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JPRS L/10253

13 January 1982

Worldwide Report

NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS

(FOUO 2/82)



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AUSTRALIA

POLICE CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY IN GRIFFITH MARIJUANA CASE

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 3 Nov 81 p 3

[Text]

Four policemen and a farmer from Griffith, Antonio Sergi, appeared in Castlereagh Street Court of Petty Sessions yesterday charged with conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

In a summary of the evidence it plans to bring forward, the Crown told the court yesterday that the five defendants agreed among themselves, and with others, to improperly protect people who were growing and selling Indian hemp in the Griffith area.

As a result of that agreement:

The four policemen had allowed people, including Sergi, who were growing and/or selling the drug, to harvest a crop of it after the crop had — or should have — come under police control.

After four policemen learned of the existence of this and another crop, they had carried out their investigation in such a way as to cover up the involvement of other

people, except for two other local farmers, Rocco Barbaro and Giuseppe Scarfo.

The policemen had carried out their investigation in such a way as to protect Sergi.

They had collated and given evidence to a District Court hearing drug charges against Barbaro and Scarfo in such a way as to protect them and others, including Sergi.

They had purported to investigate the growing of hemp in the Griffith area, but the investigation, if done at all, was designed to give a false picture that a proper investigation was being done.

One of the policemen, Detective Sergeant John Ellis, had given false evidence to the Woodward Royal Commission into Drug Trafficking.

The Crown told the court yesterday that the only inference was that each defendant had some personal financial or other reward to gain.

CSO: 5300/7518

AUSTRALIA

CROWN SAYS SENTENCES FOR TWO CANNABIS IMPORTERS TOO LIGHT

Perth THE WEST AUSTRALIAN in English 3 Nov 81 p 18

[Excerpt] The crown yesterday contended in the Court of Criminal Appeal that the gaol sentences imposed on two men convicted of importing cannabis resin into Australia were inadequate.

In the Supreme Court yesterday, Mr G. N. Calder, for the crown, submitted to the Court of Criminal Appeal that the sentences imposed on two men convicted of importing and possessing cannabis resin did not take due regard of the seriousness of the offences.

Mr Justice Brinsden said that the first leg in the distribution of drugs was importation and the quantity involved was the second largest ever traced in WA.

The court heard that when Walding arrived at Perth Airport from Singapore in May a search by customs officers revealed 4.9 kilos of cannabis resin in a suitcase.

'NIFTY'

Walding said he had agreed to bring the drug into Australia for another person whom he knew only as "Nifty."

Later, drug-squad detectives traced Fleming through lottery tickets found in Walding's possession. He admitted making the arrangement with Walding.

Both men worked in Singapore on an offshore oil rig and Fleming said he had hoped to sell the drug for between \$35,000 and \$40,000 through another person.

The drug had a street value of about \$100,000.

He said that the first leg in the distribution of drugs was importation and the quantity involved was the second largest ever traced in WA.

The two accused worked in Singapore earning good wages, were in the right location to get drugs and, as Australians, were able to get back into Australia without difficulty.

He said that the deterrent aspect of sentencing was of primary importance in drug cases to dissuade people importing drugs or acting as couriers for others.

He suggested that the sentences were manifestly inadequate and that Mr Justice Brinsden had placed too much emphasis on the men's backgrounds and previous good conduct.

CSO: 5300/7518

AUSTRALIA

BRIEFS

CANNABIS PROHIBITIONS--State cabinet would never agree to relax prohibitions on cannabis, the Premier, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, said yesterday. Cabinet's hardline attitude followed a request from the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, seeking Queensland agreement that there should be no relaxation of laws "at this time." A further request for Queensland's views on whether it would be appropriate to set a time limit on the need to review the policy also met with a tough "no." Mr Bjelke-Petersen said Queensland would never support a review as recommended by the recent Royal Commission into Drugs. (The inquiry recommended there should be a review of the legal prohibition of cannabis after 10 years.) "That could create an expectation among cannabis users of a possible change in Government policy," Mr Bjelke-Petersen said. [Text] [Brisbane THE COURIER-MAIL in English 27 Oct 81 p 10]

CSO: 5300/7518

HONG KONG

AIRPORT CUSTOMS MEN REVEAL METHODS USED TO SMUGGLE DRUGS

Tactics Always Changing

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 7 Dec 81 p 28

[Text]

An excise officer, Mr Szeto Che-wing, has been a customs man for 21 years, but he stresses he is still learning how to do his job.

"You never stop learning," says Assistant Superintendent Szeto as he tells how he and his staff at Kai Tak airport try to keep one jump ahead of smugglers.

It is a difficult job because the wily bosses who control rings of couriers sneaking narcotics into Hongkong keep changing their tactics.

As soon as the customs men discover a new mode of smuggling the kingpins of the drug trade switch tracks and adopt new methods.

At present, Mr Szeto told me last week as he guided me through the customs hall at Kai Tak, there is a change in the pattern because of a string of recent successes by customs men who have nabbed couriers attempting to bring in drugs consignments.

For a long period the couriers were found using suitcases or bags with false bottoms.

Customs searchers made a number of arrests and the couriers then switched to carrying consignments of drugs internally, hidden in their rectums or vaginas.

There have been a string of arrests in such cases and now, Mr Szeto believes, the couriers may have gone back to using concealed compartments in bags.

The 200 men and women who work with Mr Szeto

screening new arrivals at Kai Tak are spread thin on the ground.

On an average day, 11,000 people pass through the customs lines.

Obviously, says Mr Szeto, it is impossible to search every one of them.

But they do their best.

They have more to worry about than just narcotics.

They have a revenue-raising catch checking that passengers do not exceed the limits of alcohol and tobacco they can bring in duty free, they search for such things as walkie-talkies, firearms and fireworks and they play an important role in controlling the import of such banned items as ivory and furs of endangered animal species.

But drugs remain the major concern.

The customs staff are trained to sort the wheat of innocent arrivals from the chaff of likely drug couriers.

There is a very definite profile to those who carry drugs, but he doesn't like to give too many details of what sort of person customs men are looking for in case it tips off the drug bosses and gives them an advantage.

But he makes it plain that the couriers are often unwilling partners of the drugs bosses.

Either they are in debt to loan sharks or addicts themselves who have been given a grim choice of attempting to make a drugs run from Bangkok or of risking the wrath of paid triad killers.

With such a choice it is

not surprising that there seems to be an almost limitless supply of couriers.

Fear of retribution keeps them silent when they are arrested at Kai Tak, but it is thought the methods of disguising the drugs are made by the organisers, not the couriers.

Mr Szeto and other experts suspect that the men who run the drug syndicates organise bands of couriers to travel on one aircraft, usually heading into Hongkong from Bangkok.

The couriers will think they are travelling by themselves, but also on the aircraft is likely to be a "minder," a watchdog for the syndicate who keeps a careful but remote eye on the couriers to see how many of them get through the customs net.

Smuggling methods are ingenious and constantly changing.

Heroin comes into Hongkong hidden in birds' nests, in consignments of surgical instruments, secreted inside lumps of rough jade stone and concealed in statues.

The narcotics may be found in the heels or soles of shoes, inside carved-out tropical fruit or vegetables, in special body-belts strapped round the torso, in rubber bags inserted in the body and in canned foods prepared in underground factories in Thailand.

Customs men have found heroin in tubes of toothpaste, in bottles of haircream, in cans of hairspray and in

radios.

On the way out of Hongkong, searchers check suspected or known couriers and have grabbed consignments of heroin bound for Amsterdam hidden in consignments of salted fish.

Mr Szeto estimates that 95 per cent of the heroin seized at Kai Tak originates in the Golden Triangle and comes through Thailand.

But the drug syndicates are now attempting to cover their tracks by sending their couriers from Bangkok to cities which are not known drug centres, such as Manila and Taipei, before directing them back to Hongkong.

This ruse is used to try to throw customs men off the track.

It doesn't work any more.

In addition to passengers from Bangkok, the customs searchers pay close attention to arrivals from Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore and, increasingly, those arriving from Karachi because of an upsurge in opiates coming from that area.

The customs team at Kai Tak has modern aids to help it in the fight against smugglers.

One of these is a large X-ray machine which can examine empty bags to see if there is anything hidden in false linings.

Heroin concealed in the bags shows up on the X-rays.

When the machine was installed, searchers began placing the shoes of suspected couriers in the machine.

They found a number of shoes with hidden inner soles composed of compressed opium.

Word of bad news spreads quickly in the narcotics underworld and within a couple of weeks of the X-ray machine being installed, footwear stopped being used for smuggling.

So far this year, the efforts of the customs men at Kai Tak have been rewarded by the arrests of 40 couriers.

Mr Szeto and his staff hope to boost this number considerably before the end of the year.

Heroin in Camera Bag

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 16 Dec 81 p 26

[Text]

Police found a large amount of heroin in a camera equipment case carried by a Malaysian who arrived at Kai Tak airport on a flight from Singapore, the High Court was told yesterday.

Thee Lam-hooi (33) is on trial before Mr Justice Baber and a jury for allegedly trafficking in a dangerous drug.

Detective Inspector Noel Desmond Howcroft told the court that Thee arrived at the airport on April 3 carrying a case containing camera equipment.

Customs officers who searched the case found it had a false bottom.

Inside were 1,112.99 grams of a mixture containing 71.61 grams of heroin.

Insp Howcroft said that when he interviewed Thee the accused told him that he had been handed the camera case by a fat man at Singapore airport.

He also said this man was on the same flight to Hongkong.

Thee was then told to look for the fat man among the arriving passengers, but Insp Howcroft said he made no effort to find this man after they had passed through the baggage examination area.

The trial continues today.

CSO: 5320/9107

HONG KONG

POLICE RAIDS NET SUSPECTED DRUG DEALERS, HEROIN HAULS

Territory-Wide Swoop

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 4 Dec 81 p 18

[Text]

Police carried out a massive territory-wide swoop yesterday on more than 30 premises believed to be connected with a syndicate involved in the local distribution of drugs.

The 10-hour operation, which began at 5.30 am yesterday, was carried out by officers of the Narcotics Bureau who were assisted by officers from the Colony-wide divisional special duty squads.

They arrested 30 people — 24 men and six women — and seized more than two lbs of No 3 heroin valued at \$200,000 on the retail market.

