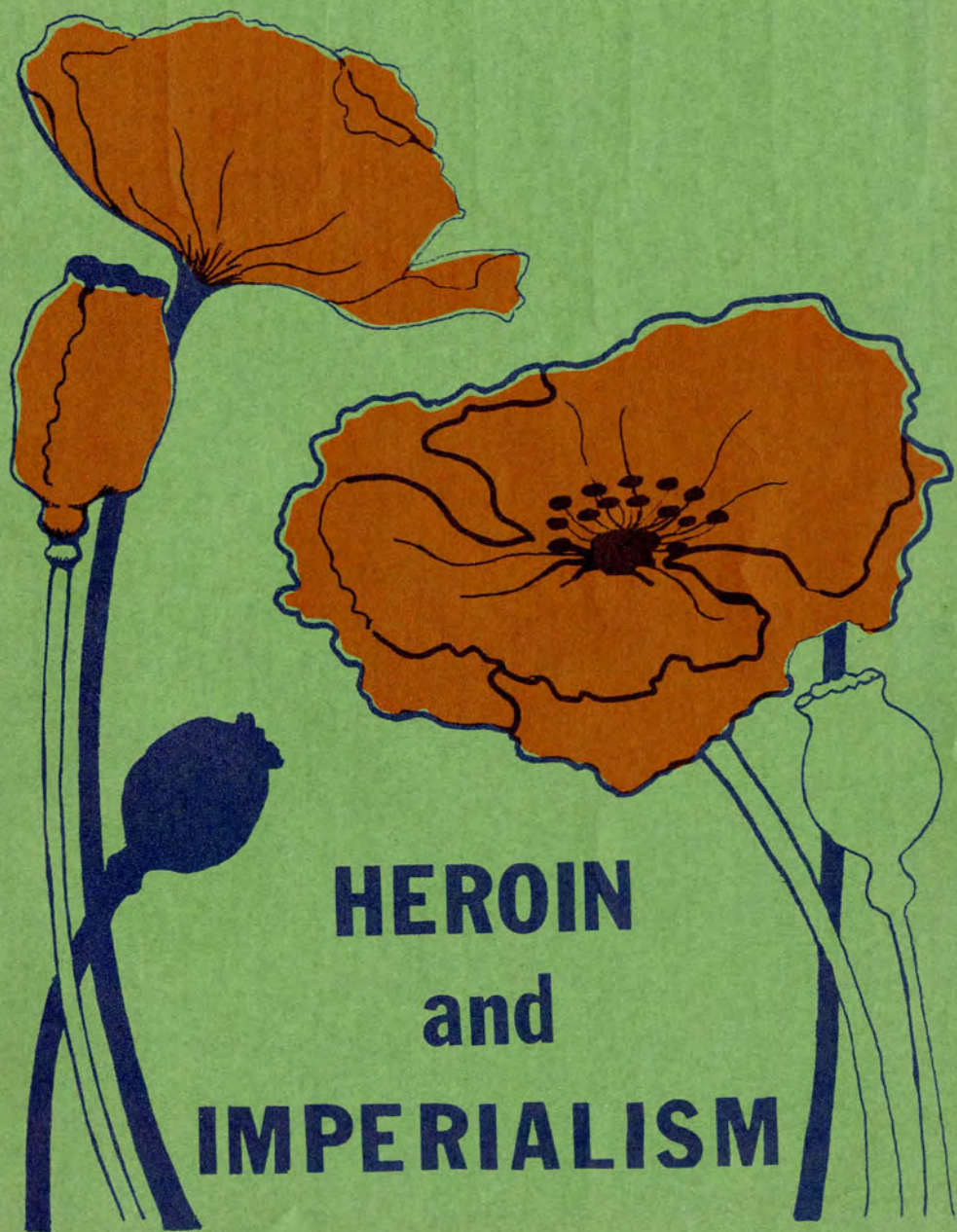


# **the opium trail**



**HEROIN  
and  
IMPERIALISM**



*Yes, under its ecstatic influence, one is made oblivious to ugly realities. But there is a trick, a cruel monstrous trick, a deadly flim-flam awaiting its naïve, youthful victim, for as the illusionary beauty of the heroin-induced high begins to vanish, correspondingly, the temporary immunity from reality attained under its chemical trance vanishes. The reality that the pathetic victim sought so desperately to escape, once again descends upon and re-engulfs him. The rancid stench of urine-soaked tenement dungeons begins to assail his nostrils. Those black cries of anguish seem to blend with the wailing sirens of pig-police cars. He hears them now, very loud and very clear — in stereophonic sound. And that garbage that flows over into the streets from uncollected trash cans is felt underfoot. . . . Whatever he must do for a "shot" he will do, he must do, for he is a slave to the plague.*

