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Jack Anderson

**The Washington Merry-Go-Round**

CIA Echoes—CIA agents accused of fostering the opium traffic in Southeast Asia can take consolation from a precedent set 30 years ago in the same area by the old Office of Strategic Services. In a book soon to be published, called "The OSS in World War II," author Edward Hymoff writes that OSS agents parachuted into Burma with silver coins and opium to pay anti-Japanese Kachin irregulars. "If there was any moral considerations," writes Hymoff, an ex-OSS man himself, "they were overcome by the realities of war and military operations."

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OCT 11 1972

## Asia's drug pipeline

## Mysterious Lo,

## the opium king

Third in a series

By Keyes Beech  
Daily News Foreign Service

CHENGMAI, Northern Thailand — "The marvelous thing about the drug traffic in this part of the world," said an enthusiastic young U.S. narcotics agent "is that it's just as romantic as it sounds—and just as deadly."

So it is. The reigning romantic figure is a 37-year-old Burma-born Chinese named Lo Hsing-han, who has fought his way up to become king of the Golden Triangle, a wild, rugged, uncontrollable region where the gun is law, smuggling is a major industry and opium is a way of life.

To American narcotics agents Lo is the first link in the devious drug chain that begins in the poppy fields of the Golden Triangle — the upper reaches of Burma, Thailand and Laos — and ends on the streets of New York.

ALTHOUGH his operations are well known, the elusive Lo has remained something of a mystery to both narcotics agents and the CIA, which has thrown its intelligence gathering resources into President Nixon's global war on the international drug traffic.

But Lo is no mystery to his former schoolteacher, Jimmy Yang, a Shan from upper Burma who manages the Rimcote Hotel, Chengmai's best, and in his spare time commands a dissident army of 200 like-minded Shans who could

dearly love to overthrow the present Burmese government.

"A very reckless fellow, this Lo," Jimmy says disapprovingly, consulting his files. "Age 37. Weight about 135 pounds. Getting a little fat. Born in Kokang State on the Chinese border. Speaks Yunnanese dialect and good Mandarin. Middle class family, if you know what that means in northern Burma."

JIMMY ISN'T sure that Lo is very bright. But his record belies disparagement. A man with charisma and considerable organizational skill, Lo commands a 1,500-man private army that controls the old mule route from the poppy fields of northern Burma to the southern town of Tachilek, where raw opium is converted into heroin and morphine base for the export market.

Lo's younger brother runs the Tachilek end of the operation.

Although by no means the only major trafficker, Lo has proved himself perhaps the most determined and resourceful. Last year it took him six months to move about 70,000 pounds of opium down from the poppy fields to Tachilek.

"He was fighting all the way against hijackers, Communist insurgents and sometimes the Burmese army. At one point he made a deal with the Burmese army to join forces against the Communists in return for some trucks to replace his mule train. You gotta hand it to a guy like that," said an American official.

RECENTLY one of Lo's caravans, following an opium trail more than a century old, arrived in Tachilek with 60 tons of opium, 800 troops excluding muleteers, and 1,200 mules.

"He has to have a quick turnaround to make money on an operation that big," observed a narcotics agent. Lo's problem right now is a drug surplus. Or, to put it more accurately, it is the buyers' problem.

A joint U.S.-Thai crackdown during the last six months has netted drugs with an estimated New York street sale value of \$247 million. The bulk of this came from Burma.

"WE DON'T deny that the stuff is coming through Thailand," said a Bangkok banker, "because Thailand is a natural conduit. And we don't deny that we have some crooked officials who are in on the racket.

"But that doesn't mean that all of us are crooks. And after what I've read about your New York City police force, I don't think you Americans are in a position to moralize. You're asking us to control the drug traffic when you can't even control it yourselves.

"We're tired of being picked on by visiting congressmen and smart-aleck journalists. Why don't you ever criticize Burma, which is where most of the stuff is coming from?"

THE ANSWER to that question is that it doesn't do any good. Even if it did, and he is not receptive to outside advice, there is very little Burma's "strongman" ruler,

Gen. Ne Win, can do about the drug traffic.

The nearly independent hill tribes of northern Burma have been growing opium poppies for more than a century—ever since Portuguese traders first introduced the drug and the British came along to put the trade on a brisk businesslike basis.

Even in the palmiest days of British colonialism, the British were never able to subdue the hill tribesmen, many of them Christian converts who later fought with the Allies against the Japanese in World War II.

AFTER MORE than two decades of independence, the Burmese government in Rangoon has been even less successful than the British.

So what the government has done is to make an uneasy peace with the local warlords to help fight Communist insurgents in return for home rule, including the right to produce opium.

"That way, everybody is happy," says Jimmy Yang. "Ne Win is happy, Lo Hsing-han is happy and the opium growers are happy."

But not quite. At any given moment in upper Burma there are at least half a dozen insurgencies under way. When the hill tribes aren't fighting the Burmese army or the Communists, they're fighting each other.

"IT'S WARLORD politics pure and simple," said a CIA agent, "and the way it works the system is self-perpetuating.