Of those arrested, 22 were still being detained last night, while the others were either released or on bail pending further inquiries.

Police said those detained are expected to be charged today on various dangerous drugs offences.

A senior NB officer said last night that yesterday's seizures were not as big as expected, but detectives believe that the raids had smashed the backbone of the syndicate.

Intensive investigations into the syndicate are proceeding while NB officers were still hunting last night for several of its senior members.

In a raid on a decoration company in Fa Yuen Street, Mongkok, detectives seized a packet of No 3 heroin and two men were arrested.

On searching the cockpit of the premises, the raiding officers found \$170,000 in cash but none of the people in the premises claimed ownership of the money.

Detectives said they were investigating whether the cash was from the sale of drugs or from other crimes committed recently.

NB officers, working

under the directions of Senior Superintendent Hui Ki-on, have been investigating the syndicate for the past six months.

They said because of the syndicate's territory-wide network, investigations took many men and manhours.

"Detection is difficult as members of the syndicate use radio pagers to make drug transactions rather than direct contact with the buyers," a senior NB detective said.

NB detectives were reinforced by divisional police stations as the premises to be raided were scattered.

In one of the raids on a flat in Hillwood Road, Tsimshatsui, detectives arrested four men and two women after 33 half-ounce packets of No 3 heroin was seized.

The flat is believed to have been used by the syndicate as a storage and distribution centre for Tsimshatsui and Yaumati.

Swoops in Kowloon

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 13 Dec 81 p 8

[Text]

Police arrested four men and seized 1.2 kg of heroin and barbitone worth \$200,000 on the retail market in a number of swoops in Kowloon yesterday and on Friday.

The swoops began at 8 pm on Friday when Special Duty Squad officers stationed in Yaumati arrested four men in a car parked outside a hotel in Salisbury Road, Tsimshatsui.

Police seized 678 grams of No 3 heroin and 226 grams of barbitone from the vehicle.

Following the arrests, police mounted raids in Tsimshatsui, Choi Hung, Wong Tai Sin and Wang Tau Hom.

In a flat at Wang Tau Hom estate, a further 311 grams of heroin were seized.

New Territories Raids

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 15 Dec 81 p 26

[Text]

Narcotics Bureau detectives arrested three men and a Thai woman and seized 1.3 kg of No 3 heroin in a series of raids in the New Territories yesterday afternoon.

A 32-year-old man and a 31-year-old Thai woman were arrested in a hut at Yue Kok temporary housing area at Ting Kok Road, Taipo, shortly before 2 pm following the seizure of 1.3 kg of No 3 heroin.

Follow-up inquiries led to the arrest of another two men — one in Yuen Long and the other in Kam Tin.

CSO: 5320/9107

LAOS

BRIEFS

POPPY GROWING ZONES--Most of the Lao Soung nationalities living in the mountains of the north have a preference for and expertise in the cultivation of opium poppies and do this for a livelihood. A great deal of poppy is grown in the provinces of Phong Saly, Louang Nam Tha, Oudomsai, Houa Phan, Xieng Khouang and Vientiane (on Phou Khao Khouai). Most of the opium is used in the production of medicine. In the past, the capitalists used the opium to make narcotics with which to fog the minds of the young people so that they would be misled into its use. [Excerpt] [Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao 7 Nov 81 p 3]

CSO: 5300/4587

NEPAL

BRIEFS

HASHISH DEALERS ARRESTED--Police have arrested red handed Kancha Thapa of Palung in Makwanpur district as he was trying to sell five kilos of processed hashish at the rate of twelve hundred rupees per kilo. Also arrested is Shyam Bahadur Tamang of Ranipuwa for similar offences. He was trying to trade two kilos of hashish for three thousand rupees. [Text] [Kathmandu THE MOTHERLAND in English 8 Dec 81 p 2]

CSO: 5300/4911

NEW ZEALAND

AUSTRALIAN DRUG INQUIRY BODY INVITED TO NEW ZEALAND

Move Termed Unprecedented

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 27 Nov 81 p 3

[Text]

THE Government said today it was prepared to allow an Australian investigation into the Mr Asia drugs ring to hold hearings and summon witnesses in this country.

Officially described as unusual and perhaps unprecedented, the move follows an informal approach from the Australians.

The Attorney-General, Mr McLay, said the Government had told the Australian Government it was prepared to appoint the investigation as a commission of inquiry under New Zealand law.

By this move Australia's Royal Commissioner of Inquiry into Drug Trafficking, Mr Justice D C Stewart, would be allowed to extend the scope of his inquiry to New Zealand.

In particular he would be able to compel the appearance of witnesses living in New Zealand and conduct hearings here, Mr McLay said.

Claim

The inquiry, set up jointly by the Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Commonwealth Governments, is basically directed towards the Australian drug dealing activities of Terrence John Clark, alias Alexander James Sinclair.

Mr McLay said the commission was set up in part because the Australian police had a number of matters

outstanding concerning Sinclair's activities which could not be dealt with at this stage by ordinary courts.

The New Zealand police had indicated that they had no such outstanding inquiries but the Australians had found there might be people in New Zealand with knowledge of Clark's activities in Australia.

Particularly, Mr McLay said, they might know how he disposed of the drug ring's proceeds.

Mr McLay said the Australian commission could not compel or summon witnesses from outside Australia to appear before it and give evidence on oath.

"By appointing Mr Justice Stewart as a commission of inquiry in New Zealand under our Commissions of Inquiry Act 1908, he will be able to come to this country and conduct such inquiries as are necessary to supplement his work in Australia."

Terms

At the suggestion of the Australians the terms of the New Zealand inquiry will be no wider than those under which the Australian commission is working.

"Furthermore, the New Zealand part of the inquiry in New Zealand will obviously have to comply in every respect with this country's statute and case law. Thus the terms of reference of any New Zealand inquiry will have to be very carefully drafted in consultation with the Australians," Mr McLay said.

Mr McLay said New Zealand police had no evidence of the drug ring's activities here which had not been dealt with by the courts or the police.

But, he said, if the Australian commission turned up any indications for a need for further investigations in New Zealand "that will certainly be done forthwith."

Sydney

No decision has been made on whether the Australian Royal Commission will go to New Zealand to hold hearings.

A spokesman for the Australian Federal Attorney-General, Senator Peter Durack, said that while no decision had been taken, the Australian Government was happy to have the indication from New Zealand that it would be welcome.

Police Association Protest

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 27 Nov 81 p 8

[Text]

IT WAS outrageous that New Zealanders should be subject to Australian jurisdiction in their own country, the secretary of the Police Association, Dr Bob Moodie said today.

He was commenting on yesterday's announcement that the Government would appoint the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drug Trafficking as a commission of inquiry under New Zealand law. (Report page 3).

"Our executive is most unhappy about commissions of inquiry generally. As far as Australian royal commissions are concerned, their record is even more dismal," said Dr Moodie.

"It's a further example of the wishy-washy leadership that the present Attorney-

General has given in the field of inquiries in New Zealand. He has abdicated his responsibility to the Australian Attorney-General."

Dr Moodie said the Air New Zealand inquiry only added confusion to the situation, the Thomas commission was a disgrace, and the marginal lands affair simply muddled reputations and confused the public mind.

Damaging

Commissions of inquiry were "star chamber exercises" which achieved

nothing more than damaging the reputations of people without the normal legal safeguards.

If the New Zealand Government felt there was a need to assist the Australian commission it could have set up its own commission of inquiry with very narrowly defined terms of reference to complement the Australian inquiry.

The Solicitor-General, Mr Paul Neazor, said the decision by the Attorney-General was in response to an indication from Australians that they would like to ex-

tend their inquiry to New Zealand.

The terms of reference, which have not yet been drawn up, would be no broader than those for the Australian commission. The investigations would have to be conducted in accordance with the New Zealand Commissions of Inquiry Act.

The Justice Department's chief legal adviser, Ms Janice Lowe, said that the commission would have the same powers as New Zealand commissions of inquiry and the same legal rights and obligations would apply.

Wellington 'POST' Comment

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 28 Nov 81 p 4

[Editorial: "Movable Commission"]

[Text]

THE MR ASIA drugs ring and its foul activities brought a most unwelcome notoriety to New Zealand.

The court hearings in England, at which startling revelations were made, ended some time ago but an Australian investigation into the ring's activities in that country is now proceeding.

In what has been described as perhaps an unprecedented move, the New Zealand Government says it is prepared to allow Australia's Royal Commissioner of Inquiry into Drug Trafficking, Mr Justice D C Stewart, to extend the scope of his inquiry to New Zealand.

Closer economic relations between Australia and New Zealand are a highly desirable thing, but for a Royal Commission on drug activities to be allowed to cross the Tasman is something different altogether, and must invite some unease.

The secretary of the Police Association, Dr Moodie, with memories of the Thomas commission of inquiry (chaired by an Australian), says it is outrageous that New Zealanders should be subject to Australian jurisdiction in their own country.

There is an assurance by the Minister of Justice, Mr McLay, that the New Zealand part of the inquiry will obviously have to comply in every respect with this country's statute and case law. It is to be hoped that, in operation, this provision will turn out to be as effective as Mr McLay envisages.

The stamping out of drug trafficking requires international co-operation. This is already taking place on various fronts. However, in the case of the Australian investigation there are no powers allowing it to compel or summon witnesses from outside Australia to appear before it and give evidence on oath.

The fact that the Australian commission has indicated it might need to examine witnesses in New Zealand to enable it to get a fuller picture of the ring's activities justifies the authority given by the New Zealand Government.

After all, New Zealand was intimately involved in the affair. The Australian inquiry is basically directed towards the Australian drug dealing activities of a New Zealander, Terrence John Clark, alias Alexander James Sinclair.

Dr Moodie says that if the New Zealand Government felt there was a need to assist the Australian commission, it could have set up its own commission of inquiry with very narrowly defined terms of reference to complement the Australian inquiry. While this appears to be a good suggestion, we would fancy that Mr McLay has possibly given thought to such a procedure and has dismissed it as impracticable.

In view of the very special circumstances, there could be a sound case for a movable commission.

The matter should be seen in that light, and not as an indicator of a new and undesirable trend.

