

Thailand

Heroin

CIA

Unchecked

WASHINGTON — (AP) — 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. The report is to be released Thursday. A copy was obtained by The Associated Press.

The report says that of 1400 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 states.

Smugglers

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."

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

"Reports indicate that heroin can be bought within 100 yards of Udorn Air Force Base and is readily available to American school-age dependents in Bangkok," it says.

Kong Kong

Essential to stopping the drug traffic, says the report, is the capture of about a dozen Thai trawlers used to smuggle narcotics from Bangkok to other ports — primarily Hong Kong, which it describes as the center of the Asian narcotics trade.

These trawlers sail unimpeded the year around despite official knowledge of their use and the availability of sophisticated detection devices to trap them. Each trawler is capable of carrying the equivalent of about six percent of the annual consumption of heroin.

"It is estimated these trawlers bring about 50 tons of opium and its derivatives to Hong Kong."

Narcotics control in Hong Kong is difficult with more than 7,000 ships and more than a million air passengers arriving there each year, says the report.

Only 26 Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and six U.S. Customs agents have been assigned to Southeast Asia.