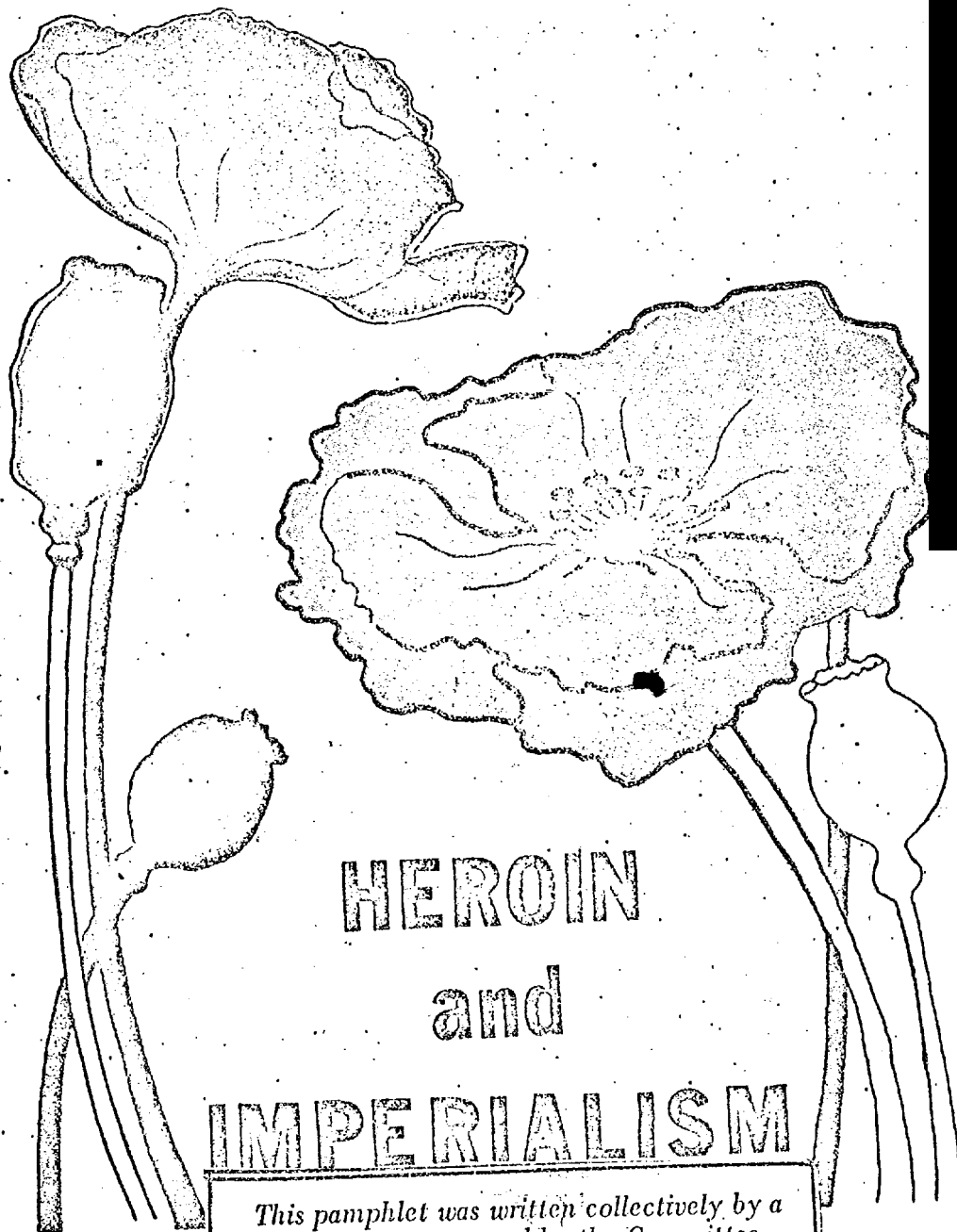
"Without the opium, the warlords wouldn't be able to buy guns. And without the guns they wouldn't be able to maintain their private armies. And without the armies they wouldn't be able to protect their turf."

NEXT: It is not on most maps but Tachilek is where the opium comes from.

April, 1972

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# the opium trail



## HEROIN

and

## IMPERIALISM

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Second Edition

April, 1972

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WASHINGTON CLOSE-UP

# Homage to CIA Drug Fight Ironic

By JUDITH RANDAL

The American Medical Association, which predictably offers few surprises at its annual meeting, achieved the unexpected this year.

As one entered the convention's exhibition hall in San Francisco's Civic Center, one's nostrils were assailed by an odor more appropriate to that city's Haight-Ashbury district — an aroma strongly suggestive of the burning leaves and blossoms of the female *Cannabis sativa* plant.

The scent fired the curiosity of all in the hall who had ever sampled marijuana and drew from the wife of one physician attending the meeting the remark that she had smelled that odor many times in the back of the school bus she drives.

That was only the beginning of the surprise. Following one's nose, one soon came upon a booth housing an exhibit on drug abuse which featured a display about many drugs, including pot, and a device that generated a synthetic smoke that was close to, if not identical with the real thing.

★

There was still more surprise to come in this display, which — it turned out — had won the gold medal in the AMA's coveted Billings Prize competition as one of the outstanding scientific exhibits of the meeting. The exhibitor was no mere doctor or pharmaceutical firm, or even your average, run-of-the-mill science-oriented government bureau. It was that most unlikely of contenders for an AMA award: The Central Intelligence Agency.

Dr. Donald Borcharding of the CIA was on hand to explain the exhibit's origins. Like most agencies, he said, the CIA has an occupational health division whose job it is to promote the well-being of its personnel. When CIA officials at the agency's Langley,

Va., headquarters became worried about pot, LSD, speed, heroin and the like, Borcharding and his colleagues assembled the display.

According to the CIA medic, it was an immediate hit, not only at the Langley "Spook Farm" but also among groups in the community, such as Knights of Columbus lodges and parent-teacher associations. The CIA is thinking about putting together "how-to-do-it" instructions so that other groups can build their own replicas.

★

Granted, the crusade against drug abuse needs all the help it can get. But the trouble with the CIA exhibit is that it does not tell things strictly as they are. For example, it implies that the use of marijuana sets the stage for later use of heroin. This issue is by no means settled and, as a matter of fact, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that alcohol, rather than marijuana, is the first drug to be abused by most people who subsequently become heroin addicts.

In any case, many experts believe that if there is any connection whatever between pot and heroin, it is their illegal status and that if the former were "decriminalized," its link with the latter would tend to disappear.