C : 5320/9108

NEW ZEALAND

DRUGS FOUND IN MAIL FOR AMERICANS IN ANTARCTICA

Recipients Face Prosecution

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 2 Dec 81 p 5

[Text]

Hashish, cannabis and "magic mushrooms" have been found by Christchurch customs officers in mail and parcels addressed to Americans in Antarctica.

Drugs had been found in more than 10 parcels, often concealed in foodstuffs to fool drugs dogs, the assistant collector of customs in Christchurch, Mr B. J. Kearns, said yesterday.

He said the discovery of the drugs obviously justified the checking of goods in transit, which had angered some of the American scientists, support workers and servicemen in Antarctica and in Christchurch.

Some of the Americans could face prosecution when they returned from Antarctica "depending on the outcome of the interviews we will have with them," said Mr Kearns.

The United States Government, including the State Department, the Defence Department and the National Science Foundation, has joined the New Zealand authorities in investigating the Antarctic drug traffic.

In a letter to a New Zealand newspaper last month, 64 men and women of Operation Deep Freeze said that the action of Christchurch customs officials had embittered "hundreds of otherwise friendly Americans" and jeopardised the friendly work-

ing relationship between the two countries.

They said that Antarctica-bound mail had been "systematically opened, read, confiscated and sometimes damaged."

Mr Kearns said he knew of only one case in which a parcel had been slightly damaged. The Customs Department had paid to replace the articles.

He said that checking of Antarctica-bound mail had started as a result of indications that goods were being illegally imported, and that some personnel were getting duty and sales exemptions to which they were not entitled.

Mr Kearns discounted assertions by the Americans that the mail was in the "freedom in transit" category.

If mail was removed from an aircraft when it landed in New Zealand, then, under the Customs Act, it had been imported into New Zealand.

The mail goes to Christchurch through the United States Navy postal system. It arrives on commercial aircraft and is then transferred to Royal New Zealand Air Force and United States Hercules aircraft for the trip to Antarctica.

A report from McMurdo Station in yesterday's New York Times went so far as to allege that some officials of the National Science Foundation, which had overall responsibility for the United States role in Antarctica, had talked of moving the operations base to Australia. "though the cost makes this unlikely."

The newspaper said that the customs checks had undermined the "traditionally close co-operation between the United States and New Zealand in the study of Antarctica."

They had also "stirred anger and depressed morale" among the American personnel.

The superintendent of the Antarctic division of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Christchurch, Mr R. B. Thomson, said yesterday that the affair was "a bit of a storm in a teacup."

Of the reported tale of a move to Australia, he said: "There is no such plan or any official thought of anything of the sort. Someone might have said it when they were annoyed down on the ice."

Personnel Interviews Pending

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 3 Dec 81 p 27

[Text] CHRISTCHURCH, Dec 2 (PA). — About 30 Americans will be interviewed when they return from Antarctica this summer by customs men, following the discovery of drugs conservatively valued at \$5000.

The drugs, some concealed in food parcels, were detected by four drug dogs as well as customs officers in Christchurch.

Among the drugs are hashish valued at \$2000 and cannabis believed to be worth about \$1800.

About 70 percent of the people who will be interviewed are American civilians engaged to work at McMurdo station, the main US base in Antarctica.

Other people to be questioned by customs staff on their return here are members of the US military forces.

"Some of the drugs have

been very cleverly concealed in parcels," Mr B W Ford, chief customs officer (enforcement) said at his Cathedral Square office today.

He showed how 13 grams of cannabis had been found in a sealed parcel of food.

Mr Ford said: "Because of this drug smuggling, innocent people working in Antarctica are suffering as customs staff have to inspect quite a few parcels, some of which aren't found to contain drugs."

Sometimes up to 10,000 kilograms of mail from the United States had to be checked.

The Christchurch assistant collector of customs, Mr B J Kearns, said:

Due care

"We handle mail with the utmost care during our searches. We regret any

damage to property but sometimes it may be necessary to damage a container during a search for drugs."

The drugs displayed today in plastic bags were the result of about 40 detections, said Mr Kearns.

He said the drugs had been found during searches in the past three months.

"No drugs sent from the United States to Antarctica were detected last year.

"Our dealing with US mails has tended to be rather less than it should have been," Mr Kearns said.

"But as a result of certain information we have carried out searches a lot more closely."

Mr Kearns said the detection of drugs had been made difficult for two customs dogs and two police dogs because some drugs had been concealed in foodstuffs.

"The smell of other foods has sometimes disguised the smell of the drugs and put the dogs off the scent."

As well as cannabis and hashish, other drugs found include psilocybin mushrooms, which have an effect similar to lsd.

Drugs graded A, B and C were seized.

Customs said cannabis found appeared to be of a better quality than the drug normally available in this country.

The drugs will be analysed by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and, after court cases, it would be destroyed by the Health Department.

It could be late February, when the science season on the ice ends, before all those wanted for interview return to Christchurch.

Wellington 'POST' Editorial

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 3 Dec 81 p 2

[Editorial: "Drug Vigilance Is a Customs' Priority"]

[Text] THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT has absolutely no cause to feel in any way intimidated by the possible international implications of its latest drug vigilance.

The seizure by its officers at Christchurch of hashish, cannabis and psilocybin "mushrooms" (which have an effect similar to lsd) in mail and parcels addressed to Americans in Antarctica has, naturally enough, attracted more than usual interest. But the fact remains that all mail landed in New Zealand is subject to customs checks and in this instance the department was simply doing its duty.

New Zealand's geographic isolation is no protection against drug trafficking. This country has become an established part of the global illicit drug network

and that makes all the more reason why our surveillance has to be 100 percent efficient.

If, as is the case, a quarter of the Customs Department's annual budget of about \$25 million is spent trying to prevent the importation of illegal drugs, then New Zealanders should expect the department to act without fear or favour. This it does.

However, because the Christchurch seizures in this instance have, by implication, involved Operation Deep Freeze and in particular American civilians at McMurdo Station, New Zealand is being asked to justify its action.

The "New York Times", for example, says the action came as a surprise to American officials and raised some complex questions of international law. These related to "freedom of transit" of

parcels and the fact that the United States considered the mail "domestic" and not subject to search by New Zealand officials.

But the customs enforcement is clear: all mail landed in New Zealand is subject to checks.

The Minister of Customs, Mr Templeton, quickly defended the department and the American Embassy here announced it was being kept informed. At the same time, American personnel both in Christchurch and McMurdo maintained publicly the "violation" of some of their Antarctic-bound mail and accused the New Zealand Government of treating them as if they were "certified felons unfettered by scruples."

Such indignation should be kept in perspective rather than allow an international incident to develop over

what was for our customs authorities just another coup in the continuous fight against the importation of illicit drugs into, or through, New Zealand.

The mail seized hardly falls into the category of harmless home comforts aimed at bringing a little cheer to those confined on the ice. Outwardly, the food parcels might have looked the real thing, but some judicious sniffing revealed more than 40 of them contained A, B and C-graded drugs.

There is even the admission that the cannabis found appeared to be of a better quality than the drug normally available in this country.

In doing its duty, the Customs Department has dealt another blow to the drug traffickers. It should serve as a warning to those who might have felt they were on to easy pickings Down Under.

Auckland 'HERALD' Editorial

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 3 Dec 81 p 6

[Editorial: "Narcotics on the Ice"]

[Text]

[President Reagan recently promised police chiefs a foreign policy "that vigorously seeks to interdict and eradicate illicit drugs, wherever cultivated, processed or transported." By intercepting drugs bound for United States personnel in Antarctica, the New Zealand Customs Department must receive official backing from Washington.

The President recognises drug trafficking for the scourge that it is. Mrs Reagan is so concerned about the effects of drug abuse that she personally launched an anti-narcotics crusade last month.

Such a firm official stand must ensure that those Americans who have complained about their

mail being searched can expect no support from their own Administration. Certainly it is nonsense to suggest that Deep Freeze headquarters could be moved from New Zealand in protest. To do so would imply that the use of hashish, cannabis and "magic mushrooms" on the ice was tolerated or condoned.

New Zealand customs officers have a statutory right to search Antarctic-bound mail. Those responsible for the safety of the United States polar community, which lives in a hazardous natural environment, might be thankful that the powers under the Customs Act are used.

CSO: 5320/9108

NEW ZEALAND

ARMY DENIES DRUG 'EPIDEMIC' AMONG TROOPS IN SINGAPORE

Wellington EVENING POST in English 30 Nov 81 p 9

[Text]

A lawyer's claims of "a spreading drug epidemic" among New Zealand soldiers in Singapore have been denied by Army headquarters in Wellington. The problem had been "contained" by a recent investigation, the Army said.

The defence counsel for two New Zealand soldiers who pleaded guilty to selling cannabis to fellow soldiers said in a Singapore district court that the men were victims of "a spreading drug epidemic" in the New Zealand Army.

Even before they were posted to Singapore in 1979 the drug problem at the Army's Dieppe Barracks had reached unmanageable proportions, the lawyer, Mr Dennis Tan, was reported as saying.

The Army's public relations officer, Major Mike Wicksteed, said in Wellington that the Army denied there was "a spreading drug epidemic."

"The drug problem in the battalion in Singapore has never reached 'unmanageable proportions'," he said.

'Contained'

"While we do not claim to have totally eliminated the use of cannabis, its use in the battalion has definitely been contained by the recent investigation into the problem.

"The investigation into the use of cannabis within the 550-man battalion in Singapore has involved legal action being taken against 24 soldiers.

"Twelve men were dealt with summarily by their commanding officer, eight have been tried by district court-martial, and four cases have been handled by the civil authorities in Singapore.

Warning

"Every serviceman posted to Singapore is warned before departure about the strict enforcement of drug laws in that country," Major Wicksteed said.

"This warning is repeated on arrival in Singapore and every six months while the serviceman is in the country."

The investigation lasted from February to June and was "very thorough," Major Wicksteed said. There was no evidence of any drug other than cannabis being used.

CSO: 5320/9108

NEW ZEALAND

AUSTRALIAN ON TRIAL FOR IMPORTING CANNABIS FROM THAILAND

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 2 Dec 81 p 22

[Text]

AUCKLAND, Dec 1 (PA). — An Australian appeared in the District Court here today charged with importing into New Zealand cannabis plants said to have a street value of \$1 million.

Andre Milley, 30, of no fixed abode, denied importing cannabis last Christmas Day.

