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INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS BIWEEKLY REVIEW

19 January 1978

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This publication is prepared by analysts in the National Foreign Assessment Center for specialists in the Washington community who are interested in international narcotics matters. Comments and queries are welcome.



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LATIN AMERICA: A Brief Discussion of Drug-Related
Violence

Violence has long been associated with narcotics trafficking in Latin America. The potentially huge financial profits have caused many drug smugglers to have virtually no compunction against taking human lives, particularly those of enforcement officers. As enforcement operations in Latin America become more sophisticated and efficient, trafficking groups and other organized crime syndicates involved in the illegal drug industry are increasingly resorting to violent countermeasures in order to protect their interests.

Earlier this month a Bolivian drug agent from the Department of Narcotics and Dangerous Substances (DNSP) was lynched in a cemetery in downtown La Paz. A note attached to the murdered official's body stated this was the beginning of the "elimination of narcotics agents" in Bolivia. The murder is undoubtedly a scare tactic by one or more cocaine smuggling groups and is intended as a response to Bolivia's current priority program to end the lucrative cocaine trade through registration of coca growers and increased emphasis on enforcement and interdiction.

Although the DNSP has competent and professional leadership, the organization has traditionally been staffed with underpaid and poorly trained personnel. If more DNSP agents are murdered, the reluctance that many enforcement officials already feel about going into parts of Bolivia's drug oriented hinterland will be increased--perhaps to a point where there will be no control at all in certain areas.

In Colombia, the gangs that operate cocaine laboratories and smuggle marijuana are reportedly well armed with automatic weapons. Competition for supplies and disputes over prices and operational territory have resulted in frequent gang warfare. This situation has

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exacerbated Colombia's already serious crime problem and added pressure on the government to solve the country's social disorders. Efforts over the past year to control the problem, however, have resulted in an increasing number of ambushes and assassinations of National Police (F-2) and Department of Administrative Security (DAS) agents assigned to narcotics control. Even judges have been murdered in an attempt by the traffickers to intimidate the judiciary.

Perhaps the most graphic example of violent reprisals by drug traffickers has occurred in Mexico. Apparently pinched by the continuing eradication program, poppy growers in northwestern Mexico have begun firing on the government helicopters that are spraying herbicides. A number of helicopters have been struck, several have been brought down, and at least one pilot has been killed. In addition, steel cables have been strung across mountain valleys, but the aircraft, so far, have successfully avoided entangling their rotor blades. Although it has not been attempted thus far, there is always a possibility that some of the prominent drug groups might employ "commandos" to sabotage the helicopters while they are still on the ground.

Acts of brutality and sabotage may prove embarrassing for the affected countries, but violent retaliations by drug smugglers will not ultimately prevent governments from either continuing or escalating their drug enforcement programs. Indeed, the very extent to which traffickers can retaliate against enforcement agencies is limited at the outset.

For example, regardless how well armed they are, no trafficking groups can match military firepower. Heroin traffickers in Culiacan, the drug smuggling capital of Sinaloa, Mexico, operated with virtual impunity until the armed forces swept out the city late last year. Rampant lawlessness, which the ill-equipped local police had been powerless to stop, terminated practically overnight after the aggressive and tough-minded Mexican Army moved in.

Similarly, Colombian drug traffickers--through their corrupting influence on government officials and their

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indiscriminate shootouts among themselves and police officers--have exceeded the military's level of toleration. As a result, the drug industry in Colombia has become part of the focus of an intensified campaign to clean up violence and crime in the country, a campaign which the military command enjoined President Lopez to undertake.

In the long run, however, a type of symbiotic stalemate will persist. The violent reprisals of the drug smugglers will not dissuade enforcement, nor will the efforts of enforcement eliminate the traffickers--they both will endure. In the interim, violence will be prevalent, and the loss of life on both sides will be simply one more aspect of the complex and pervasive narcotics problem in Latin America.