More important to this discussion than an argument about the casual relationship of the two drugs is the point that the CIA does not come into the campaign with completely clean hands. Reporters have been hearing for more than a year that the agency has been supporting the heroin traffic in the Golden Triangle region of Laos, Thailand and Burma, and that this opium byproduct has been one of the more important cargoes carried by Air America, an airline operating in Southeast

Asia whose charter business is almost exclusively with the CIA. The Golden Triangle region, incidentally, is said to grow 70 percent of the world's illicit opium from which morphine base, morphine and eventually heroin are derived.

For more details on the CIA's complicity in the heroin mess, one might consult an article entitled "Flowers of Evil" by historian Alfred W. McCoy, in the July issue of Harper's magazine. Part of a forthcoming book called "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," the article spells out in detail how Yag Pao, long the leader of a CIA secret army in Laos, has become even more deeply involved in the drug traffic and what role this traffic has played in the importation of heroin into the United States and its use by our troops in South Vietnam.

★

Writes McCoy of the situation: "As a result of direct and indirect American involvement, opium production has steadily increased, high-grade heroin production is flourishing and the Golden Triangle's poppy fields have become linked to markets in Europe and the U.S."

The CIA went away from the San Francisco meeting with a gold medal and, no doubt, a good many doctors who saw the exhibit went away impressed. Some of them probably learned for the first time what pot smells like.

But for others there was a bitter incongruity in the government's super-secret spy arm winning a medal for an exhibit on the horrors of drug abuse. To some it was a little like the Mafia getting a top award for a display of the evils of extortion, prostitution and gambling — and a few of the more socially aware physicians present did not hesitate to say so.

STATINTL

# "Earth" Mag. Says

## U.S. Spy Agency

# CIA - AGENTS PUSH DOPE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—If, and we have every reason to believe it's true, the charges made in the March, 1972 issue of "Earth Magazine," that the CIA is now, and has been in the past, dealing in the dope traffic, it's deplorable. Drugs and its danger was brought to the attention of the American people of the National HERALD-DISPATCH newspapers in 1960. We pointed out in our initial drive against dope, the fact that it destroys American youth.

Hence, if the CIA as charged and documented by "Earth Magazine" is dealing in the dope traffic, they are singularly destroying a whole generation of American youth. Dope destroys the brain cell, it renders the individual, regardless of race, creed, or national origin, useless and powerless to think clearly. Dope, as it was fed to American soldiers in Asia is despicable and deplorable. In Asia America's finest young manhood was destroyed before being sent into battle in a senseless, useless, racist war.

In the article titled "The Selling of the CIA" text by Morton Kondracke, offers documentation, photographs of former CIA spies. The spy was quoted, and we have no reason to believe that Earth is lying on the CIA, that its history is a sordid one.

The HERALD-DISPATCH has been aware for a number of years that the CIA has had stooges in the universities and colleges throughout the nation where they recruit brilliant young students. These students were used as spies to overthrow the African and Asian countries, to murder, assassinate, and destroy people.

"Earth" cites facts that the CIA is involved in the opium traffic with the "fertile triangle" in the border areas of Laos, Burma, Thailand and the Yunnan province of southern China. They say, "about twenty-five percent of the heroin sold in America comes through this Southeast Asian channel. Ironically, the American taxpayer foots a six billion dollar a year bill for running the dope—the CIA, an organization which answers to nobody, is intricately involved in the traffic of opium from the States. U.S. tax money



# C.I.A. IN BURMA?

--DNST

Is the Central Intelligence Agency playing clandestine war in yet another Asian country? Persistent reports involving Americans in secret operations in the opium land of northern Burma point to the possibility.

Most recent of these incidents is the hushed-up downing of a white, unmarked helicopter inside Burma in May of this year.

According to sources within the American intelligence community, the helicopter belonged to Air America--a U.S. contract air line--but was on charter to the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG), the American military aid mission in Thailand, for use of the Deputy Chief of JUSMAG.

But on board, when it was forced to make an emergency landing at a small strip inside Burma, was a member of the military attache's staff in Rangoon, a CAS (Controlled American Source, under the CIA) officer and the pilot.

Initially the American Embassy here in Bangkok could find no information about this incident, describing it as a "Vientiane bar story." Trekking on to Vientiane, this reporter was then told by the American Embassy there that a helicopter did in fact go down in May in Burma and it belonged to JUSMAG.

Querried again, and after four days research, the Embassy in Bangkok could only conclude that the incident had occurred. But neither the Americans involved nor their mission could be discovered.

According to sources within the American intelligence community, the helicopter was on a mission inside Burma, was forced to find a landing zone because of engine trouble, and, upon landing was held for over a week by Burmese authorities.

One source in the Vientiane Embassy said the helicopter was on a mission in Thailand. Another source there said the helicopter was on a mission in Laos.

According to J. R. Cunningham, Laos manager for Air America, two other incidents involving American planes interferred in Burma have occurred over the past

years ago a twin-engine beechcraft airplane went down near Tachilek, in the vicinity of the Burma-Lao-Thai border. The second incident, a year ago, involved a helicopter with an American pilot and Filipino flight mechanic. Both of these were Air America planes that had mistaken Burma for Thailand when looking for emergency landings, Cunningham said.

Cunningham denied that there had been any such incidents involving Air America this year, or that Air America pilots ever fly missions into Burma deliberately.

State Department spokesmen in Washington D. C. confirmed that a helicopter had strayed over the border into Burma last November. The craft was on a "refugee resupply mission" and ran into bad weather. It was subsequently held for one week, a spokesman said.

The State Department denied any knowledge of the incident last May. A Department of Defense source in the military attache office also was unaware of the incident. "As far as I'm concerned, it didn't happen," he said.

Back in Bangkok American press attache Donald Newman shrugged off the May incident. He asserted that the helicopter was held no longer than "about a day."