He appeared before Justices of the Peace, Mrs A V Fitzpatrick and Mr A R Gorbey for the taking of depositions.

Mr Rowan Moss appeared for Milley, who was originally from France.

The police prosecutor Detective Sergeant David Lucas said Milley was alleged to have imported two suitcases containing 50 small packages of cannabis, weighing a total of 42.8 kilograms.

The bags were not claimed and were seized by the police at Auckland airport.

The defendant was later located in Australia, and extradited.

Prosecution witness Detective Inspector Brion Philip Duncan said he worked as a narcotics attaché in Bangkok from August 1978 to August 1981.

Heavy bags

On Christmas Eve 1980, he went to Bangkok International Airport as a result of information received, and watched Milley check in two suitcases. They appeared very heavy.

Detective Inspector Bryan John Rowe, an officer in charge of the drug squad in Auckland, said he went to Auckland airport on Christmas Day 1980, and took possession of two unclaimed suitcases.

"Royal Thai" luggage labels on the bags were marked with the destination Auckland, and the name Milley, he said.

The suitcases were found to contain two large packages wrapped in black polythene: each one containing 25 smaller packages.

He told the court samples from the packages were given to an analyst at the DSIR, and certified to be cannabis plant containing resin.

The plant material was in compressed form, and weighed a total of 48.2 kilograms, Mr Rowe said.

It would normally be sold in "bullet" form, and being

Thai cannabis, would have a street value of \$1 million in total.

"It is believed that this particular seizure was the largest of its type ever made in New Zealand," he said.

Detective Inspector Lindley David Sinton said he was a member of the New Zealand Police Force, and had been seconded for duties in Australia.

No sign

On Christmas Day, 1980, he received instructions from headquarters to find Milley, but initial inquiries failed to locate him.

He continued inquiries and located Milley in a Sydney boatyard in September 1981.

Mr Sinton read to the court a formal statement that Milley made at the police station in Sydney.

In the statement, Milley said he met a man who called himself "Peter" in a Sydney bar where he was working.

Peter had offered him \$5000 to bring jewellery from Bangkok and he agreed to do this because he needed

the money, Milley said in the statement.

Peter gave him the money to go to Bangkok and brought the suitcases to him in the hotel there. When the bags were opened he recognised a smell like cannabis, Milley said in the statement, but Peter had told him he would be in trouble if he did not go ahead with the plan.

In the statement, Milley said he had never received the \$5000 from Peter.

A Kiwi?

He did not know any other name for him, but he thought he was a New Zealander.

Mr Sinton said he contacted Wellington and told them what Milley had said, and that afternoon Milley was visited by Australian police and charged with the offence.

After hearing the evidence, Mrs Fitzpatrick and Mr Gorbey ruled there was a case to answer.

Milley was remanded in custody, to appear before a jury in the District Court on February 3.

CSO: 5320/9108

PAKISTAN

BRIEFS

HEROIN SEIZED--About 109 kilograms of high quality heroin has been seized in Baluchistan. The official sources in Quetta said that this heroin was being smuggled from Pakistan to Iran. Five alleged smugglers have been arrested and the cars used for this purpose confiscated. [Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 28 Dec 81]

OPIUM SEIZED--Quetta, 31 Dec--Thirteen kilograms of opium valued at 26 million in the foreign market has been seized by anti-smuggling squad of the central land custom in Mangochar area of Kalat District. According to a custom press release two alleged smugglers have been arrested and a truck used for smuggling has been impounded. Further investigations are in progress--PPI. [Text] [GF041334 Karachi DAWN in English 1 Jan 82 p 5]

DRUGS SEIZED BY CUSTOMS--Customs air freight unit yesterday impounded 13 drums, containing 625 kilograms of "seco-barbital sodium," valued at about RS 312.5 million in the underworld market. In the last week of November, the customs special checking squad had seized 600 kgs of the same material valued at RS 300 million in the underworld market. [GF041339 Karachi DAWN in English 31 Dec 81 p 8]

CHARAS SEIZED--Two persons were arrested and over 110 maunds of charas were recovered from their possession by the Anti-Burglary Squad of City Division police yesterday. Accused Nazir Ahmed and Rehmatullah were caught, while they were trying to load the consignment on a Hyderabad-bound passenger bus at Boulton Market. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 19 Dec 81 p 10]

HASHISH RECOVERED--Wah Cantt, Dec. 24--The Customs and Anti-smuggling Squad No. 1 arrested two persons, Mohammad Iqbal and Abdul Hakim, and allegedly recovered two lakh grams (five maunds) of Hashish and motor spare parts.. The raiding party exchanged fire with the accused for about ten minutes as it chased the car which turned turtle when its tyre burst on being hit. [Karachi DAWN in English 25 Dec 81 p 9]

DRUG SEIZURE REPORTED--Quetta Dec 26--Narcotics worth Rs. 163.5 crore was recovered at two different places within last 24 hours in the world's one of the biggest drug haul. According to details, Acting on a secret information, the Customs Mobile Staff ambushed a Toyota pick-up No. 1180 near Pishok on Noshki-Dalbandin road last night and recovered 59 kilogrammes of heroine from its concealed cavaties. [Karachi MORNING NEWS in English 27 Dec 81 p 8]

HEROIN SMUGGLING; FOREIGNERS HELD--Two foreign nationals were arrested from Lahore Railway Station on charges of smuggling heroin on Saturday. D. Brown, a Britisher, was travelling to Karachi by Khyber Mail with 150 kilogram heroin while Erwin Dictor, an Austrian, keeping 30 gram heroin was going to India. Charas and opium weighing 1282 grams was also seized by the District Excise Staff from various places in the city. Five persons were arrested under the offence. Three drunkard were also arrested for drinking and making hooliganism in the Tibbi area. [Text] [Lahore THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 6 Dec 81 p 5]

CSO: 5200/4580

SRI LANKA

MASSIVE OPERATION DESTROYS 100 ACRES OF GANJA

Colombo THE DAILY NEWS in English 17 Dec 81 p 1

[Article by Srimal Abeywardene]

[Text] The Police and the Air Force will team together today to launch one of the biggest ever campaigns to destroy an estimated hundred acres of ganja plantations in the Southern Province.

A stage two operation is likely to follow in the Eastern Province.

Over 300 men and SLAF helicopters will be used in this search and destroy mission which the authorities expect will lead to the destruction of at least Rs. 10 million worth of unharvested ganja.

"We are tackling this like a military operation. We already know where most of the patches we want to destroy are located. We will set up base camps at Sella, Kataragama, Uda Walawe and Hambegamuwa and we will go into the jungles and destroy the ganja," Mr. Leo Perera, DIG, Eastern Range, said yesterday.

The ganja plantations, often small

patches of 'green gold' camouflaged with vegetable 'messas' in chena plots, and sometimes more extensive, have been identified at Hambegamuwa in the Wel-lawaya police area, Galge in the Hambantota area and Habaraluwewa in the Uda Walawe police area.

Mr. T. B. Werapitiya, the Deputy Defence Minister initiated this war on ganja. Earlier this week IGP Ana Seneviratne and Air Force Commander Dick Perera reviewed the final arrangements.

The men on the field will be linked to their base camps, Air Force Headquarters and the Police Communication Centre, by radio.

SLAF experts have

meticulously prepared maps of the areas to be covered. Men familiar with the jungles will help in this effort.

The authorities are keen that the operation which will continue for five days from today also gathers intelligence on poaching and illicit timber felling.

Mr. Hema Weerasinghe, SP, the head of the police narcotics squad and Squadron Leader Oliver Ranasinghe of the SLAF, were associated with DIG Leo Perera at a final meeting yesterday.

A reconnaissance of the area to be covered has demonstrated that the previous operation launched by the narcotics squad, last Febru-

ary has considerably affected ganja growing.

"The plots generally are much smaller though they may be more numerous," SP Weerasinghe said.

The authorities believe that the success of the narcotics squad in busting a ganja ring, which included society names had resulted in "orders" to the growing areas falling off and the capital required for the cultivation drying up.

"When we acted in February the plants were tall and mature. Now they are not. It is easier to destroy the plants before they are full grown," Superintendent Weerasinghe explained.

CSO: 5300/4912

THAILAND

MUSER TRIBAL CHIEFTAIN'S BURMA NARCOTICS OPERATIONS NOTED

Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 8 Nov 81 p 21

[Article by Paul Jasvinder]

[Text] "YOU want No. 4?" a husky voiced man with shifty eyes asked me. "I've got plenty. The price is 65,000 baht for 700 grammes. You pay in advance. Cash only."

Welcome to Doi Larn, the wild, lawless land where heroin and gambling are the two preoccupations of the residents and where Cha Ue reigns supreme. This is Cha Ue's territory, the leader of the Muser rebels, a loosely-knit army which follows the rules of its leaders to the letter. Their goal? To fight the Burmese soldiers to the very end.

Doi Larn, located some 30 kilometres from Fang District in Chiang Rai, is considered one of the major supply routes of heroin to buyers from Thailand. Sources say the drug is manufactured 30 kilometres deep inside the mountainous jungle from here, accessible only to the Muser soldiers.

The main attractions of this no man's land, dividing Thailand and Burma, are drugs, gambling and moonshine whisky — not necessarily in that order. The village is situated on the Burmese side but is accessible to Thais, although few dare take the risk. It is one of the strongholds of the Muser rebels and the site of occasional skirmishes with Burmese government soldiers.

Hard Drugs

Cha Ue's army is believed to be mainly supported by sales of hard drugs — mainly heroin, although it taxes traders for any merchandise brought into its territory.

The dealer I talked to, who is also a well-known businessman here, said he gets heroin through Muser soldiers. "They are my contacts," said the dealer. He said he makes 15 per cent commission flat from each sale. Demand for No. 4 heroin is high now because of an anticipated bumper crop of opium throughout the region.

The dealer explained the following procedures for each transaction:

The dealer accepts the money from the potential buyer and gives it and the order to the Muser soldiers (after his cut is deducted). He said once the "goods" arrive, usually in one day, he escorts the buyer to the nearest border point.

"Ban Tod is the best point to take the drugs out," said the dealer, referring to the border about half a kilometre from here. "Our job finishes there. Once you are on the Thai side, you are on your own."