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THAILAND: Government Professes Commitment to Vigorous
Narcotics Control Program

Prime Minister Kriangsak has offered strong affirmation of his personal commitment to a vigorous government program against narcotics production and trafficking in Thailand and along the Thai-Burmese border. His professed plans, however, have thus far shown few signs of immediate implementation.

In [redacted] official talks with US officials in Bangkok, Kriangsak has strongly reaffirmed his determination to eradicate narcotics trafficking from Thailand, and he has recently emphasized that antinarcotics enforcement elements in Thailand have complete authority to carry out their narcotics suppression responsibilities. Unlike his predecessor, the Prime Minister claims that he seeks complete international cooperation and assistance in such areas as crop substitution and addict rehabilitation.

Kriangsak has stated his belief that the international narcotics problem can only be solved by attacking the source of the problem--by eradicating the opium poppies in the growing areas. He affirms his strong support of crop substitution as a control program, and claims to have pursued such a program in Thailand for years. He insists, however, that the farmers who have become dependent on the cultivation of opium poppies for their livelihood must be given some alternative source of income and be convinced that they can earn more from other crops than from opium.

[redacted] Kriangsak has admitted that irregular armed elements from Burma that are involved in narcotics trafficking, have clandestine bases in Thailand and have been getting some logistic support from Thai sources of supply. He has stated quite candidly that his government and the Thai armed forces have "some equity" in these "irregular armies in northern Thailand." He

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regards this equity as affecting the security of Thailand, presumably by insulating his country from armed Burmese Communist forces operating in the Thai-Burma border area. Kriangsak adamantly denies, however, that he authorized either the Thai Army or the Internal Security Operations Command to supply any of the irregular forces from Burma with military equipment including weapons and communications equipment or that he had advance knowledge of such assistance.

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Kriangsak applauds the accomplishments of the Thai Police Narcotics Suppression Center, but he has plans to make the narcotics suppression more effective. He claims that he is considering a move that would improve the capabilities of the Thai Border Patrol. Basically this would be accomplished by organizing at least four special strike "platoons." In past operations against opium refineries in the Thai-Burma border area the Thai forces have been able to seize and destroy the clandestine refineries but have been unable to prevent the escape of the operators, guards, and workers who then reopen new facilities in other areas.

In other moves designed to tighten narcotics controls, the Prime Minister plans to ban chemicals that are essential to opium refining process--primarily acetic anhydride--from parts of Thailand north of a line yet to be fixed in northern Thailand. He also has affirmed his intention to foster closer cooperation between Thailand and Burma in the narcotics control effort, especially in the common border area. He reportedly will soon invite top Burmese political and military leaders to come to Bangkok for talks on the narcotics issue. Furthermore, as a domestic control measure, he plans to impose heavier penalties on convicted traffickers.

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Despite all of General Kriangsak's professions of commitment and intent, however, the Thai narcotics control effort has not changed much since he became Prime Minister last November. Thai police and customs forces continue to make significant seizures and arrests, but opium refineries are still operating in the border area and trafficking southward through Thailand apparently is still continuing. Although Kriangsak professes great personal interest in crop substitution as an opium control measure, he obviously expects foreign assistance in developing viable alternative crops. Developments in Thailand during the next few months should indicate whether Kriangsak is sincere in his professions, both private and public, of his determination to launch a more vigorous program, both unilaterally and in cooperation with neighboring Burma, aimed at stopping the flow of narcotics through Thailand to world markets.