"It wasn't a big deal," said Newman. "It didn't have anything to do with things real or imaginary going on in Burma."

But what is going on in Burma? All official versions of the story deny a member of the Rangoon American Embassy or of the CIA was on the chopper. A source within the military intelligence community, however, said "We've got guys going in and out of there all the time."

The area in question is known as the Shan states, the easternmost section of Burma, sharing borders with China, Laos and Thailand. It is well-known as the center of opium growing in Southeast Asia but is balkanized by warring tribes, clans and warlords. According to well-informed sources, there are at least three contingents of local forces supported and ad-

The U. S. is also said, by a source close to the Bangkok American Embassy, to be helping to finance an irregular force known as the "C. I. F.," composed of remnants of old Chinese Kuomintang units, left in Burma and Thailand following communist takeover of China. These forces, along with local tribal groups, are reportedly engaged in a mini-war against the communist-supported Meo people for control of opium-growing land in the extreme northeast of Thailand near the Burma and Laos borders.

It is rumored here that aid will soon be cut off to these forces, numbering about 2,000 men, in connection with the new anti-opium drive of the Nixon administration.

A Shan trader, who illicitly plies in gems, skins and other exotic items of trade between Thailand and Burma, said that American weapons, particularly M16 rifles and M79 grenade launchers, in the Shan states is increasing, as various factions attempt to control the trade routes and more recently the heroin factories in the area.

The factories have come apparently as a result of increased drug surveillance in Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. The bulky opium is refined into heroin closer to the fields, making it easier to transport.

The trader felt that most of the arms are first given by the U. S. to the Lao and Thai armies and then sold under the table to various groups in the Shan states. Some of the arms, however, come directly from Americans to help their favorites, he said.

The Burmese Communist Party also operates in the area and is equipping its People's Liberation Army with Chinese weapons, the trader said. He added that American assistance was designed to counter the communist guerrilla movement, which has won some support in certain areas of the Shan states, by eliminating opium growing--not especially profitable to the farmers--and by driving off the bandit-like paramilitary units that control the movement of opium out of the desolate mountains of Burma toward the international heroin markets of the world.

# Air America Helicopter Detained by Burmese

By D. M. Ronk

Special to The Washington Post

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 there 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.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS  
NO. 20  
SERIALS  
STATION

- November - 1971

# HEROIN

Peter Arnett has been covering South East Asia and the Vietnam War for more than a decade. His reporting has won such varied accolades as The Pulitzer (1966) and Sigma Delta Chi (1968) prizes, expulsion from Indonesia (1962), and the government closing of his weekly paper based in Vientiane, Laos (1960).

An Associated Press reporter since 1960, Arnett recently wrote a series of articles with Bernard Gavzer about the heroin traffic in South East Asia and the ways that heroin gets to US troops in Vietnam. UR interviewed him shortly after his return to New York, and asked him about the nature of the drug traffic there.

An American GI lights up a cigarette in Saigon. He poured grains of white heroin powder into the menthol cigarette, from which he had first removed some of the tobacco.

Wide World Photos

Everyone is against the use of heroin or at least they say they are. But beyond the basic idea that people take heroin because their life is a bummer, there are only a lot of charges and counter-charges about who is letting/helping/pushing/or profiting from the heroin trade.

We think that the heroin trade is a typical issue of our time. For example, how is it that heroin can be transported thousands of miles over all sorts of obstacles to poison millions, while we cannot possibly figure out how to get food to starving people?

We hope to do a series of articles and/or interviews about heroin presenting a variety of views and evidence. We have started with South East Asia because it is the largest source of opium in the world; and also because the heroin usage by American soldiers in Vietnam has led to increased information on this issue becoming available, such as the confidential government documents that we partially reprint here.

We do not imagine that we can cover this by ourselves and we hope that anyone who has information, documents, or knowledge will help us with this

UR: Has the CIA been part of the drug traffic in South East Asia?

Arnett: The CIA has indeed been involved, as has the US Government, for years in the drug business, but it's essentially for political reasons — as a political necessity.

Now, why is it a political necessity? At the beginning of the '60's, South East Asia was seen as greatly threatened by Communist China. There was great fear that revolutionary war by people's armies would sweep across South East Asia, to Vietnam, Thailand, Formosa and all the rest. So the American officials out there — the CIA, the American Military, and the Embassy people — figured that any approach would be acceptable if it was in order to resist that great a threat. Eventually, of course, it led to a commitment of half a million American troops in Vietnam. But even before Vietnam, any act to prevent the Communists from taking over the area was considered acceptable, and this included the drug business. Here's an example of how it worked.

In Laos you have this tribe, the Meo. They came down from central China about one hundred years ago. They are nomadic and they are squatters. They move in family groups and live above the 5000 ft. level in the mountains.

They farm crops, including opium, and they have a fairly well-developed culture based on silver ornaments and home-made weapons. The CIA and the American Government considered them important because they were the buffer between China and the rest of South East Asia. So it was in the interest of the American Government to win their allegiance. They were just another arm of the American war effort.

However, in the early '60's the Communists started pressing into Laos. Up to that time these people had been growing opium and other little crops, but opium was their only cash crop. The average family could make \$40 or \$50 a year from it, and that would be enough to buy some silver ornaments and to pay for the pigs for the harvest celebrations.

As the Communists started coming through they started to cut the old trails that these people had been using to unload their opium. The Meo were stranded in the mountains and the CIA figured that the least they could do was to help them in harvesting and distributing their crop. So, on the numerous American airfields you had a liaison



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# Burmese takeover by U Nu now appears less likely

By Henry S. Hayward

Staff correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

Rangoon, Burma

U Nu appears to have missed the boat as far as making a comeback in Burma is concerned, according to informants here.

Nine months ago, the former Burmese prime minister, now reputed to be in neighboring Thailand, was considered a genuine threat, with an outside possibility of upsetting the Ne Win government here.

