

# Charges Against Ex-Ambassador

## Washington

Two former U. S. officials in Laos charged yesterday that senior officials of the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane were involved in widespread corruption from 1970 to 1973, using profits from sales of excess U.S. military goods for personal gain.

The charges were immediately denied by former U.S. Ambassador G. McMurtrie Godley, but he acknowledged that the investigators for the General Accounting Office and the Agency for International Development had concluded "there were instances where people didn't follow the regulations to the letter."

The two officials, Howard F. Mushett of San Clemente, Calif., former embassy chief of security forces, and retired Colonel Ralph F. Newman, former chief of the AID Requirements Office — through which military

equipment was funneled to the Laotian army — testified before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee.

Mushett's charges were largely directed against Godley and the former embassy administrative officer, Reed Robinson, who has since retired from the Foreign Service.

Mushett charged that large quantities of excess U.S. military property were illegally bartered by Robinson and other embassy officials.

Newman claimed that embassy officials ignored the theft of entire truckloads of aviation gasoline by Laotian Air Force personnel, even after it discovered that some of the gas was being resold to North Vietnamese truckers operating on the Ho Chi Minh trail. State Department sources said it was simply untrue that the embassy had "acquiesced" in such transactions.

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