

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.7/210  
3 November 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS  
Fifth session  
Item 8 of the provisional agenda

ILLICIT TRAFFIC

Memorandum by the Secretary-General

The Representative of the United States of America on the Commission has requested the addition of the following two sub-items to the item on Illicit Traffic (item 8) in the provisional agenda (E/CN.7/205):

- d) Situation in Thailand
- e) Heroin Diversion in Italy

Information received from the United States Representative regarding the situation in Thailand is reproduced below. In addition, the Secretary-General has the honour to inform the Commission that on 2 November 1950 he addressed communications to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Burma and Thailand drawing their attention to the fact that in accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission might decide to invite those two States to participate in its deliberations on the situation in Thailand should it include that matter in its agenda. On the same date the Secretary-General communicated in the same sense with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy in respect of possible Italian participation in the Commission's discussions on Heroin Diversion in Italy.

RECEIVED

/Information  
E/CN.7/210

UNITED NATIONS  
ARCHIVES

Information received from the Representative of  
the United States of America regarding the  
situation in Thailand

"A considerable amount of publicity is being given to the confiscation of opium being smuggled into Thailand. Following is a chronological review of opium seizure as reported in the English language newspapers during April, May and June 1950:

- April 1 - 20,000 grammes of opium was found in a wood near Denchai railway station.
- April 1 - 37,000 grammes was discovered on the Lampang-Pitsanulok train
- April 5 - 21,823 grammes was found in Mae Kok.
- April 5 - 60,400 grammes was discovered in a motor car in Amphur Payao.
- April 6 - 49,135 grammes was taken from Nai Fad Khaiyekul and Nai Sanong at Haadyai.
- April 10 - a consignment of 446,400 grammes was taken from a goods wagon in the Bangkok railway station.
- April 13 - 1,708,700 grammes of opium was discovered in a motor car in Takyang Nai Indr.
- April 17 - 60,000 grammes was found in a boat on the Chao Phya River near Klong sarn.
- April 18 - 16,000 grammes was discovered in a train at Denchai railway station.
- April 22 - 40,000 grammes was taken from a goods train at the Denchai railway station.
- May 13 - a large consignment of opium was taken from a goods train at Lampoon.
- May 19 - opium hidden in coconuts and valued over 20,000 ticals was seized at a local railway station.
- May 24 - 12 packets of opium were taken from the Chiangmai train.
- May 24 - 30 tins of opium were thrown from the North Express at Lopburi where they were seized.
- May 26 - 4 packages of opium were confiscated on the Chiangmai Express.
- May 29 - 123.5 kilograms were taken from an express train at Prae and 6 kilograms were taken from a bag belonging to a priest at Denchai Station.
- June 2 - 3 kilos concealed in book binders were taken from the North Express.
- June 3 - 5 tons were seized between Chiangrai and Lampang.
- June 7 - 11 kilograms of opium was taken at the local railway station and 2 tons were confiscated at Lampang.
- June 13 - 23 kilograms taken from North Express.
- June 15 - 25 kilograms taken from North Express.
- June 20, 30,000 grammes taken from North Express.
- June 22 - packages of opium were taken from the ship SS Chiplam anchored in the Chao Phya River (no amount stated).

/June 23

June 23 - 3,300 grammes of raw opium was confiscated from the North Express train.

June 26 - 40 to 50 kilograms of opium was taken from the North Express.

June 27 - a police major of the Excise Suppression Division, a passenger on the North Express, discovered and confiscated 19 kilograms of opium.

The alleged source of this opium is Burma. According to our information opium seizures of this magnitude have been occurring in Thailand for the past several years. I do not see any indication from your section that seizure reports are being submitted by the Government of Thailand in accordance with the provisions of the International Narcotic Conventions, nor do I see any signs that the Burmese Government is submitting any information to the United Nations concerning this alleged large production of opium.

I quote below portions of the editorial from the Bangkok Post dated April 20, 1950. I have omitted some of the more harsh criticism contained in this article:

"A report yesterday that another two tons of opium had been seized by the authorities in Chiangrai only makes the more amazing the antics taking place in this strange and illicit trade.

"According to police and press reports, a total of more than eight and a half tons of opium has been seized since the first of this year. On 17 January sixty kilograms were seized; on 16 February 2,953 kilograms; 21 February 199 kilograms; 22 February 1,300 kilograms; 3 March 1,542 kilograms; 11 March 560 kilograms and now another approximate 2,000 kilograms. Eight and a half tons. It should also be mentioned that last December another four and a half tons was seized in Lampang.

"One cynical observer on reviewing these figures noted that as the situation now stands opium traders can find it to their profit to bring opium into Thailand and see that it is seized by police and still make a profit. He reasoned thusly:

"Last year a reward of twenty-five satang was paid for each gram of opium seized. This has now been raised to be baht per gram.

"The government can afford to pay this reward for it in turn can sell the opium for four baht per gram, realizing a profit of three baht on each gram. On the opium seizures so far made this year the government has,

/theoretically

theoretically at least, paid out 8.6 million baht in rewards, but can sell this total for more than thirty-four million baht on the local market.

"The government annually buys about twenty-four tons of opium anyway, as part of its monopoly program with opium den concessionaires. This means that it is receiving more than a third of its opium supply at bargain prices.

"Now to view it from the trader's angle:

"He can buy opium along Thailand's borders for about 200 baht per kilogram or about one-fifth of a baht per gram. Therefore it is to his advantage to buy all the stocks he can at these prices, then have his shipments seized by police, with whom he can share the reward of one baht per gram. He makes more than a hundred percent profit, the policeman gets his share of the reward and the government gets a cheap supply of opium".