Now neutral sources describe him as a diminished threat. "There's no groundswell of popular feeling for him at present. He's waited too long and done nothing, in typical U Nu style," they say.

In Burmese official circles, the former leader sometimes is referred to contemptuously as "a soap bubble"—as fragile and drifting as a child's toy.

"He's not worth mentioning" was one comment to this correspondent. "We don't even bother to jam his propaganda broadcasts. Who cares?"

It nevertheless is conceded that U Nu's rebel followers recently took control of the southern Burmese town of Ye near the Thai border. But they were quickly ousted, the government claims.

It also is asserted here that U Nu's whereabouts are known, along with the exact location of his followers. But the official posture is to be cool and not offend Burma's neighbors by making protests about U Nu's activities.

If the government were actually concerned about the possibility of a U Nu takeover bid, it seems unlikely that General Ne Win would venture away from home as often as he does.

Last year, by actual count, he was absent from Burma for 143 days, although a considerable portion of the time was spent in London for medical treatment. This year he had his trip to Peking, and a visit to Australia is mooted.

"He's not acting like a scared man," one diplomat in Rangoon observed.

The fact that U Nu is based in Thailand, meanwhile, does nothing to improve Burma-Thai relations. In addition to alleged guerrilla activity, smuggling back and forth across the border of the two countries is commonplace. One source claims the official trade between the two countries is zero; no "legal" business whatever is transacted.

Thai businessmen, for example, do not even bother to appear at the annual government fair in Rangoon. They operate on the assumption that Thai jewelers already are getting sufficient Burmese jade through other channels.

(Thai businessmen, on the other hand, may feel their chances of getting a fair bargain through official channels in Burma are slight.)

U Nu, nevertheless, still has his supporters in Burma. I remember an Indian shopkeeper in Taung-gyi, capital of Shan State, when I asked him if he still liked U Nu.

"Oh yes," he said, and his face lit up in a way that left no doubt of his sincerity.

And a West European resident rated U Nu as "a minor irritant—certainly more than a soap bubble." He added, "He still is troublesome in the Moulmein area."

Some Burmese still suspect the American Central Intelligence Agency of backing U Nu and that the Thais only give him sanctuary. But most Burmese now accept that the CIA has nothing to do with him, although they think American business concerns, especially oil companies, may have helped finance him, as an investment in possible future Burmese oil rights.

In any confrontation with U Nu, the Burmese armed forces presumably would stay loyal to Ne Win, since it is Army officers who run the country.

Overall strength of the Burmese forces, Army, Navy, and Air, is estimated at 150,000 men. Their equipment is a variety of American, British, and Japanese weaponry, much of it old. Until July 1, this year, the United States operated a military-equipment delivery team here to instruct the Burmese in American weapons, but this operation now has been phased out.

Foreign observers give the Burmese forces good marks. "Better than most of its neighbors on a man-for-man basis" and "no corruption in the Burmese forces" are some comments. "They stay out in the field," one pointed out, "and fighting the insurgents keeps them on their toes."

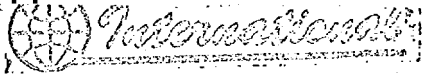
Many a visitor to Burma has had the experience, when flying up-country, of finding himself left behind at a small airfield such as Heho for several hours while his plane fills up with soldiers to be ferried to some outlying point such as Kentung, in the southern Shan State, near the Thai border.

One Westerner recently waited a total of six hours on the ground while his plane made two such round trips for the military airlift. "So sorry," smiled Burmese officials.

"Their tanks may be old and tired," the source continued, "but you don't use tanks in the mountains. You use mules and pack animals. There are no roads, only trails."

For airpower, Burma is behind American jets (some of which are visible at Rangoon airport), French and American helicopters, about 30 all told, and

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## Gaps in Nixon-Mao publicity

By TOM FOLEY

Henry Kissinger's trip to Peking and the forthcoming visit of President Nixon to the People's Republic of China are now getting tremendous publicity in the U.S. news media. But many questions about this apparent U.S.-PRC rapprochement remain unanswered—at least, publicly—and the detailed speculation in the U.S. press deliberately seems to avoid these areas. They are the following:

1) Northern Burma and Laos: ever since the Chinese civil war, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has been deeply involved in this region just south of the Chinese province with the romantic name of Yunnan, or "Cloudy South" province. In 1949, the defeated remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's army crossed over into north Burma and Laos, seized control of these outlying areas, and began calling themselves the Yunnan Anti-Communist and National Salvation Army. Actually, they are the biggest opium dealers in Southeast Asia and they have been financed and armed since 1949 by the CIA.

In Laos, the CIA organized, trained and equipped the 50,000-man secret army led by Gen. Vang Pao, composed of his Meo tribesmen followers, who are the biggest opium smugglers in Southeast Asia. But everybody knows that the CIA created this Meo military force not only for use in Laos: in Yunnan, there are 4.5 million Meo tribesmen who form the most important national minority in south China and who have maintained their ties with their relatives across the Laos border.

2) Tibet and northern Nepal: in 1959, when revolt broke out among the Amdo and Khampa tribesmen of Tibet, it did not require great insight to see the CIA hand involved in it. The Khampas were armed with brand new U.S. equipment, including GI fatigue uniforms and thermoboots. Since both Tibetans and Chinese hate and fear the Khampas, the CIA made a serious political mistake in backing them, because everybody else allied against them. They did get the Dalai Lama, however, probably because he is of Amdo, in China. About 20,000 Khampas

and Amdos fled mainly into northern Nepal after the 1959 revolt and simply took over the country in conjunction with the CIA and U.S. military in Nepal. As far as anybody knows, most of them are still there.

