

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 14, 1977

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Peter Bourne ^{P.B.}

SUBJECT: Monthly Narcotic Report #3

HEROIN

The overall situation with heroin continues to improve. The average purity for samples seized in March was 5.5 per cent, a continuing drop from 5.9 per cent in February. The Mexican opium poppy eradication program for the spring 1977 harvest is over. The Mexican Attorney General's Office reports 25,505 fields destroyed a figure confirmed by our own people. The eradication campaign has been most successful in the Northwest zone where 96 per cent of the plantings were destroyed. We will monitor the fields throughout the summer to be sure new plantings are not starting. I will go there for two days next week to make an on site assessment of our progress.

I have submitted to you a separate report on my trip to South-east Asia. In summary, the situation in both Burma and Thailand is looking brighter. The members of the Burmese cabinet with whom I met impressed me with their commitment to the eradication program. They have forcibly reduced opium plantings by 16,000 acres this year, and have attacked every major opium caravan. We are in continuing negotiation to provide them fixed wing aircraft to increase their military flexibility. In Thailand, I received the strongest assurances from Prime Minister Thanin of his commitment to interdict the traffickers, support the substitution program and deal with drug related corruption. Evidence of his commitment is everywhere. The price of heroin at the refineries on the Thai/Burma border is \$1,800 kg., the lowest in years, reflecting fear by the traffickers of buying because of continuing heat from the Thai government. I am discussing with the Coca Cola company the possibility of their sponsoring coffee cultivation as a substitute for opium in northern Thailand. The situation in Laos is chaotic and it is clear that no nationwide policy yet exists, but they represent a minimal fraction of the international market.

The one bleak spot is Afghanistan where opium cultivation has increased dramatically this year. This is not yet affecting the international market, but we have asked Secretary Vance to express our concern in the strongest terms to President Daoud. We may need to involve you at some stage.

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for Preservation Purposes**

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MARIJUANA

A recent study in California shows that decriminalization of marijuana has saved the state government, \$12 million in the last year.

COCAINE

We are devoting considerable time and effort to formulating an appropriate strategy for dealing with Colombian cocaine traffic and the pervasive government corruption. I would like to discuss this issue with Rosalynn before she leaves on her visit there.

REORGANIZATION

The first component of the Drug Abuse Law Enforcement reorganization study-border interdiction is now well advanced and we anticipate having a final report by the first week in July. The report on the initial fact finding phase has been very well received by the agencies involved.

DRUG MESSAGE

In view of your suggestion that we delay the initial drug message until we have the complete detailed package prepared and make only one statement, we have initiated a comprehensive mechanism with all involved agencies to allow them full participation in the development of the message. We plan to have the message with supporting legislation ready for you by June 9th.

ROPER POLL DATA

I am attaching some data from the Roper Report showing that drug abuse remains a consistently high issue of concern for the American people.

PGB:ss

Attachment