Asked about the maximum quantity a buyer can order, the dealer replied: "Whatever you want I can deliver. The best stuff is Lion Brand No. 4. It's made out

of opium planted by the Burmese who sell it to the Muser soldiers."

Asked what safeguards the customer has after handing over the money in advance, the dealer replied: "Look, I have been in this business many years. My neck is at stake. I wouldn't be here today if I had betrayed my customers." He added that betrayal may occur once the heroin is smuggled out to Thailand because of the huge amount of money involved.

The dealer said he is in "big business" and prefers large orders. "Forget about the 700 grammes, why not place a 7,000 grammes order? Better yet, try to smuggle the drug out of the country. It takes only once, and you'll be a rich man."

No. 4. That's what they call it here. The word "heroin" is rarely mentioned. Says the same dealer: "There are many kinds of heroin available in Doi Larng, but the best is No. 4 Lion Brand. It's easy to

differentiate it from other brands. Most brands are soft and powdery, but No. 4 is crude, like detergent, because it is fresh."

About a block away from the drug dealer's shop is the morning market where gambling is a daily occurrence. Called "casinos", they consist of a few makeshift tables located inside the market, a huge, barn-like compound in the centre of the town. Every day, hundreds of gamblers form a big circle around the tables, eagerly clutching both Thai and Burmese banknotes.

Blackjack

Two Chinese sit at the centre of each table: One takes care of the money while the other spins the dice inside a black tin box and immediately covers it with a lid before gamblers put down the money on numbers of their choice. Various games, such as blackjack and other card games, also draw crowds nearby.

"They get sucked in every day," said the drug dealer shaking his head slowly.

Casinos are open until very late at night as many gamble after their day's work is done. A large

number of gamblers, surprisingly, are women.

"Women in Doi Larng are as rough as men," said one gambler. "Many women here are also drug addicts."

There is a huge sign in Thai, Burmese and Chinese on the wall directly above one gambling table in one corner, warning gamblers to strictly observe house gambling rules, with heavy penalties for cheaters.

"That's really a joke because the 'house rules' are made by Cha Ue" remarked one gambler. "And his rules mean he wins and you lose."

Another bold sign next to the gambling sign says, "Those found in possession of white or black powders will be automatically fined 10,000 baht and sentenced to six months in jail or both fined and jailed or will be at once expelled from Doi Larng or will be executed."

"No one pays any attention to the sign," said one man and laughed. "The reason behind putting up that sign is that Cha Ue wants no one in possession of heroin except himself."

Market morning dominates the social life and is the gathering place for the planters, drug dealers and gamblers. It is the only hub of Doi Larng's activities where transactions of all kinds are carried out openly.

One drug dealer and gambler said that Cha Ue makes 40,000 baht a month from gambling concessions with it even coming here. In addition to gambling pay-offs, the source added that the Muser leader also gets 5,000 baht from production of moonshine whisky in the village.

Peanuts

"But that's peanuts," he said. "He makes millions a month from heroin to support his men."

Opium smoking is prohibited here, he said, adding that a major bulk of the yield is delivered directly to the Muser soldiers who use it to manufacture heroin.

It is impossible for a visitor to come into this rough land without

arousing the curiosity among the local residents, particularly the gun-carrying young soldiers. I was having lunch inside the market the day I arrived when two Muser soldiers, armed with M-16s, suddenly appeared at the table and

glared at me. One was short and swarthy and the other tall and thin, both in their late teens. I plucked up courage and asked both to join me for lunch. They ignored my invitation and walked off towards the gambling table.

My second confrontation with the Musers came shortly before I boarded the bus back to the Thai side when a man with a weathered face and in civilian clothes with a gun dangling loosely on his hip stopped me.

"Are you a Thai or American?" asked the man, giving me a searching look. Thai, I answered. "Good for you," he said and slowly walked back towards the market.

'Law and Order'

"That was Cha Der, one of Cha Ue's sons," the bus driver told me as the vehicle began to descend the muddy road. "He comes here to keep 'law and order'."

Illicit business, whether it is drugs, gambling or moonshine, does not only exist but is encouraged by the Muser leaders with visions of money in mind. Production of home brewed whisky, called Lao Kao, (white whisky) is rampant.

One day I and the bus driver walked out of the raucous market place and passed along subterranean passages of mud that must have stretched 200 feet before we came to a big smoke-filled thatched hut made out of bamboo leaves. The driver gave a series of knocks, and it was opened by a young soldier carrying an M-16. He smiled and motioned us to step inside. The small room reeked of strong alcohol and sticky rice. In one corner of the room was a huge tank with water bubbling under the hot stove.

"This is 40 degrees proof alcohol," said the soldier, holding a bottle of freshly-brewed whisky

in his hand and proceeded to explain to us several methods of making the moonshine whisky. (One method was to add Fab detergent. "It's stronger," said the soldier.)

Although casinos and drugs dominate daily life here, Doi Larng's legitimate economy is based on tea production. Most of the women in the village work at the nearby tea plantations.

Tea

"Tea is fetching a very good price this year," one tea planter told me as our bus sloshed through the flooded road leading back to the Thai side. "We're selling for as much as 80 baht per kilo." Most of the tea planters supply their products to tea factories in Fang District where it is manufactured and sent to Bangkok.

Once I asked a gambler how easy it is to obtain marijuana in Doi Larng. He didn't answer, but took me to a fruit vendor, a frail, betel-chewing old woman. "Mama," the gambler said to her, "can I have five baht worth of kanja? (marijuana)" The woman hurriedly accepted the money and disappeared inside the house. She returned quickly and gave him a handful of kanja neatly wrapped in a small paper bag.

"Strong stuff," said the gambler, studying the marijuana in his hand. He discarded the tobacco from his cigarette and refilled it with marijuana and lit it. "Strong and very good," he said, deeply inhaling. "I can have 30 smokes for the money I paid."

"Where did she get the stuff from?" I asked. The gambler escorted me to a small garden at the back of the woman's wooden house and pointed at some green plants.

There probably are more guns in Doi Larng than the whole population combined. Everyone seems to be carrying one: The soldiers, the gamblers and the civilians out in the street.

The handling of the guns by the young soldiers appears to be more symbolic than practical. Soldiers

are told to hold on to the weapon 24 hours a day and never leave without it in case of "an attack by the enemy." So it was a common sight to see the soldiers having their lunch inside the market place with one hand firmly clutching the M-16.

"We want to be ready just in case," said one sarong-clad soldier. Ready for what? I asked. The soldier looked startled, probably unfamiliar with such a question from a stranger. He did not respond but kept on eating.

One long time resident said that the majority of the soldiers are unable to grasp the conflicts and political ideology existing between Muser and Burmese leaders.

"They (the soldiers) are just too naive to understand the crux of the problem," said the resident, adding that many young men with no education decide to join the army either because of boredom or a determination to carry guns.

"They are bored stiff with the society that has no diversified culture and offers no socialisation," continued the man in his late 40s, a former Muser soldier himself. "Once they join the army, they immediately begin to play the role of the defender. Carrying guns gives them a feeling of supreme power."

"Muser youths are brainwashed by the army to display hatred. There is nothing more dangerous than giving the youngsters guns and telling them they can shoot anybody they feel is suspicious."

Threat

"Does the Muser-Burma conflict pose a threat to Thailand?"

In private conversations, Thai officials say that except for the flow of drugs, they don't see any danger posed by the Muser soldiers. "Muser soldiers don't bother us because they don't hold any grudge against Thai people," explained the official. "We'll start worrying when they begin encroaching upon our territory."

Fighting between Muser soldiers and the Burmese at present

is more or less a cat-and-mouse affair. According to one career soldier, the situation has reached a stalemate because of the lack of clear cut issues involved in the conflict, except repeated complaints by the Muser leader, Cha Ue, that his people are being oppressed by the Burmese, though no specific charges have been made by him.

Other sources say the stalemate will continue unless a major confrontation between the two parties takes place, which they believe is highly unlikely.

Talking to the Muser rebels one fails to understand their aim. Two answers were given in conversations: One is "we want liberation" although only a few can intelligently discuss what the word means, and two "It's up to our leader," meaning Cha Ue, whose whereabouts remains as much a mystery as the man himself, even to his "constituents."

Money

From personal observation here in Doi Larng, it seems the major preoccupation with Cha Ue is making money, and lots of it, through the heroin trade.

One can't help sympathising with the Muser people, most of whom don't seem to comprehend the conflict with the Burmese.

Shortly before I left I had a brief conversation with a young soldier who couldn't have been more than 17 and was holding on to his M-16 for dear life. Asked why he was carrying the weapon, the soldier answered: "Liberation."

"What liberation?" I asked. He blushed and looked down at his gun. Then he slowly turned his head towards his colleagues. None moved or uttered a word.

"I don't know," the young soldier finally answered.

CSO: 5300/4585

THAILAND

PAPER ON ANTIOPIUM CAMPAIGN AMONG HILLTRIBES

BK290701 Bangkok POST in English 28 Dec 81 pp 1, 3

[Article by the Chongkhadikit]

[Text] The National Security Council has launched a concerted campaign to get the hilltribes to voluntarily destroy their own opium poppy plants in exchange for rice supplies and substitute cash crops.

NSC Secretary General Prasong Sunsiri said that he personally saw hilltribes in Doi Sam Mun, in Chiang Dao District of Chiang Rai Province, tear out poppy plants with their own hands last week.

He has also ordered that people from the plains who supply the hilltribes with poppy seeds be arrested.

He called upon agricultural, forestry, public welfare, public health, education and other ministerial officials working with the hilltribes to cooperate with the Office of the Narcotics Control Board to help reduce or eliminate the cultivation of opium.

Squadron leader Prasong cited instances where forestry officials destroyed hilltribes' coffee plantations during work to carry out a reafforestation programme.

After inspecting poppy fields in the north, particularly in Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Son provinces, he said the government must aim at:

--providing the hilltribes with a means of obtaining income that they would be giving up by destroying their poppy fields.

--helping the hilltribes understand the necessity of ending the cultivation of opium.

--severing the connections between opium seed suppliers and the hilltribes by rounding up the suppliers.

--providing medical facilities for rehabilitating drug addicts among the hilltribes and educating their young people against smoking opium in order to stop them planting opium for their own consumption.