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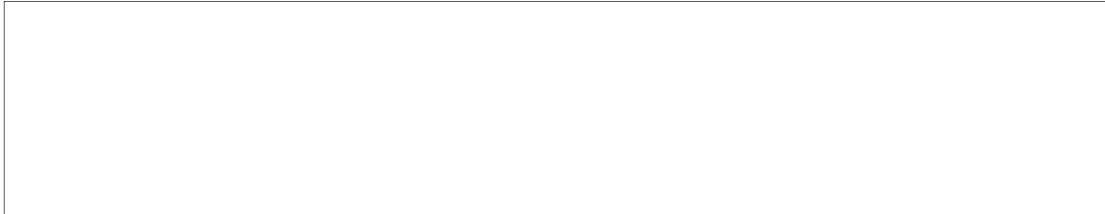
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NOTEWORTHY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS



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GUATEMALA: The Pressures of Burgeoning Political Violence

Guatemala is experiencing an upsurge in political violence that is symptomatic of, if not directly attributable to, the coming presidential election. Typically, radical groups believe that forcing the administration to declare a state of siege and suspend the election will foster public dissatisfaction and political chaos, enabling them to build popular support. President Laugerud, despite mounting public and personal pressures, seems determined to keep security forces in line and hold the election as scheduled on 5 March.

Aside from the abduction of several wealthy businessmen last fall, the two spectacular kidnappings last month by Guatemala's largest terrorist group, the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), are the first major incidents of political violence in the election campaign. They once again impressively demonstrate the daring as well as the substantial capabilities of the EGP to act throughout most of the country.

On 13 December, the EGP kidnaped and killed Luis Canella, a prominent businessman and member of the President's Council of State. On 31 December, it kidnaped Roberto Herrera Ibarquen who was Minister of Government and Minister of Foreign Relations under former President Arana, Laugerud's predecessor. Herrera is currently vice president of Laugerud's Council of State, a member of Guatemala's Belize negotiating team, a wealthy businessman, and a close personal friend of the President.

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The EGP, which claims that Herrera organized and directed government "death squads" in the early 1970s, demanded wide media dissemination of its propaganda and \$2.5 million in ransom in exchange for Herrera's release. The government and the Herrera family apparently complied with the demands. According to one press report from Guatemala, Herrera has been released.

President Laugerud would like to leave office with his comparatively good human rights record intact, but he is under considerable pressure from rightists and businessmen to crack down on the terrorists. Although he has called for stronger measures to combat violence, including the death penalty for kidnaping, he has publicly asserted that he will not impose a state of siege.

Last week, Laugerud called on the three presidential candidates to confer with him on ways to discourage campaign violence. Former President Enrique Peralta Azurdia, candidate of the conservative National Liberation Movement, showed up, but the other two candidates did not. Fernando Lucas, the semiofficial candidate, was late returning from a trip to Venezuela, while the Christian Democratic candidate, Ricardo Peralta Mendez, refused to attend unless the press was permitted to participate. Cooperation by the political parties would help ease campaign violence, but in the absence of a government crack-down, terrorist incidents are likely to continue.

Even so, the election will probably come off as scheduled, and the cycle will play itself out with the level of violence declining after the new president assumes office in July. A tangential but major implication of the latest kidnaping is that it distracted Laugerud from the Belize issue. His attention is critical now if a settlement is to be achieved this year, since he will become a lame duck President in just seven weeks.

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INDIA: Gandhi Splits Opposition

The aggressive tactics former Prime Minister Gandhi evidently intends to employ are likely to disrupt Indian politics. Her decision to split the Congress Party diminishes, if not destroys, the party's potential for establishing itself as India's first major opposition party since independence. The split in opposition ranks also increases the difficulty the ruling Janata Party will have in staying together over the long term.

Gandhi and about a third of her followers on the All-India Congress Committee, the Congress Party's general working body, called their own convention in Delhi earlier this month that was attended by 1,500 to 2,000 supporters. They declared their independence of the present Congress leadership--after having failed in earlier attempts to take over the party's organization--and issued a program condemning the government's domestic and foreign policies. The rebels were promptly expelled from the party by Congress President Brahmananda Reddy and Parliamentary Leader Y. B. Chavan.