-Michael Tabor, ex-junkie,  
now a black revolutionary

*When you're a junkie you've got to look out for yourself and only yourself, cause no one else is going to look out for you. So you are constantly trying to fuck people and people are constantly trying to fuck you. In a way that's how the system works; people fuck over each other. Instead of trying to help your neighbor, you're just trying to help yourself.*

*A junkie in Rising Up Angry*

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60¢

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# **the opium trail**

**HEROIN  
and  
IMPERIALISM**



*This pamphlet was written collectively by a study group supported by the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars. The group included Pat Haseltine, Jerry Meldon, Charles Knight, Mark Selden, Rod Aya, Henry Norr, and Mara. Thanks to all who helped, especially Jim Morrell, Tod McKie, and Jancis Long.*

*Second Edition  
April, 1972*



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# COUGH

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# ADDICTION IN AMERICA

**A**DDICTION TO OPIUM and its derivatives has been an American problem for nearly as long as our nation has existed. In the nineteenth century, before their addictive power was recognized, narcotics—usually morphine—were frequently prescribed by doctors as pain-relievers. Patent medicines, sold everywhere off peddlers' wagons and over pharmacy counters, often had a narcotic content of 5 to 10 per cent. Through such wonder-working remedies as Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, Dr. Cole's Catarrh Cure, and Perkins' Diarrhea Mixture, enormous amounts of opium, morphine, codeine and other drugs were spooned into children as well as adults. With the development of the hypodermic needle in the 1840's, addiction rates soared.

During the Civil War morphine was freely applied as a battlefield pain-killer. By the end of the war more than 45,000 veterans were suffering from "soldiers' sickness", as addiction was called. Estimates of addiction ran as high as 4 per cent of the population—a rate that would give us more than 8 million junkies in today's population!

## Origin of Heroin

It was not until the 1890's that doctors and authorities clearly recognized the dangers of narcotics addiction. Then withdrawal clinics began to spring up all over the country. Articles and books exposing the horrors of addiction rolled off the presses. In 1898 medical scientists came up with what they thought to be a non-addictive cure: *heroin*. Derived from morphine, heroin quickly replaced the other opiates in most cough medicines and tonics. The addictive

nature of the new drug was not noticed in scientific circles until 1910, when tens of thousands of people had already been consuming it freely for years!

---

### OPIUM CONSUMPTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

The consumption of opiates increased enormously, far outdistancing the growth of population, during the last half of the nineteenth century. Since there was relatively little illicit traffic, the following figures on the importation of opiates give a fairly accurate picture of the enormous increase in consumption of this drug during the last four decades of the last century:

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<i>Decades</i>	<i>Opium (in pounds)</i>	<i>Opium Alkaloids (in ounces)</i>
1860-69	110,305	588
1870-79	192,602	2,296
1880-89	328,392	20,212
1890-99	513,070	20,193

---

The Harrison Narcotics Act, passed in Washington in 1914, drove the narcotics trade underground. The law was designed to bring addiction under control by strictly limiting and taxing the production and distribution of drugs. Unfortunately, Congress dropped from the bill all provisions for the treatment of addicts. Hundreds of thousands of people—most of them ordinary citizens with jobs, families and no criminal records—faced the prospect of enormously painful and usually ineffective “cold-turkey” withdrawals. At first doctors, hospitals, and clinics tried to ease the problem by prescribing drugs in decreasing doses, making gradual withdrawal possible. But the Federal government and the courts chose to interpret the Narcotics Act in the strictest possible way.





### **G-Men Raid Clinics**

Government agents began raiding clinics and shutting them down. Thirty thousand doctors were prosecuted and 3,300 actually jailed for continuing to prescribe narcotics for their addicted patients. The few doctors and public officials who demanded a more humane policy were ignored. By 1924 nearly all the clinics were closed, and scarcely any doctors were still willing to risk disgrace and prosecution for prescribing narcotics.

