

British Police Crack Down On Hongkong Drug Traffic

Hongkong — (UPI) — The British have cracked down on the narcotics traffic in Hongkong. But the fight is by no means won.

Last year, 11,000 persons were convicted here on narcotics charges. Some 1,500 pounds of opium was seized. Police pulled as many as 1,000 raids a month.

But the British privately admit the traffic has not been stopped, nor will it be completely shut off until opium is eliminated at the source—in the poppy fields of Southeast Asia, for instance.

Insinuations and outright accusations that the Hongkong government tolerates or at least does little about the flow of narcotics through here are not true.

In December, 1954, the police established a special bureau to coordinate the fight against narcotics. Since the bureau was set up, the number of convictions and seizures has jumped sharp-

ly and they are still rising.

By Ship and Air

During 1955, nearly twice as many dope cases came before the courts as during 1954. Seizures of raw opium, for example, climbed from 65 pounds in 1954 to 1,500 pounds in 1955. During the first three months of 1956 alone, 450 pounds of opium, heroin and morphine were grabbed.

It is believed that the bulk of the opium that arrives here is grown in the area along the Thailand-Burma-Lao-Vietnam-China border. The area is so inaccessible, however, that little evidence has been gathered as to which country most of the poppy fields are in.

It is not true, according to the British, that there is any evi-

dence opium enters Hongkong directly from Red China. There has not been a seizure in years of narcotics being smuggled into Hongkong by junk from Canton or across the China-Hongkong border.

The narcotics are smuggled by ship and airliner, and, significantly, virtually all the ships and planes on which narcotics have been found stopped off at least briefly in Bangkok.

Last year, one case involved some 400 pounds of opium being found in suitcases aboard a commercial airliner. The baggage had not been manifested. The pilot did not know he was carrying extra cargo.

Heroin Smoking

Smugglers are ingenious. Op-

ium from which morphine and heroin are derived, is concealed in plaster busts, oranges, pillows and even in firecrackers.

The latest gimmick is probably the most ingenious. Morphine compressed into small blocks was first discovered in Japan in 1954. Last year, a U.S. Air Force sergeant was arrested carrying similar blocks from Bangkok to Hongkong.

The blocks are four by three by one inches in size and weigh only eight ounces. The loose powder mixed with another substance is compressed into a mould and hardened. Then it is wrapped in tight-fitting cellophane. It can be carried in a pocket.

One of these blocks is equivalent to five pounds of opium

with 10 per cent morphine content. Police here have not yet sorted out the method used to compress the powder.

Just what percentage of the narcotics entering Hongkong stays here is impossible to estimate. But the use of heroin has doubled during the past year. The reasons probably are that heroin smoking is less obvious, requires virtually no equipment and gives a greater bang to the addict. The total for the colony is undoubtedly far greater, however. Significantly, only one addict was confined last year under 20 years of age.

Who Profits?

A heroin smoker actually needs only the heroin and a strip of tinfoil. The powder is placed in the tinfoil, which is then rolled like a cigarette. A match is burned under the tinfoil and

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the addict inhales. It takes less than a minute for the whole operation.

Heroin is manufactured here. Last year, four plants were raided and so far this year another four have been uncovered.

One police source said the campaign against narcotics has become so heated that many heroin chemists are leaving Hongkong for less precarious points. Some of these chemists are remarkably good at their job. In fact, one was so good, that police chemists tried to get him to explain his methods. He declined.

The sale price for heroin here runs from \$50 to \$65 per ounce depending on the quality. Morphine is slightly cheaper. Opium goes at \$120 to \$200 per pound.

depending on the morphine content.

The best market for opium is the United States, where it sells for \$900 per pound. Prices taper off elsewhere, such as in Singapore and India.

Heroin is far more expensive. In the United States, the wholesale price runs anywhere from \$300 to \$500 per ounce. By the time the peddlers have diluted it, the heroin retails at an even higher price.

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Plans Made for Gifted Students

Manhattan, Kan. — (UPI) — Kansas State college this fall will offer a special program adapted to the needs of gifted students.

John C. Weaver, dean of the school of arts and sciences, said the program would provide for both special courses and special counselling for particularly able students. It will be available, he said, to those in the upper five per cent of their college class.

"The particular challenge in higher education today is the training of our best minds," he said. "Such individuals are society's most valuable commodity. We believe our new program is a step toward providing the best education possible for our students at all levels of competence."

Freshmen entering on the honors program, on the basis of their high school grades and scores made in entrance tests, will be assigned to special advisers in their major field and a special four-year course of study will be worked out for each individual.

Students already in college may compete to enter the honors program if their records indicate they are at the top of their class.

The honors course will permit students to bypass elementary courses in which the individual already has competence.

"While the program does not propose to shorten the four years of study necessary to obtain a degree," Weaver said, "it does allow the gifted students to reach goals beyond the ordinary limits of undergraduate education."

All Said To Have Love for Poetry

Philadelphia — (UPI) — Every man and woman has an inborn love for poetry, says Mary O'Connor, herself a poetess of some renown.

It is the universal love for poetry, she explained, that impels a man to memorize the lusty lines of "The Shooting of Dangerous Dan McGrew," just as a scholar will make the study of Shakespeare his life's work.

Mary, who directs the activities of the American Poetry League from a hospital bed in the Philadelphia Home of Incurables, lately has undertaken to make Poetry Day, celebrated in Pennsylvania on Oct. 15, an international observance.

"A land without poetry would be unthinkable," she said. "The hundreds of varieties may differ with the individual's taste, but few people have gone through life without saving a few choice clippings of poetry they particularly loved."

Use Tribune Want Ads



EYEWITNESS—Dr. Arthur Besley holds field glasses through which he saw a woman sun bather bludgeoned to death in a Chicago park by a husky man who is still at large. Besley told police he was looking at the park from his 15th story apartment when the man jumped from the bushes, looped his shirt around the woman's neck and struck her.

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