3) Taiwan and CIA air bases: as everybody except the ordinary American citizen knows, Taiwan is headquarters for the CIA's vast air operations in Asia. The CIA base is at Tainan and is run by a front organization called Air Asia, which also has an office in downtown Taipei. Air Asia in turn is a subsidiary of Air America, the CIA line which provides all supply and transport runs for CIA operations in Laos, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Air America has its offices in Okinawa; it is a Delaware corporation with about 4,000 employees listed on its records as working in Asia.

The CIA base at Tainan, in southwest Taiwan, was the launching point for all CIA operations against the Chinese mainland, including parachute drops and reconnaissance flights. This is also well known to everybody except the American people.

But the curious fact is that the U.S. news media have not mentioned a word about any of these areas, and neither has the U.S. government. The Chinese side has been completely silent about them as well.

Any real normalization of U.S.-China relations demands that all these CIA operations be ended—and not only in China—and that the American people finally be told the truth about them in detail.

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19 DEC 1970

NATIONAL GUARDIAN

# WORLD IN REVOLUTION

## BURMA

"Nine government battalions stationed [in north-eastern Burma near the border with People's China] were forced to abandon a large area ... near the frontier" recently, wrote Jean-Claude Pomonti for Le Monde. Since 1962, he said, "skirmishing has gone on virtually without respite.... The regular army [is] composed of 140,000 battle-hardened veterans equipped by the U.S."... Michael Morroy reported recently from Laos: "Burmese border officials at the Thai-Burma border northwest of here claim there is permanent CIA 'intelligence-gathering activity' going on in Burma near the Chinese and Lao borders. 'White Chinese' guerrillas [remnants of Chiang Kai-Shek's army forced out of China] numbering 2000 men armed with M-1, M-2 and M-16 rifles are also said by the Burmese to be active in the same area".... Illiteracy in Burma is 63% according to the last census: 83% of the women and 44% of the men can neither read nor write.

# Burma has Red troubles beyond road to Mandalay

By Henry S. Maynard  
Staff correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

Mandalay, Burma

This is the end of the line for foreigners. Somewhere north of here trouble lurks.

Kipling's Chungking paddle-wheelers went this far up the Irrawaddy River in British days in Burma. And stopped also at this former Burmese capital only halfway to the country's northernmost border.

Much beyond Mandalay visitors to Burma -- be they tourist or businessman, newsmen or diplomats -- are normally not permitted. They can drive 42 miles to Maymyo in Shan hills to cool off at that hill station. But Maymyo is mostly east not north.

One American who recently asked -- and mistakenly received -- a ticket to Lashio in northern Shan State found himself upon arrival there hustled back aboard his plane for an immediate return flight.

It's not that the Burmese Government has anything all that secret or significant to hide north of Mandalay. Armed clashes, ambushes, dynamiting of trains, and mining of roads or bridges are well known to occur in various areas.

It's just that Burma chooses not to expose visitors to perils and risks involved. Nor does it choose to take responsibility for those who would take such risks.

Thus few if any foreigners have seen Burma's insurgency areas at first hand in recent years. Many of the places where British and American soldiers and airmen fought the Japanese in the Burma campaign during World War II today are closed to British, Americans, and Japanese.

But in Mandalay and Rangoon one hears reports about the present status of the insurgency in the north. This correspondent heard several versions as follows:

The government position is that the battle against insurgency is being won. Things are getting better day by day. Fighting and skirmishes do occur but the end is in sight.

## A friendly Rangoon

Troubles on the Chinese frontier, for example, do not signify that China is likely to attack or invade Burma. Peking has enough territory and problems already without grabbing Burma's. All Peking wants is a dependably friendly Rangoon. Rangoon intends to be friendly -- in a neutral way.

You can hear it said by Burmese: "We are not afraid of China." And "the Thais are afraid of us." And "don't forget our Central Valley now is pacified. Our rice bowl is cleared. Our river traffic flows. Our trains run at night. Except for a pocket of resistance, in Bassein there's no mining of bridges."

The English-language newspaper, Working People's Daily, Dec. 3 carried the headline: "Ten thousand peasants pledge to fight rebels."

The story told of farmers from 40 villages armed with staves and bows and arrows who gathered in the foothills of Pegu Province to denounce Burma Communist Party rebels. They condemned atrocities and depredations of rebels "who have terrorized the area for 20 years."

The Burma Communist Party was likened to a stricken tiger -- near its end but still dangerous.

## Less optimistic view

Other versions of rebel activities take a less optimistic view although conceding government success in the central-plain region. Pegu Yoma is where Burmans live. They are the basic ethnic group of the Burmese Union.

Formerly this was the stronghold of the White Flag Communists who are Chinese-oriented Burmese Communist rebels. Then the main White Flag group was decimated in the foothills by the Burmese Army. The White Flag leader was killed and others captured. Now trains run and roads are clear. It is safe to Mandalay by land as well as by river.

But other ethnic groups remain highly restive elsewhere. About 29,000 Karens, Shans, and Kachins are counted as active insurgents. Each group has its own state in the Burmese Union. The borders with Thailand and Laos as well as China are said to be tense with trouble.

## Communists fought

In the hilly Northern Shan State, Chinese Communists are reported to be helping another wing of the Burma Communist Party. Arms and supplies freely cross the border. Engagements of up to 500 men are fought between the Burma Army and Burmese Communists. Many are newly recruited White Flaggers.

The Rangoon government's efforts to be conciliatory toward Peking are meanwhile only beginning to bear fruit. The atmosphere has improved since the anti-Chinese riots of 1957 in Burma. Now Chinese prisoners have been released, and Rangoon has sent an ambassador to Peking. But no Chinese ambassador yet has appeared in Burma.

Further north are the Kachins. Their dispute with Rangoon is religious. Half of the Kachins are Christians. Yet former Prime Minister U Nu made Buddhism Burma's official state religion in 1961. The Kachins want this repealed.

