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Prisoner of Pathet Lao

Pilot Lost in a Cloudy War

Washington

Civilian contract pilot Emmet Kay, the first confirmed American POW in Laos since last February's cease-fire there, was the victim of a shadow war the Central Intelligence Agency has fought in and financed for a decade.

Details surrounding Kay's work — and his capture — are as cloudy as the war itself.

Did Kay fly missions for the CIA? The company he worked for says "no." A knowledgeable congressional investigator says that the flight may have been paid for on paper by another U.S. agency but that the majority of such flights probably were actually for the CIA.

AIRLINES

And in the Laotian capital of Vientiane, officials said Kay was on a "routine" mission — ferrying at least four CIA-recruited guerrilla soldiers — when his small propeller-driven plane went down May 7 over Communist territory in bad weather while en route to a Laotian government outpost at Bouam Long, northeast of the Plain of Jars.

A Shock For Dad

Atlanta

Air Force Captain James Phillips celebrated Father's Day as the proud but "shocked" father of quadruplets.

His 26-year-old wife Sybil, was in labor for only three hours Saturday afternoon. The quadruplets — three girls and a boy — were born within seven minutes of each other.

Because of their small size, the babies were listed as being in guarded condition at Cobb General hospital yesterday but were doing well. The largest baby was three pounds, 11 ounces and the smallest two pounds six ounces.

Phillips, a student at Georgia Tech, said they had been warned to expect triplets. They already had one child.

United Press

Congressional reports suggest Kay was one of perhaps more than 500 Americans working for contract airlines and carrying supplies and irregular troops hired by the CIA to fight the Communists in Laos. This CIA support

began in 1962.

The CIA, in keeping with its usual policy concerning the secret war in Laos, refuses to make any comment.

Kay worked for Continental Air Services, Inc., a "distant subsidiary" of Conti-

Continental Airlines. His capture was disclosed after Pathet Lao officials claimed June 1 to have captured an American major. Although Kay is a civilian, the Communists said he was a military pilot.

TALKS

The State Department acknowledged Friday that officials from the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane had been meeting with Communist Pathet Lao officials to discuss terms for Kay's release.

A spokesman for Continental Airlines in California contacted Saturday said Kay had worked for Continental Services in Laos about four years.

Continental Air Services operates from headquarters in Vientiane, the spokesman said, usually flying missions under contract to the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID).

About 90 of its 500 employees in Laos are U.S. citizens, and it does about \$6 million worth of business a year with the U.S. government, the spokesman said.

CONFUSION

Asked if it did contract work for the CIA, he replied: "No. Air America is the CIA's airline. Everybody is always confusing us with them. It's a pain in the neck."

But Congressional investigator Richard M. Moose, sent to Laos three times to

probe the secret war for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has reported that Continental Air Services is one of three main charter carriers doing work for the CIA.

Moose told UPI in a telephone interview that all U.S. government flying contracts in Laos are issued through AID, which then bills the agency that actually uses the airplane.

Moose cited figures from his latest report this spring showing that AID itself expects to spend only \$5.8 million for contract flying in the current fiscal year, but that the total bill for U.S. government contract flying in Laos for the first half of the year alone was \$22.9 million. Most of this, he said, was spent by the CIA.

POOL

"It is a kind of interchangeable pool," Moose said. "All of the American agencies use the airlines interchangeably. Then at the end of the year they total out the bill. At any rate, Continental is used by the CIA just as it uses Air America."

Reports by Moose and James G. Lowenstein — virtually the only source of information on the secret war fought by 44,330 CIA-paid Thai and Laotian irregular troops — show three main contract airlines in Laos.

They are Continental Air Services, Air America, with \$36 million worth of contracts and 423 American employees in fiscal year 1972, and Lao Air Development, with \$2.4 million in U.S. contracts in fiscal year 1972.

The major activities of these airlines, according to the reports, are to transport the irregular troops for the CIA, carry their supplies, and transport food for both the troops and their families. Secondary activities are to carry CIA case officers and AID refugee workers.

United Press