Sqd ldr Prasong was accompanied on his inspection tour by police Major General Chawalit Yotmani and police Colonel Koson Limpichat of the ONCB and representatives of various ministries and government departments. He also took with him several hilltribe youths who are students at Ramkamhaeng University to act as interpreters.

The NSC secretary general said that he informed the hilltribe peoples about the evils of narcotics derived from opium and told them what the government, with international assistance, would do to help them find another source of income once they switched from cultivating opium.

He said the government would provide seeds for each crops to replace opium and also supply them with rice which cannot be grown in the harsh, hilly terrain that the hilltribes inhabit.

The rice would be supplied to villages through cooperatives. These would be promoted not only to provide channels for distribution of official aid and essential materials but also for marketing of the replacement crops.

Following sqd-ldr Prasong's lecture the hilltribes at Doi Sam Mun walked out to the fields and plucked out the poppy plants by the roots.

Obviously impressed by this reaction, sqd-ldr Prasong said it showed that the hilltribes would cooperate with the government if they were given reasonable treatment.

He added: "The plains people who supply the hilltribes with poppy seeds are the culprits. They are taking advantage of the belief that the government would not dare take drastic action against the hilltribes for fear they would become insurgents or join the Communists. We must get them."

CSO: 5300/4584

THAILAND

PREM GIVES OKAY TO PLAN TO DESTROY POPPY FIELDS

BK040511 Bangkok NATION REVIEW in English 4 Jan 82 pp 1, 10

[Text] Prime Minister Gen Prem Tinsulanon has switched on the green light for the long-delayed plan to destroy poppy fields in 10 villages in Chiang Mai, deputy secretary general of the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) Pol Maj Gen Chaowalit Yotnani said.

However, he said the premier wanted the plan to be "executed gently" so that it would not offend the hilltribe people.

The plan to wipe out over 140 rai of poppy fields was initially scheduled to be implemented in November but was postponed because the premier did not endorse it.

More than 1,000 border patrol policemen and defence volunteers are expected to be employed in the controversial plan.

Pol Maj Gen Chaowalit said Prem recently gave approval to the plan but instructed authorities responsible for it to implement it in gentle manners.

"The premier prefers to see the authorities be gentle in executing the plan. He wants the authorities to try to persuade the hilltribe people to cut down the poppies themselves," he said.

The authorities were instructed to destroy the poppy fields on a case-by-case basis to lessen the chance of offending the local people.

Informed sources in ONCB said the plan was temporarily shelved because the government was afraid that it would antagonize the hilltribe people.

Pol Maj Gen Chaowalit said Prem had given an instruction that poppy fields in areas where substitute crops were introduced should be destroyed first.

Economic assistance should be extended to areas where their inhabitants were poor before their poppy fields were to be destroyed, he said.

Premier Prem ordered the plan to be suspended on grounds that he needed to know more information about it.

The 10 villages where poppy fields will be destroyed are under a United Nations crop substitution plan. The fields cover a total of 140.2 rai.

The 10 villages are Khun Chang Kian, Buak Chan, Mae Samai, Khun Yuang, Ban Phanom, Ban Hinfon, Ban Puitai, Mae Tho, Doi Ammun and Ban Hup.

ONCB had initially planned to invite representatives of mass media to witness the destruction of the poppy fields.

CSO: 5300/4584

THAILAND

DRUG TRAFFICKERS SET UP 'DEATH SQUADS'

BK290114 Bangkok NATION REVIEW in English 29 Dec 81 p 1

[Text] Chiang Mai--Anti-drug agencies here claimed to have evidence suggesting that big-time drug traffickers in the north have set up "death squads" to deal with anti-drug officers, informed sources in the police department said.

The sources said that the traffickers set the price for each of the anti-drug officers to be killed at between 15,000 and 20,000 baht.

They said anti-drug officers with good performance record are potential targets of the death squads.

According to the intelligence reports, the traffickers normally pooled their money among themselves when they wanted to have any of the anti-drug personnel terminated.

The reports also said that the traffickers sometimes set up traps to kill anti-drug officers who were lured to a place where they were told some drugs were being delivered.

Armed men would ambush the officers at the scene, according to the reports.

The sources said that anti-drug agencies, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) of the U.S., the civilian-police-military unit five of Chiang Mai, and the drug suppression centre of the border patrol police here were working out counter-measures.

Meanwhile, a report from the police department yesterday said that since the armed caravan of Khun Sa clashed with Thai rangers from Pak Thongchai on September 29-October 8, all trafficking activities were temporarily suspended.

The clash resulted in heavy casualties on both sides.

CSO: 5300/4584

THAILAND

PAPER CITES CONFLICTING VIEWS ON POPPIES

BK190447 Bangkok NATION REVIEW in English 19 Dec 81 p 13

[Text] "D-day" was set and more than 1,000 border patrol policemen and defence volunteers were ready to be mobilized to chop down over 140 rai of poppy fields in 10 villages in Chiang Mai.

But suddenly words were passed down that Premier Prem Tinsulanon wanted the plan to eradicate the poppy fields to be put off until he was given adequate information about it.

The objection raised by the premier--as seen by officials of the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB)--means that the plan has automatically been shelved.

One of the officials said the plan was from the start opposed by the National Security Council (NSC) which had expressed fears that it would antagonize hill-tribe people in the villages.

"The NSC apparently did not want the hilltribe people to be angered by the eradication of their poppy fields and turn against government officials operating along the border," he said.

It is no secret that some of the hilltribe men owning the poppy fields have been working as informers for government authorities. They have reportedly been feeding the government with intelligence information on the movements of the Communist insurgents and Chinese haws.

A rough study based on experiences shows that if one of the hilltribe people becomes an insurgent the government would need as many as 50 men to destroy him, an informed source said.

For these reasons, NSC apparently feels it unwise to anger the hilltribe men who are serving as a bulwark against Communist influence, the source said.

For practical reasons, opium is still something the hilltribe people find it difficult to live without. Those belonging to the older generation are mostly addicted to opium smoking as a means of relaxation while the poppy is undeniably an economic crop of the hilltribe people.

Opium is also widely used by them as effective pain-killer since public health service in the areas is almost non-existent.

Officials of the ONCB said that now is the poppy harvesting season and is definitely a wrong time to move against the poppy fields.

"The hilltribe men pin their hope on the poppies as a source of income to repay debts they have accumulated over the year," one of them said.

He said in fact there were reports that hilltribe people in some of the target areas had been told by insurgents to resist the campaign.

"We don't understand why they chose to do it during this time of the year," complained one anti-narcotic officer who said Communist insurgents had already begun making propaganda out of the campaign in Khun Wang and Mae Samai villages.

However, government authorities in favour of the campaign claimed that the hill-tribe people had not kept their words.

"They have been saying that they will stop growing poppies next year. But they still do it," one of them said.

He said the yields of the poppies this year are three times higher than the previous year.

Officials of the office of the prime minister reportedly believe that an eradication of the poppy fields will in a way give a good image for Thailand.

"At least, it will show to the United Nations, the United States and the rest of the world that Thailand is serious about suppressing narcotics," one of them was quoted as saying.

Looking at the problem from another perspective, however, officials of the ONCB said the lack of coordination among the agencies carrying out their separate crop substitution programmes has also made the matter worse.

The Thai-United Nations project reportedly envisages an immediate end to poppy-growing in the north without regard to the fact that it had been a century-old tradition of the hilltribe people. Its crop substitution programme has not been very successful because of marketing and transportation problems for substitute crops introduced.

However, the government programme under royal patronage puts more emphasis on attempts to promote the hilltribe people's professions rather than putting an end to poppy-growing.

"The people behind the programme apparently understand that poppy-growing is still a basic and necessary way of living of the local people and that the crop substitution programme will take years before it will yield results," said an official of the ONCB.

So it was natural that people behind the two programmes of different philosophy had conflicting views on the aborted plan to eradicate the poppy fields last week.

"But whatever the conflicts may be, national security must come first," observed one anti-narcotic officer. "We should not worry too much about pleasing the UN or the Americans who do not really understand our problems."

The hilltribe people themselves were reportedly not very happy with the news that government authorities were planning to destroy their poppy fields though they were promised assistance for substitute crops.

Local officials have already tried to convince them of the necessity to give up poppy-growing and even distributed them with seedlings of alternative crops.

But the hilltribe people were not very responsive. Not many of them were willing to exchange their poppy seedlings with those of typical crops.

In the end, government authorities were able to obtain only 41.76 kilogrammes of poppy seeds from them.

Most of the hilltribe people claimed that their substitute crops did not produce the yields they desired. Some argued that they had already invested in their poppy fields and wanted to make something out of them this year.

officials of the ONCB pointed out that the government needed to prove to the hill-tribe people that growing substitute crops can be more rewarding before it can "convert them."

But what is more important is that the government must crack down on the drug traffickers that have been serving as the market for the poppies grown by the hilltribe people.

The drug traffickers, who normally provide the hilltribe men with financial assistance in their poppy-growing, buy the yields at the spot.

"So if the government can deprive the hilltribe people of the market of their poppies, all of its efforts to put an end to poppy-growing will certainly work," one of the officials said.

CSO: 5300/4584

THAILAND

NORTHERN GOVERNOR DISCUSSES OPIUM PROBLEM

BK200505 Bangkok POST in English 20 Dec 81 p 7

[Article by the Chongkhadikit: "Getting to the Root of Opium Problems"]

[Text] As next year's opium harvest promises to be a bumper one, even bigger than this year's, the governor of Chiang Mai is concerned over the fact that suppression of the narcotics traffic is less than effective because of the lack of an adequate crop substitution programme.

The concern becomes deeper as the Burma Communist Party links itself up with Chang Si-fu or Khun Sa, drug king of the Golden Triangle, and other heroin dealers using routes across the Thai border.

Minorities trading in opium not only for their own livelihood but also to finance independence movements have compounded the problems in the north. [as published]

About 40,000 to 50,000 rai in northern Thailand is cultivated with the opium poppy. The hill tribes use slash-and-burn methods, destroying large areas of forests.

Governor Chaiya Phunsiriwong asks, "Let's get rid of the opium, but how will the hill tribes live?"

This is where crop substitution comes in but "it always comes in too little and too late."

Suppression operations cannot succeed if unaccompanied by crop substitution.

"As long as people plant opium, there is a source for heroin. It's not much use to catch the smugglers because where there's opium there is a way to take it out and there's someone ready, willing and able to take it out."