## U Nu poses threat

Further south in the Southern Shan State are the Karens and the Thai border. There the potential threat is from U Nu himself. Nobody in Burma seems sure what U Nu is up to or who is backing him. The finger of suspicion sometimes points vaguely toward "the Americans" or "the CIA" which charges are vigorously denied.

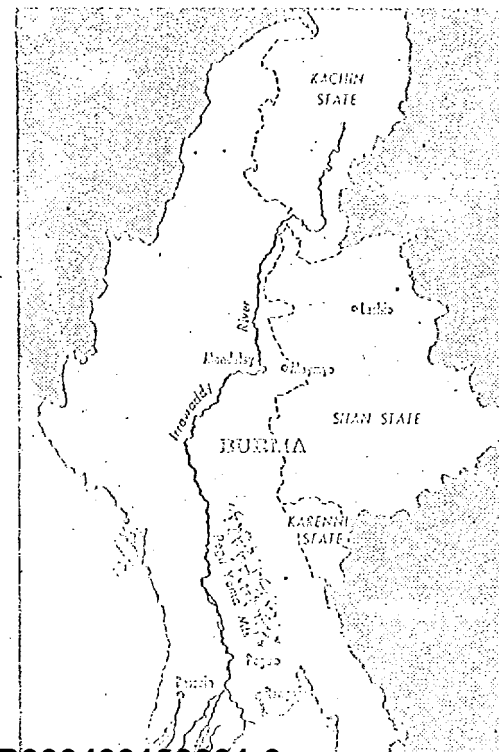
Some suspect a foreign oil company may finance U Nu's possible attempt to return to power in Burma. If so, it might be in return for offshore oil concessions.

But at the moment there is no visible activity inside Burma by U Nu. Burma's Army is regarded as strong enough to handle any such threat.

U Nu still is popular in Burma. He probably could win any free election. But no election has been held -- and none is scheduled until after a constitution has been drafted next June. Even then it doubtless will be a one-party election which Chairman Ne Win intends to win.

So the U Nu threat is not taken very seriously. Yet one hears insurgency is not diminishing but increasing in the border areas as a whole.

If the present revolutionary council were overthrown, the guessing is that it would be done by a new internal military coup against Gen. Ne Win. Not by Chinese. Not by insurgents from the north or east. Not by U Nu.



Super-Secret Missions

CIA's Spy Teams Inside Red China

STATINTL

Tribesmen On Roving Patrols

By Michael Morrow Chronicle Foreign Service

Houei Sai, Laos

This sleepy Mekong river town is as close as a journalist with any regard for his safety can get to a secret CIA outpost which is the staging area for armed reconnaissance teams being inserted by the United States into China.

Sources close to the CIA pinpoint the staging area at a small mountain valley airstrip called Nam Lieu (Nam Yu) 15 minutes' fly-time north of Houei Sai. According to the same highly reliable sources, "there is always a team in China."

The teams are equipped with American small arms, a special three-pound radio with a range of 400 miles, and other special gear. Their missions are to tap Chinese telegraph lines, watch roads and do other types of intelligence gathering. Teams have gone as far as 200 miles into China.

Each team is said to consist of about 15 men, most of whom are Yao hill tribesmen. Yao are used because this tribe lives in large numbers along the mountainous frontiers of Laos, Burma, Thailand and

are approximately 2 million Yao living inside China, and some of the guerrillas have family connections there. Meo and Lao Theung tribesmen are also used for similar reasons.

The teams are normally flown to a sod airstrip known as "Site 93" or "Moung Moune" about 20 kilometers north of Nam Lieu, near the Mekong river where it forms a border with Burma.

Sometimes they are put down right on the banks of Mekong by helicopters. They carry instantly inflatable rubber rafts to use crossing the Mekong into Burma. From Burma they continue northwest, entering China about 50 kilometers from Site 93.

The teams from Nam Lieu are gone three to four months, maintaining contact by radio with Nam Lieu and with airplanes which fly close to the China border in order to pick up their broadcasts.

On at least one occasion an airplane has been almost shot down for straying into China. During July 1968, an Air America "porter" single-engine plane with two aboard crossed the Chinese frontier near the tri-borders of Burma, Laos and China. Parts of both wings were blown away by anti-aircraft fire but the plane was able to limp back to base.

Several of the teams inserted into China have been captured, and some have switched allegiances, returning to Nam Lieu as counter-spies.

CHINESE

There has been at least one occasion when a returning team brought Chinese back

cal Chinese functionaries caught up in the purges of the Cultural Revolution in China defected to a Nam Lieu reconnaissance team.

They were brought to Nam Lieu by the team. There they were well treated by the Americans for a time but eventually turned over to the Royal Laotian Government.

According to sources close to the CIA the five were thrown into the Laotian equivalent of a "tiger's cage," a 12 by 12 by-12 foot pit exposed to the elements and without sanitation facilities, and eventually executed.

DIRECTED

Like most CIA operations in Laos, the one at Nam Lieu is directed from a super-secret headquarters at Udornthaburi airbase in Northeast Thailand. There are four Americans at Nam Lieu, however, headed by a rough-and-tumble veteran clandestine guerrilla organizer named Anthony Poe.

In addition to activities inside China, Poe and his team also work with hill tribesmen in the area, organizing, training, equipping and resupplying them. There is also a joint operation between the "SGU" (special guerrilla units) and Thai Army which they direct at Xieng Lom south of Houei Sai on the Lao-Thai border.

Poe is a legendary figure in Laos, known best for his dislike of journalists, disregard for orders and radio codes, capacity for Lao whiskey and expertise at clandestine guerrilla operations.

He is an ex-Marine non-commissioned officer, wounded in landing at Iwo Jima, American legally married to

World War II. In the '50s he helped organize Tibetan CIA-aided insurgents, escorted them to Colorado for training and finally went back with them into Tibet.

