

Air America Helicopter Detained by Burmese

By D. E. Honk

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VIENTIANE, Nov. 2— U.S.

spokesmen have confirmed that an American helicopter was detained by Burmese authorities when it was found to be operating inside their borders around the end of May of this year.

According to the U.S. spokesmen, the Air America

helicopter apparently violated Burma's air space during "bad weather."

However, Michael Morrow of Dispatch News Agency, who reported on the incident in late September, said the "best" sources in Bangkok, Thailand, told him the craft was on a clandestine mission into Burma and was carrying a Burmese military attache

from Bangkok as well as at least one U.S. intelligence agent.

Air America is described as a private charter airline. It provides aircraft for several U.S. missions throughout Southeast Asia and has close links with the Central Intelligence Agency.

Morrow said the sources in Bangkok said the mission of

the white, unmarked helicopter detained in Burma was to visit CIA camps within that country. The craft, according to Morrow's sources, was assigned to the deputy commander of the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in Thailand.

Burma is currently engaged in what one recent visitor to Rangoon described as a

"multi-headed civil war" with several opposing forces, some of them politically motivated but some no better than ethnic bandit gangs.

One group of insurgents is led by former Prime Minister U Nu who was ousted in 1962 by the current military regime of Prime Minister Ne Win.

Morrow's report about the Burmese military attache being

on board the detained helicopter would indicate clandestine U.S. assistance to the Ne Win government.

Recent visitors to Burma report increasing evidence of clandestine American presence and describe it as approximating the earlier presence and operations in Laos. Most areas of the country are off limits to foreign visitors.

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