Foreign governments alarmed over the spread of consumption of Golden Triangle heroin in their countries put too much emphasis on suppression and not enough on crop substitution, it is felt by the governor.

"Too much emphasis has been placed upon suppression of traffic in narcotics after they have crossed borders from the opium fields. Foreign support for crop replacement has been very weak," commented the governor.

"It's easy to destroy the poppy plants. They are planted in areas totalling 40,000 to 50,000 rai.

"However, the government is concerned over the problem of how the hill tribes are going to live when their poppy plants are destroyed.

"At the same time, Thailand has common borders with Burma and Laos where opium is growing. The Burma Communist Party has taken control over the northern portion of Buma.

"The most influential group in the Golden Triangle is that of Khun Sa or Chang Si-fu.

"Behind the cultivation of opium there are definitely people who put up capital. These people are mainly from the minority groups. These groups could be residing within our country or in neighbouring areas.

"The destruction of opium plants, therefore, is a most sensitive matter. We have to find reasons for such a measure. We have to look after the welfare of the hill tribes before we destroy their means of livelihood.

"If we destroy the plants before we do anything to help the cultivators, it is going to bring about a difficult situation. If we say that we are driving the hill tribes into the arms of the Communists, we will be accused of being alarmist.

"I don't think the Communists will infiltrate, I think the more likely infiltrators are the minorities. There are four such groups. One is indigenous which wants to set up its own independent state. Another group does not care much and is easily led. The third group is the Chin Haw (Yunnanese) who migrated from Yunnan after the 93rd and the 193rd nationalist Chinese armies had retreated from China into Burma and northern Thailand. The fourth is the 93rd army itself which has come into our northern areas before. It is this army which brought the Yunnanese along to serve as supports.

"Since the first group concerns the Burmese Government, it is the last three groups which constitute a threat to Thailand. Communists have infiltrated the second group.

"It is from the third and fourth groups that narcotic bans like that of Khun Sa, actually a Yunnanese, come.

"There are at least 300,000 hill tribes people in northern Thailand, with 100,000 of them being in the Chiang Mai area.

"These are people without nationality. If we push them, they will be used by other groups for their own purposes. In this way, suppression is a two-edged sword.

"We cannot eliminate opium planting 100 percent. When we move against the hill tribes in one area, they go to another. The frontier has no boundaries. We have to help them change to a new means of livelihood."

Governor Chaiya is advising the Ministry of Interior to formulate a new policy.

"If we continue like we have been doing, we will not see the end of the tunnel. We must have a stage-by-stage planned programme.

"Several million rai of our forests and watersheds have been destroyed by the hill tribes. It should be possible for us to allow the hill tribes to cultivate those areas already denuded.

"The areas must be arable. We go in and set up infrastructure. The most important thing is to introduce administrative machinery which will ensure that these hill tribes remain in those areas. If we don't set up administrators we won't be able to stop them from their nomadic wanderings to destroy more forests.

"If there is no administrative setup, it's going to be a difficult business.

"Even in areas which have been developed the hill tribes continue to grow opium. They don't do it in the villages but at a distance from the villages, probably a day's walk away. They go away from the villages for one week and return. Then they go away again for the harvest.

"I asked them if their opium had never been stolen. They told me they had an honour system.

"The American suppression officers don't understand. At one time when opium was a national problem causing us many difficulties no one was interested. Look at the opium wars of the past and the interests of foreign countries which the opium trade served.

"Great interest is now shown in opium because heroin which is derived from opium has become an international problem. The foreign governments are interested only in how to prevent heroin getting into their countries.

"They don't see what the effects of destruction of the poppy fields would have on Thailand. We would like them to be sympathetic with us.

"We are appealing to them to help correct the problem at the roots within our society. Suppression only attends to the end results of the problem. The way to attack the problem at the root is to assist us in crop replacement.

"A crop replacement programme cannot succeed if the foreign governments look at economic problems from a narrow viewpoint. They set up tariff barriers against our commodities. They know we are an agricultural country. We have surpluses of rice, maize, tapioca, sugar and other produce. We need these surpluses in order to sell to the world's markets. When barriers are set up against our products, it adversely affects our national economy.

"The foreign governments who are pressing us about suppression are looking at only one side of the coin.

"When we produce potatoes as crop replacement, restrictions are placed upon them by foreign governments.

"Japan and the United States are producing rice to compete for our markets. If these and other countries want us to destroy the poppy plants and continue these kinds of trade policies, they'd better forget it.

"They can also forget the few millions they give us as aid for suppression.

"We don't want such aid which is actually self-serving. All they have to do is eliminate their restrictions against our agricultural products.

"They have to look at our problems from our point of view--our side of the coin."

CSO: 5300/4584

THAILAND

BRIEFS

OPIUM SUBAGENTS ARRESTED--A joint team of narcotics and crime suppression police arrested three men with almost 10 kilogrammes of prepared opium at a Commerce Ministry silo in the Phra Prabaeng area, Samut Prakan, yesterday afternoon. Thongmuan Simanorom (40), leader of the silo workers, Charoen Phoncharoen (50), a guard, and Som Phanpi, 35, were initially charged with illegal possession of opium following their arrest in a 4:30 p.m. police raid. Police claimed the men were subagents of a trafficking ring and had been distributing the drugs to labourers and workers in the Phra Pradaeng area for some time. The police, led by deputy commander of crime suppression division, Col Chalo Koetthet, searched the silo located by the Chao Phaya River and found 10 packages of opium weighing 9.2 kilogrammes. [Text] [BK250753 Bangkok POST in English 22 Dec 81 p 2]

WARDEN JAILED IN TRAFFICER'S ESCAPE--Former commander of Bang Khwang maximum security prison Han Phansombun has been given a 20-year jail sentence for aiding the escape from the prison of convicted heroin trafficker Siri Sirikun. The sentence was handed down yesterday in the Nonthaburi provincial court. Han was charged in September 1979 with malfeasance in office, exercising his power as the prison commander to illegally release Siri and with conspiring with an accomplice to forge a criminal court seal and release warrant. Siri, who had been sentenced to jail for life, was released from jail on June 30, 1977. But his disappearance was not uncovered until about 2 years later when he failed to appear in court to hear a verdict on his appeal against the life prison term handed down in the Dika (supreme) court. A subsequent investigation into Siri's disappearance implicated Han and two lower-ranking wardens. Siri was arrested in Butterworth, Malaysia, in September 1979 and was later extradited to Thailand to serve out his life sentence. He also received a 21-year sentence after being found guilty of having escaped from prison. [Text] [BK250753 Bangkok POST in English 25 Dec 81 p 3]

'MAJOR TRAFFICKER' ARRESTED--Thai and Australian anti-narcotics officers have arrested a man they believed to be a major international drug trafficker operating between Thailand, Australia, Europe and America, officials of the Narcotics Control Board announced last night. They said Suppha-at Chaoduli was nabbed while he was allegedly on one of his trips to deliver heroin in Melbourne on December 24. Suppha-at, 33, had earlier delivered an amount of heroin to his customers in Australia on December 3. Suppha-at allegedly operated a textile store and a guesthouse in Chiang Mai to conceal his real business, the officials

said. Following Suppha-at's arrest, anti-narcotics officials in Chiang Mai arrested a police official, Pol Sgt Maj Surasak Phaomphan, who they accused of being a courier for the alleged international drug trafficker. They also seized 3,235.8 grammes of No 4 heroin and 230 grammes of No 3 heroin from Surasak. The drug was reportedly to be smuggled out of the country to Australia. [Text] [Bangkok NATION REVIEW in English 1 Jan 82 pp 1, 10]

SUSPECTED TRAFFICKER ARRESTED--Police yesterday arrested a suspected drug trafficker at a checkpoint on Pahonyothin Road after he failed to deliver almost 10 kilogrammes of No 3 "red rocks" heroin to a prospective customer. Kittikon Sae Tang, 28, reportedly admitted that he was to have delivered the drugs to a Malaysian man in the Central Plaza Shopping Centre in Lard Prao earlier in the morning. However, the man, whom he identified as Peter Robert, failed to show up. A police team, who had set up a checkpoint near Soi Ro So Pho Niwet to search for illegal weapons, stopped Kittikon's volvo sedan as it was heading towards Kasetsat University at about 1:30 am. While searching the car, police allegedly found 9.6 kilogrammes of heroin in a large bag on the back seat. Kittikon reportedly told police that he had delivered drugs to Malaysian clients several times before. He was charged with possessing drugs with intent to sell. [Text] [Bangkok POST in English 1 Jan 82 p 1]

CSO: 5300/4584

COSTA RICA

BRIEFS

DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED--San Jose, 23 Dec (AFP)--The Costa Rican authorities arrested two members of an international drug traffickers band operating in Colombia, Costa Rica and the United States. They are Carlos Perez Espinal, a Nicaraguan who is allegedly the chief of the drug traffickers, and Hernando Ibarra Quezada, a Costa Rican who worked at the airport as an immigration official. Ibarra had 2 kilos of cocaine at the moment of their arrest. [PA251425 Paris AFP in Spanish 2134 GMT 23 Dec 81 PA]

CSO: 5300/2114

JAMAICA

BRIEFS

GANJA PLANTATION--Eighteen acres of ganja, including fully-grown plants and seedlings along with 152 crocus bags of the weed, were destroyed by the police in operations in Belvedere district, in rural St Andrew, on Friday. In a six-hour operation, the police also destroyed 68 tins of ganja seeds. [Text]
[Kingston THE SUNDAY GLEANER in English 29 Nov 81 p 2]

CSO: 5300/7519

PANAMA

BRIEFS

DRUG SEIZURES--During 1981, the narcotics department of the Ministry of Finance and Treasury seized \$93.2 million in drugs at the Omar Torrijos Herrera airport. Among the drugs seized were "methaqualon" (\$90 million); 26.5 kgs of cocaine (\$3 million); and 220 mm of hashish (\$200,000). Authorities disclosed that 38 persons were arrested in connection with drugs, including 14 U.S. citizens and 7 Colombians. [PA011658 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 30 Dec 81 pp 1, 10 PA]