These actions parallel events in 1969 when Morarji Desai and others broke away from the then governing Congress Party and expelled Gandhi. At that time, however, by exercising the powers of government and patronage Gandhi was able to retain the loyalty of a large majority of Congress Party members and to solidify her control over the party. Neither wing of Congress has that power now.

The future outline of Indian politics is once again fluid. We are not yet sure of the extent of Gandhi's support in the Congress, or of where the bulk of her strength lies in India. Both wings of the party are sure to begin wooing potential supporters. If Gandhi can muster sufficient popularity in three southern states where elections are to be held in the spring, she could emerge as a leader with at least regional strength.

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If the Reddy-Chavan Congress appears to be losing popular support, many of its members might give in to the temptation to join the Janata Party--especially in the north where the governing party is strongest.

On the other hand, the old Congress Party might appear more attractive now that it is dissociated from the stigma of Gandhi and emergency rule, and disgruntled Janata factions in some states may be tempted to join with it in new political coalitions.

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IRAN: The Opposition, Plus Ca Change

Terrorist organizations of recent years and nonterrorist, nationalist opposition groups that have become prominent in recent months are not new on the Iranian scene. All have spiritual, if not organizational, ties to similar groups of the 1940s and 1950s.

Since 1970, two terrorist organizations have been prominent--the Peoples Sacrifice Guerrillas and the Peoples Warriors. The first is a Marxist anarchist group that draws its inspiration and some training, funding, and weaponry from such sources as Libya, South Yemen, Cuba, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The latter is a religiously oriented, conservative group that believes the present Iranian regime is anti-Islamic and dominated by the secularism of the West. Although they are poles apart in philosophy, the two groups have cooperated with one another because they have a common enemy, the Shah and the style of government he represents. Both groups have indulged in assassinations of Iranian officials, but only the religiously oriented group has been implicated in attacks on Americans.

The same tendencies existed in the 1940s. The Tudeh Party, a traditional communist party dominated by Moscow, was involved in agitation, propaganda, mob violence, and

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espionage. It restricted its murders to party members who were deemed unreliable. Most of the six or eight political assassinations of the period were the work of a religious group, the Fedayan-e-Islam. An unsuccessful attempt on the Shah's life in 1949 was made by a man who carried credentials in both groups. The Tudeh Party also provided training in weapons to some of the religious group.

In the last few months a nonterrorist, nationalist opposition group--at present trying to organize as the National Liberation Front--has emerged. It is composed primarily of middle class intelligentsia, teachers, writers, lawyers, and engineers who represent an important part of the modern sector of Iranian society. Their aims are usually framed in glittering generalities and reflect the politically liberal ideas that many have acquired in the course of a European or American education. Their most concrete demand is the abolishment of the monarchy or its reduction to a figurehead status, and the dismantling of the machinery which the Shah has constructed to carry out his White Revolution. The White Revolution itself is seen as a fraud. The National Liberation Front is a direct descendant of the National Front which former Prime Minister Mossadeq organized in 1949 and which dominated the government until 1953. Some of the present activists were prominent under Mossadeq, although most are probably too young to have been active at that time. For them Mossadeq represents a "Golden Age"; the stagnant economy, paralysis of parliament, rioting mobs, and backstabbing among Mossadeq's supporters and opponents are all forgotten in the rosy glow of that mythological past when, so they imagine, Iranians controlled their own destiny. The major weakness of this group is that it has been unable to adjust its thinking and plans to the completely new situation the Shah has created in the last 25 years.

The commitment of the United States to human rights gave the nationalists new hope. A near article of faith for the nationalists is that the Shah is so completely controlled by the United States that he must do what Washington wants. For them, a simple order to the Shah would put the nationalists in power and solve all of Iran's problems. Similarly, the nationalists thought in 1961 that the Kennedy administration would assist them in overthrowing the Shah. The monarch himself suspected the same thing.

