

Heroin Flow Unchecked, Report Says

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A report to a congressional committee says a major share of heroin coming to the United States flows almost freely from Thailand, unhampered by corrupt Thai officials and meager U.S. anti-drug efforts.

The report to the House Foreign Affairs Committee was written by Rep. Lester L. Wolff (D-N.Y.), recently named chairman of a special narcotics subcommittee. A copy of the report, to be released Thursday, has been obtained by the Associated Press.

The report says that of 1,400 tons of opium grown annually, 700 tons comes from the so-called Golden Triangle area of Burma, Laos and Thailand—with the latter country the key to the trafficking of heroin base and heroin, derivatives of opium.

"Thailand . . . is the major conduit for the flow of opium and its derivatives to the illicit market in Vietnam, Hong Kong and ultimately to the United States," the report says.

It quotes American officials as saying Thai police seldom seize opium caravans "partly because of a lack of expertise and partly because of an unwillingness on the part of some officials to exert the effort necessary to intercept the smugglers."

Although conceding a lack of manpower, the report adds that "much of the blame seems more properly attributable to corruption and lack of cooperation among middle and lower echelon law enforcement officials."

It says Thai police have increased seizures of narcotics but the information that led to them came from U.S. officials and the increase has not kept up with the increased volume of heroin traffic in and through Thailand.

Drugs of all types "are readily available throughout Thailand and are widely used by American personnel" stationed there, according to the report.