

STATINTL

Drugs and the CIA

incomplete
as received.

From a staff correspondent in New York

publication of a chapter from his then forthcoming book in "Harper's Magazine" and similar accusations made by Mr McCoy before a Congressional hearing.

The allegations attracted little national attention at that stage.

But, in July, the CIA made a formal request to the publishers, Harper and Row, to review the manuscript, stating that Mr McCoy's claims were "totally false and without foundation."

Although affirming their belief that Mr McCoy's "scholarship is beyond reproach" and refusing to promise to make any changes in the text, Harper and Row agreed to make the manuscript available to the CIA.

That decision caused controversy in publishing circles because of the precedent of allowing the CIA to review a book before publication.

However, Mr B. Brooks Thomas, vice-president and general counsel for the publishing house, explained: "We are not submitting to censorship or anything like that. We are taking a responsible middle position."

When the CIA's critique of the book was submitted at the end of July, Mr McCoy and his publishers regarded it as an anti-climax.

Mr Thomas stated that the publishers were "underwhelmed" with the CIA's reply. Harper and Row made



General NE WIN



General VANG PAO

a point-by-point refutation of the CIA's defence and announced that they would publish the book unchanged.

American reviewers have hailed the book as the first work of near-scholarship on the popular subject of heroin smuggling.

While the book adopts a New Left, anti-CIA and anti-American foreign policy stance, it is a fascinating history of the world's opium and heroin trade.

Mr Colby flatly denies the charge that the South-East Asian opium trade in any way "depends on the support (money, guns, aircraft, etc) of the CIA," as claimed by Mr McCoy.

He said that the US Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs had publicly stated that the CIA for some time had been its strongest partner in identifying foreign sources and illegal trade in narcotics.

The CIA, he said, had no evidence that General Vang

Pao was involved in the Laotian drug trade.

"Because his forces are the principal Laotian deterrent to North Vietnam aggression, many US Government personnel have been in constant contact with General Vang Pao for a number of years," he said. "No evidence has come to light connecting him with narcotics traffic."

Mr Colby said that Air America had long had an effective inspection system, and recently had introduced a more rigid system to bar even the inadvertent transport of narcotics.

Mr McCoy, in his determination to indict the Nixon Administration and the CIA, fails to give credit for strenuous efforts the American Government has made in recent times to combat the narcotics trade.

James A. Markham, a writer on the drug problem for "The New York Times," says that, in certain parts of the world,

"American diplomats" give almost monomaniacal attention to persuading frequently indifferent or corrupt officials to do something about poppy cultivation, heroin refining and heroin trafficking."

Mr Nelson G. Gross, senior adviser on international narcotics to the US Department of State, said recently that the intensive drive mounted by the Government over the past year-and-a-half was beginning to have a noticeable impact on the trade.

"The availability of heroin on the streets is less than it was a year ago. The quality is not as good. The wholesale price is higher and the retail price is higher," he said.

The Government, he said, was moving fast to prevent a major new route of drug traffic developing from South-East Asia.

With the US Secretary of State, Mr William P. Rogers, he had met Chairman Ne Win of Burma to explore means of helping the Burmese Government combat heroin processing and transport.

The frightening extent of heroin addiction in American cities and the street crime it spawns make drug traffic an emotional subject in this country.

If Mr McCoy's book helps step up the campaign against drug trafficking it will serve a good purpose.

But the campaign will not be helped by his politically motivated and exaggerated accusations.

MORI/CDP