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The attitudes represented by all these groups are rooted in Iranian history and society and will not go away easily. Religious terrorism is at least 500 years old, the Westernized nationalist impulse goes back to the early part of the 20th century and Marxism-Communism to at least 1918. These oppositionists cannot operate within the limits that the Shah has set for political activity. To do so would be to sell out to the system, but some of the nationalists and not a few communists have sold out and have found a place in the system.

The Shah is trying to develop in his Rastakhiz Party an organization that will mobilize mass support for him and his programs. If this is done, he reasons, the destructive opposition will be isolated and will wither away. Meanwhile, overt acts of opposition are met with force, not, the Shah would say, because they are committed by the opposition, but because they are destructive.

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TURKEY: Government Approved

Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit won a vote of confidence yesterday in the National Assembly. His first priority appears to be resuming negotiations on the Cyprus problem by offering new proposals. He also hopes to meet with Greek Prime Minister Caramanlis, both to discuss bilateral issues and to press for more direct Greek involvement in the Cyprus negotiations.

Ecevit's informal coalition held firm yesterday, polling 229 votes, three more than a majority. The opposition, led by former Prime Minister Demirel, mustered 218 ballots against the new government's program.

Ecevit has already communicated to Caramanlis his wish to meet personally with him. He views a meeting with Caramanlis as the best way to begin meaningful negotiations between the two countries.

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Ecevit recently told US officials and UN Secretary General Waldheim that the proposals he intends to make on a new constitution for Cyprus will go further than those of his predecessor toward meeting Greek Cypriot demands for a strong central government, while also safeguarding Turkish Cypriot rights. He also noted that his government, unlike Demirel's, would offer concrete territorial proposals, but that Greek Cypriots should not expect to get back too much. Progress on the Cyprus issue, Ecevit believes, would in turn pave the way toward solving the Greek-Turkish dispute over the Aegean.

Ecevit plans to be his own foreign minister and has apparently won support from his coalition for his foreign policy. His program calls for maintaining good relations with all countries and makes a point of the need for cooperation with Turkey's neighbors, particularly Greece and Cyprus. His initiatives on the Cyprus problem are likely to strike a responsive chord at home; Turkish politicians believe that some kind of movement on this issue is essential if Turkey is to solve other international problems.

The new Prime Minister may have somewhat less flexibility in dealing with domestic policy. Although there is recognition within his coalition of the need to implement austerity measures and eliminate political violence, the methods for meeting these needs remain vague, and Ecevit is certain to hear many different opinions from his colleagues.

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TURKEY: Political Violence

The high rate of political violence that plagued Turkey last year shows no sign of declining since the installation of Prime Minister Ecevit earlier this month. Ecevit has declared that an end to domestic strife is a critical goal of his government. The principal causes of the violence, particularly among students, are deep-seated, however, and defy immediate solution.

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During 1977, between 200 and 300 individuals were killed in political incidents--twice the tally for 1976 and at least seven times the total for 1975. Over 3,000 people were injured and more than 700 bombings were reported.

Ecevit and his coalition partners have announced that they intend to eliminate domestic turmoil and improve security. Ecevit named retired General Ozaydinli to the Interior Ministry, which supervises the national police. A highly respected officer and staunch supporter of Ecevit, Ozaydinli is nevertheless regarded as energetic and impartial in his treatment of extremists.

25X1 Ozaydinli will use every means at his disposal to curb anarchy. Should this prove ineffective within two or three months, he may also impose martial law.

Allegiance to either leftist or rightist ideologies does not appear to be the primary motivation for much of Turkey's violence. On the left, the Turkish People's Liberation Army is the principal advocate of terrorism, but effective police action has decimated its ranks, which were not very large to begin with. Extreme rightists are concentrated in the Idealist Hearths, a nationalist organization under the ideological tutelage of National Action Party leader Alpaslan Turkes. Turkes drew many of its zealous members into commando groups called "grey wolves" and gave them paramilitary training. In the last year, however, Turkes has sought to improve his political standing and has restrained his youthful warriors from large-scale retaliation against "leftists." This might cost him the allegiance of some rightist zealots, however, who may strike out on their own.

