why preach ethical vegetarianism while contributing to the deaths of refugees by paying taxes to back dictatorial governments? Why cry for cleaner air on newsprint which people will burn? Why pay lip service to the equality of all men while working at a \$20,000-a-year job so you can send your kids to private schools? The rationales of the dealers, whatever they may be, cannot be less contradictory than any of our own — only more flagrant. Moderation in all things, said the Greeks, and most of us try to leash our inhumanity on a lether of socially acceptable length. Still, since we're so seldom "in touch" with the consequences of our actions, all it takes is a little greed to instigate a fatal thinking process. And there but for the grace of God...

CIA to track smack?

In a masterpiece of timing, Hubert Humphrey on Feb. 1 called for the CIA to be assigned to hunt down the smugglers of heroin and other contraband drugs. "If the CIA can ferret out subversives," he said, "it can find the dope smuggler and put him out of business."

Some have taken the statement at its surface value and likened it to asking the SS to investigate atrocities at Auschwitz. Others have suggested that it sounds good enough to win votes and is ultimately safe because it is inconceivable. The most astute observers see it as a stroke of genius designed to split the CIA in two — between dealers and powermongers who will turn on their ex-colleagues. These loyal traitors will form the basis of a new and more incorruptible master intelligence force in whom the President (read: Hubert Humphrey) can have unquestioning trust.

Opium war in court

Earth magazine is working with San Francisco attorney Ron Leachman in preparing a suit against Air America, a Southeast Asian airline started by the CIA. The suit will allege negligence on the part of Air America and its Board of Directors for allowing its facilities to be used for the trafficking of opium from the "fertile triangle" of poppy fields in Laos, Burma and Thailand.

Mr. Leachman would appreciate hearing from any returning veterans or civilians about heroin traffic in Southeast Asia. You can reach him through Holly Reppert at Earth Press, (415) 989-4300; Earth Magazine, The Agriculture Building, The Embarcadero at Mission, San Francisco, CA 94115.