Later he worked in the Thai-Cambodian border area with the "Khmer Blue" anti-Sihanouk guerrillas receiving assistance from the CIA, and in other parts of Thailand with other guerrilla groups for a total of five years.

He has been in and out of Laos since before the Geneva Accords of 1962, and was one of the first Americans involved in arming and training hill tribes paramilitary groups in Laos.

He refuses to have his picture taken, and once literally threw a journalist's camera away for taking a picture of him. He has refused to obey higher orders commanding him to commit his paramilitary guerrillas to large-scale attacks away from their home area, and often disregards radio procedures.

Those who know him say his drinking stems from the dangerous life he leads, particularly the flying he does through the treacherous mountains of northern Laos. Poe is highly respected by some but hated by others involved in secret operations in Laos for his brusque and stubborn manner. He is said to prefer working with the hill tribes to working with Americans and looks down on most American operations because of their heavy reliance on American personnel.

Poe is said not to have been back to the U.S. in 15 years. He is perhaps the only American legally married to hill tribes

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## BURMA

*The author of this report, Sterling Seagrave, knows Burma and its politics as a resident there in his youth, and in recent years as a journalist. His father was the late "Burma Surgeon" Dr. Gordon Seagrave. As son-in-law of a principal figure described here, Edward Law Yone, adviser to U Nu, Mr. Seagrave is also informed about the movement to overthrow the regime of General Ne Win. Because of this relationship, he has not been able to travel to Rangoon in the past year, but has just returned from a tour of rebel-controlled areas within Burma. He writes now from Bangkok, where U Nu and his advisers exiled themselves last fall.*

—The Editors

The traveler passing through Rangoon on a twenty-four-hour transit visa (the only access to Burma for nearly a decade) is struck by the grim, stagnant mood which oppresses the city—a city through the first half of this century as bustling as Singapore and as exotic as Hong Kong. Although there is no official curfew, the tree-lined streets are silent and empty after 8 o'clock in the humid evenings, mocked by traffic lights blinking uselessly. The few stores (all of them nationalized) are as uninviting and bare as props in a Kafka scenario: characterless, bureaucratic, and distinguished only by long queues of despondent men and women in threadbare sarongs waiting since before dawn to collect their meager ration of food or clothing, whichever the store may have at the moment. Around every corner, as any Burmese will tell you, is an MIS (Military Intelligence Service) agent, Burma's equivalent of Haiti's Ton Ton Macoute, waiting to report back to "the Bogyoke"—literally, "General." The Bogyoke is General Ne Win, the ill-tempered

chairman of the ruling military junta, which seized power by coup in 1962.

No foreigner or resident diplomat is permitted to travel outside the narrow central corridor of Burma, which runs up through the hot central plains from Rangoon to Mandalay and a little beyond. This is the only area which the junta firmly controls. It is the stronghold of the ethnic Burmese who have dominated the country for over a thousand years. The remaining rich, jungled, mountainous two thirds of Burma is a no-man's-land of disenchanting hill people, local guerrilla forces, and Chinese Communist militia. By preventing foreigners from traveling outside the corridor, the junta has been able to pass off the persistent widespread opposition and multiple rebellions as the work of bandits and a small hard core of pro-Peking Communists among the restless hill tribes.

### Ripe

General Ne Win has managed to seal Burma off from the rest of the world for eight years now through a strict policy of xenophobic isolationism and ostensible neutrality. Now, rather suddenly, he is in serious trouble.

In Bangkok and New Delhi, there has been speculation about a Red Chinese invasion of North Burma. Confirmation of a sort came from Rangoon when Ne Win disclosed somewhat cryptically in a speech that the Burma Army had engaged in eight major battles near the Chinese frontier in recent months. The enemy, he said, were "Burmese Communists," but many observers thought otherwise.

The reports were confusing, but it was clear that Peking was quietly sending large numbers of men to combat deep inside a neighboring country for the first time since the Tibet crisis of 1959 and the Korean War.

But by far the most significant development to threaten Ne Win directly was the cleverly engineered escape of former Prime Minister U Nu to Bangkok. Once out of Burma, he promptly announced

plans to overthrow Ne Win. These rebel leaders representing all the main ethnic groups fighting Rangoon quickly agreed to back U Nu on the single condition that their long grievances with the central government would receive a fair hearing once Ne Win was ousted. Under a reorganized field command, anti Ne Win forces began training in rebel-controlled areas within Burma.

U Nu insists that he will resort to a military assault only to back up a nationwide uprising; this, he has said, is imminent. An uprising would seem unlikely, given the political apathy in Burma in recent years. But this winter the Ne Win regime is distinctly nervous. Its military command has been quietly reshuffled, and warned to be on extreme alert. There have been reports of sudden arrests in Rangoon and other towns, and unusually heavy activity by MIS agents. And in December, stone-throwing, car-burning riots broke out. The government sent troops to the scene, firing machine guns into the air. Posters in English and Burmese appeared on buildings and at every rotary, damning U Nu and his associates and lumping them together with the CIA—an unlikely coupling. Thousands of workers in nationalized factories and offices were let off work to parade through the streets of Rangoon reading anti-Nu chants from hand-held idiot cards printed at the government press, raising their fists and shouting in careful orchestration.

### Semblance

After twenty-one years of troubled independence, Burma is obviously at a major crisis point. It is a crisis which has been inevitable since independence.

Burma suffered devastating material damage in World War II. Political and cultural foundations as well were destroyed; Burma's age-old system of god-king dynasties came to an end, as did a century of British rule. In 1947, its father of independence, General U Aung San, and practically his entire cabinet, were machine-gunned by an assassin hired by a rival politician. When the Union Jack came down in 1948, the leadership fell to the devout Buddhist intellectual U Nu. He was elected prime minister of his