The primary cause of violence among Turkey's youth is rooted in economic and educational problems. A university education is essential for those aspiring to become members of Turkey's elite. University students are frequently confronted with miserable dormitory and library conditions. Furthermore, underpaid professors often must teach classes of several hundred students, and frequently feel compelled to employ rote educational techniques. The ability of students and their parents to finance educational expenses is undercut by an inflation rate of over 30 percent. In addition, students

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often face uncertain futures, because of Turkey's high unemployment rate.

Student activism in Turkey began nearly two decades ago when students became involved in the events that contributed to the 1960 ouster of Prime Minister Menderes by the military. Subsequently, political groups became embroiled in factional struggles in which fists and knives began to replace words.

The situation was exacerbated by the importance of personal honor in Turkish society and the traditional acceptance of vengeance as a legitimate course of action. Ideological motivations have since been largely replaced by the need to avenge insults and injuries suffered by friends or relatives. Because much of this violence is spontaneous, it is difficult to control. Only if Ecevit is able to improve the country's economic and educational situations, will he be able to provide long-term domestic security.

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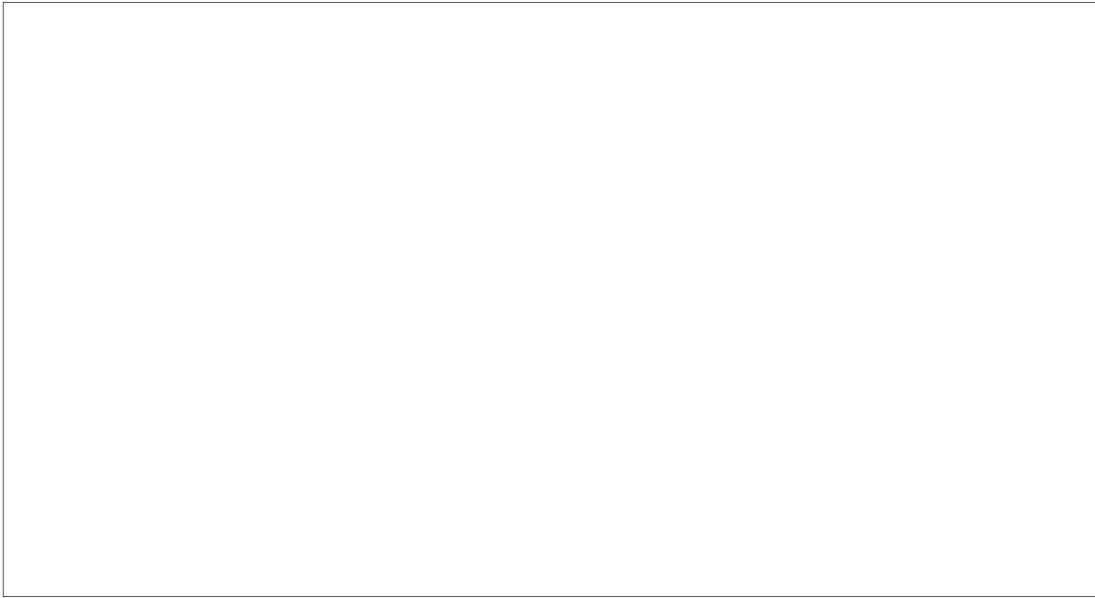
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BRIEFS

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PERU: According to the President of the Peruvian Supreme Court, the judicial system, on the recommendation of President Morales Bermudez, will begin imposing more drastic sanctions on convicted narcotics traffickers. The President reportedly views the fight against narcotics as his number two priority problem for the current year. The Embassy notes that the nation's severe economic crisis presumably has top priority.