CSO: 5300/2114

IRAN

BRIEFS

SHIRAZ DRUG DISCOVERIES--Shiraz Islamic revolution guards have seized 16 grams of heroin and 14 kg of opium juice from a number of persons. [GF291258 Shiraz Domestic Service in Persian 1500 GMT 28 Dec 81]

KHORASAN OPIUM HAUL--A man has been arrested in (?Saravan) for possession of 1 kg of opium. Two persons have been arrested in the Quchan area for possession of 1 kg of opium. [GF311755 Mashhad Domestic Service in Persian 1430 GMT 31 Dec 81]

DRUG SEIZURE IN MASHHAD--The Neyshabur antidrug squad has seized 17 kg of opium from a number of persons. Similarly, the Mashhad Islamic revolution guards corps have seized 31.7 kg of opium and 2 kg of heroin from a number of persons. [GF041714 Mashhad Domestic Service in Persian 1430 GMT 4 Jan 82]

CSO: 5300/5342

LEBANON

BRIEFS

SEIZURE OF HEROIN--The security authorities at Beirut Airport arrested two persons who were trying to smuggle 1 kg of heroin to the United States. [Text] [NC212215 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 21 Dec 81]

CSO: 5300/4707

GHANA

BRIEFS

COCONUTS IN DRUG SMUGGLING--A Ghanaian Indian hemp smuggler recently held British Customs Officers spell-bound for the clever way in which he tried to smuggle into London a quantity of the drug. Bennet Amofa, a 27-year-old clerk, hid the drug in coconuts which showed no signs that they had been tampered with, reports Ben Asamoah, Ghana News Agency Correspondent in London. The officers described the ruse as a "notorious feat in the world of smugglers." At a London Court, Mr Ian Campbell, a customs officer, prosecuting, told the court that but for the extra vigilance of the customs officers on duty at the Heathrow Airport, Amofa, a clerk of the Ministry of Education, would have got away with his specimen because "it was so cleverly done that it was not possible to detect any foul play." Mr Campbell said the four coconuts would be kept by his department and used as training material. Amofa was given a three-month suspended sentence and fined £300. Earlier, Mr Peter Copley, counsel for Amofa, had asked the court to consider the present congestion in British Prisons and not to send his client to prison. He suggested that in future foreign offenders like Amofa should be given suspended sentences and deported as a move to ease the current prison accommodation crisis in Britain. [Text] [Accra DAILY GRAPHIC in English 10 Dec 81 p 1]

CSO: 5300/5618

NIGERIA

USE OF DIPLOMATIC POUCH FOR HEMP SMUGGLING DEPLORED

Kaduna NEW NIGERIAN in English 4 Dec 81 p 1]

[Editorial: "Scandal at Our London Mission"]

[Excerpt] Tales about scandals in our missions abroad are legion, and like all tales ought to be taken with a pinch of salt--sometimes a whole spoonful. But after what happened at our High Commission in London, it would take a fool to dismiss the tales entirely with the wave of the hand. At any rate given our seemingly congenital disposition to abuse privilege--and what can be more privileged than a bag that is immune from the prying eyes of the security forces under normal circumstances?--some degree of credulity is certainly pardonable.

Still to think that anyone would want to and actually succeed in loading any of our diplomatic bags with hemp despite all the safeguards against abuse! It really beats one hollow. It does however prove something which is obvious. This is that a well-organised syndicate traceable to Nigeria must have been involved probably with a little help from some top VIPs--obviously, very irresponsible persons.

To trade in hemp is bad enough and deserves the stiffest penalties. But to use our diplomatic bag as a cover-up for such nefarious trade, with all its implications for our image, and more important still, for our security is simply the limit. And nobody who is discovered to have anything to do with this, no matter how highly placed should be allowed to get away with it. No expenses should be spared to identify such culprit(s) and once identified must be made to face the entire rigours of the law. In other words nothing short of public prosecution in addition to internal disciplinary measures by the Ministry of External Affairs, will do.

CSO: 5300/5617

CYPRUS

POLICE SEIZE SHIP, 5.5 TONS INDIAN HEMP

Nicosia CYPRUS WEEKLY in English No 114, 11-17 Dec 81 p 1

[Text] Cyprus police yesterday made what is believed to be the biggest success in their anti-narcotic campaign so far, uncovering a record giant haul of 5-1/2 tons of Indian hemp stacked on board a Lebanese-owned cargo ship off Cape Kiti. The vessel was sailing from the Lebanese coast to an undisclosed port in Europe.

An official announcement said the "Esperants", flying the Cyprus flag, was stopped by two police launches, the "Kimon" and the "Aphrodite", and a search on board brought to light the all-time record cargo of drugs, worth several million pounds at street prices in Europe.

Disguise

The captain of the ship, a Greek national, and the eight-man crew--four Turks, two Egyptians and two Lebanese--were all taken to Larnaca police station where they were being held in custody last night. Officials did not disclose their names.

Reports from Larnaca said the name of the 275-ton cargo ship had been painted over in white on the bow and a number of the letters on the stern had also been painted over in a apparent attempt to disguise it.

The 'Esperants' was hemmed in by the two police launches under the command of Mr. Panicos Hadjiloizou, the senior officer of the police anti-narcotics squad, and a top Interpol official who has been in Larnaca since last Thursday.

Plaques

Officials said that neither the captain of the cargo ship nor any of the crew offered any resistance to the police, and no arms or ammunition were found on board.

The huge quantity of hemp was found neatly packed in half-kilo plaques wrapped in plastic and sewn into what officials described as 'tidy bags.'

One official was overheard to remark: "This is the first case of Greco-Turkish cooperation I have seen for quite some time," as the captain and his crew were brought ashore and driven to the police station.

Court

Last night the ship was docked in Larnaca harbour and under heavy police guard.

The detainees are due to appear in court today.

CSO: 5300/5341

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CYPRUS

OFFICIALS SAID TO SEEK HELICOPTER FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL

Nicosia CYPRUS WEEKLY in English No 114, 11-17 Dec 81 p 2

[Text] Cyprus Police need a helicopter or small aircraft to help them in their fight against drug smugglers using the island as a transit centre, the Chief of Police Mr Savvas Antoniou has said.

The police already deploy launches and radar-equipped vessels bought from France to patrol the island's coasts and to shadow or intercept vessels suspected of being engaged in smuggling.

Specially trained dogs are also at hand to sniff out hidden narcotics.

But Mr Antoniou, in an interview with 'Agon' newspaper, said: "There is no doubt that a helicopter or a small plane would greatly facilitate the job of the police and help them follow suspicious movements on land or in the sea.

"We have to improve the means and equipment at our disposal, especially since drug smugglers have all the money they want to get the most modern equipment to carry out their illegal trafficking".

Mr Antoniou said the efforts of international smuggling rings to use Cyprus as a transit stage for channelling narcotics was of "particular concern". The situation had worsened following the events in neighbouring Lebanon.

"It is true that because of its geographical position Cyprus is used as a centre for the channelling of narcotics to Europe and America from the countries of production, such as Turkey and Lebanon", he said.

In cooperation with Interpol and other national police forces, the Cyprus Police are striving to locate and neutralise such gangs and have had significant successes, he said.

The police Chief repeated that there was no concern about the spread of narcotics among the Cypriots themselves.

"Isolated cases, mainly involving young people and aliens, come to light from time to time, but the measures taken by the police are a strong restricting factor.

"In view of the traditional abhorrence of our people to narcotics, spread of this evil habit in future is not anticipated", he added confidently.

FRANCE

BRIEFS

DRUG DEALER KILLED--Paris, 5 Jan (AFP)--A gunman carrying a United States passport who was killed in a shootout with police in the Paris metro (underground railway) last night has been identified as a known drug dealer with contacts in Thailand. He was provisionally identified as Paris-born Michel Bernard Naddef, 33, living in a suburb here, police said. He was registered in the Interior Ministry files for drug trafficking. His U.S. passport appeared to be genuine and showed frequent travel between Europe and Bangkok. The drug squad was investigating his background to see if they could trace his narcotics contacts. Naddef was stopped by police when he leaped over a metro entrance to avoid paying for a three-franc (50 U.S. cents) ticket. They frisked him and found a pistol, but he broke away and then opened fire with a second pistol he carried. A police officer fired one shot and killed him outright. Police have been checking the identities of young men in the metro in an effort to control growing violence there. Pickpockets, said to be mainly drug addicts, hold up an estimated 250 to 500 passengers weekly. A young man who refused to part with 100 francs (about 18 dollars) was stabbed in the abdomen on Sunday night, and other passengers made no attempt to help him. [Text] [NC051213 Paris AFP in English 1119 GMT 5 Jan 82]

CSO: 5300/2113

NETHERLANDS

HEROIN WEIGHING 21 KG FOUND IN SHRIMP SHIPMENT

Rotterdam HET VRIJE VOLK in Dutch 17 Nov 81 p 5

/Text/ The Hague--The police in The Hague dealt the drug trade in the Netherlands a crushing blow with the confiscation of 21 kilograms of heroin concealed in a shipment of deep frozen shrimp from Pakistan.

The heroin (market value 2.5 million guilders) was found yesterday afternoon in a raid on a house on Daguerre Street. All the 12 occupants of the house were arrested. The principal resident was known to the police as "small scale drug dealer."

Yesterday evening the police arrested another five Pakistanis in various hotels in The Hague.

The heroin was transported in an airliner from Pakistan to Schiphol. The shipment was picked up there by a messenger service and delivered yesterday afternoon in The Hague.

At the moment when the shrimp (70 foam rubber cases with 42 pound packages) were brought in the house, a team of 20 detectives struck. According to a police spokesman in The Hague "the cases were scattered about the whole house, in the living room and even on the stairway."

By way of precaution, all residents of the house in question, 12 men ranging in age from 17 to 52 years, were taken into custody. This morning only a few of them were questioned. They are detained at various police stations in The Hague, to prevent them from contacting each other.

In June of last year the police in The Hague also confiscated a large shipment of heroin from Pakistan. A Pakistani diplomat appeared to be involved then in this matter and shortly afterwards he was expelled from the Netherlands. The police in The Hague confiscated the largest amount of heroin a year and a half ago when many tens of kilograms of heroin were found in a shipment of Buddah statues.

The Amsterdam narcotics unit tipped off the police 2 months ago about the drug shipment intercepted yesterday. No resistance was offered during the raid on the house in The Hague.

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CSO: 5300/2107