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VIETNAM: UN and Vietnamese officials have been discussing the prospects for an early antinarcotics program in Vietnam. According to a report from Vientiane,

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Laos, where talks recently occurred, UN and Vietnamese representatives have been discussing a UN draft response to an earlier appeal for assistance from the Vietnamese Government. They reportedly have agreed that any program sponsored by the UN program for drug abuse control should be managed from Vientiane, at least for the first few years. The UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) director in Laos told US officials on 10 January that he had recommended that UNFDAC provide \$1,000,000 annually for opium eradication and addict rehabilitation projects for the Montagnard tribes in Vietnam and another million dollars for medical care for Vietnamese drug addicts. Vietnamese officials informed another UN representative late last year that there are an estimated 500,000 drug addicts in southern Vietnam and that there may be some opium poppy production in the central highlands. The allegation that the Montagnards may be cultivating opium poppy is highly suspect, however. An American specialist with long experience in this area claims that he has never encountered poppy cultivation in the Montagnard tribal area of the central highlands. American representatives in Vientiane speculate that the Vietnamese Government may be seeking crop substitution aid for this area more to pacify rebellious tribal elements in the south than to help solve any bona fide opium production problem. They also question the Vietnamese Health Minister's claim that no opium poppies are being grown in northern Vietnam. They point out that traditionally tribal groups in the north have grown opium poppies.

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LAOS: According to a UN official in Vientiane, the Government of Laos signed an agreement with the Bulgarian Government some time ago for the purchase of four tons of raw opium from Laos at approximately \$6,000 per ton. The opium reportedly had a morphine content of about 7 percent. The opium was to have been shipped to Bulgaria via "a special plane" due to arrive bringing supplies for the Bulgarian Embassy.



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INTERESTING READING

PCP: A Terror of a Drug, TIME, 19 December 1977, " . . . phencyclidine (PCP) is the most dangerous drug to hit the streets since LSD . . . it has been linked to hundreds of murders, suicides, and accidental deaths."

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**US Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) Translations on Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. Published by JRPS, 1000 Glebe Road, Arlington, Va. 22201.*

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Seized Cocaine Disappears from Bank Safe (BOLIVIA)--TNDD, No. L/7548, p. 48. "Officials of the Bolivian Central Bank and the State Bank are investigating the mysterious disappearance of . . . 3.5 kilograms of cocaine which was being kept in a safe in the Central Bank." The discrepancy was discovered when government officials came to get 30 kilograms of illicit cocaine for incineration.

New Study on Drug Dependency and Trafficking (COLOMBIA)--TNDD, No. L/7548, pp. 52-55. Extracts from a report by a law student at the University of the Andes.

Interpol Discovers Two Million Dollar Drug Laboratory (ECUADOR)--TNDD, No. L/7548, pp. 63-64. The drug laboratory, which was camouflaged on a private estate, reportedly had been in operation for some time and had turned out large amounts of cocaine and "other drugs."

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Doctors and Nurses Involved in Drug Smuggling (URUGUAY)--TNDD, No. L/7548, pp. 83-87. Two doctors and a nurse were implicated in one illicit prescription operation. In another "drug traffickers forged dozens of prescriptions with signatures of professionals who were completely innocent of the undertakings."

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Special Narcotics Squad Tracks Pakistanis in Morphine Traffic (DENMARK)--TNDD, No. L/7548, pp. 97-98. Last November, a 34-year-old Pakistani, who had previously been acquitted of a narcotics trafficking charge, was arrested in Copenhagen and accused of being the head of a gang trafficking in morphine pills in both Denmark and Norway.

Morphine Smugglers Arrested (DENMARK)--TNDD, No. L/7548, pp. 99-100. "Seven young people aged from 20 to 24 years were imprisoned (last November) . . . for trade with morphine base--an extremely scarce substance among Danish narcotics addicts, who prefer . . . heroin and Pakistani morphine pills."

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