Thanks to the federal government, addicts were left with nowhere to turn but to the newly-flourishing illegal market in drugs. With millions of Americans desperate for a fix and willing pay almost anything to avoid the suffering of withdrawal, underworld syndicates quickly moved in to meet the demand. As prices soared, addicts were forced to turn to crime to support their habits—women often took up prostitution, men stealing. The drug traffic thrived especially in the new



ghettoes of northern cities. The police, who at least made pushing difficult in most white areas, blinked at the drug traffic when its only victims were black.

### **Sweeping It Under the Rug**

The Harrison Act certainly did not eliminate addiction, but it did succeed in pushing the problem out of the sight of politicians and most of the public. Addiction ceased to be regarded as a major public issue. But the problem continued to fester. Heroin spread through the ghettoes, especially after World War II. The new immigrants from Puerto Rico joined black people as the special victims of the heroin plague. And the underworld continued to make enormous profits off of the trade.

In the late 1950's and the 1960's, junk spread again into the white population. Young white people whose schools were like jails, who couldn't find decent jobs, who were hassled constantly by cops, teachers and parents, turned to dope for the same basic reason black people did, to escape from the frustrations of daily life. By the late 1960's the chickens were really coming home to roost. The rich and powerful men who had cheerfully tolerated smack in the ghetto found



their own sons and daughters shooting up. Off in Indochina the army that was supposed to be defending their empire wound up strung out, too. At home whole neighborhoods became unsafe, as increased addiction contributed to the wave of "crime in the streets." The U.S. Attorney in New York estimated that addicts are responsible for half the major crimes in the metropolitan area. And the seething jails filled up with junkies: in New York more than 40% of the male prisoners, and 70% of the women, are addicts.

### Law Enforcement?

All this has finally produced a tremendous outcry. The newspapers are again full of horrifying junk stories. President Nixon has launched another war, he says, this one on drug addiction. Every day brings new raids and seizures of smuggled smack. Posters and radio spots everywhere warn young people to stay off drugs. And in Vietnam the military announces some new anti-drug program nearly every day.

But the heroin plague continues to spread, with smack flowing in the ghetto and moving rapidly across white neighborhoods. And by now more than one GI in ten in Vietnam is addicted. Why no progress?

Part of the answer is that the heroin traffic would be difficult to stop no matter how hard the government tried.

### The Opium Poppy

The white poppy that is the source of opium is grown in many parts of the world. When there is a crackdown in one area, importers simply find new producers. In the 1950's when the poppy was eliminated from Iran (until then one of the main sources of supply), production in Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan increased to take up the slack. Now that the heat is increasing on the



Michel Renard/Micro-Pix, Inc.

An oriental poppy, whose green pods are tapped for a milky fluid which, after drying, is pure opium.



Turkey-Marseilles-New York route, more and more of the smack sold on the streets here—perhaps as much as 25 per cent—is coming from Southeast Asia.

Refining opium down to heroin requires only simple equipment and basic training in chemistry. Heroin itself is so highly concentrated that it is relatively easy to smuggle in huge quantities. The profits are so enormous that, no matter how great the risks, there are always people willing to take their chances at setting up new networks of supply and distribution. Some parts of the Mafia, for instance, have decided to give up the drug traffic and invest their earnings in "respectable" businesses. But other underworld syndicates have simply moved in to take their place. Along the East Coast Cuban exiles have taken over much of the trade. The Cuban Revolution took away their "right" to run rackets in Cuba, so they have brought their skills to the land of the free.

#### All-out Effort ?

If the authorities were indeed making the all-out efforts to stop the heroin traffic that they claim to be making, they would at least make life much harder for the big operators who are raking in fortunes off junk. They could probably even slow down the spread of addiction. In fact, however, most official efforts, though much stricter than they were a few years ago, remain largely ineffective. In the year ending June 30, 1971, Customs officials seized 937 lbs. of heroin entering the country, compared to only 45 lbs. the year before. But sources in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics estimate that 25,000 lbs. of heroin enter the country annually!

While the papers headline spectacular busts on their front pages, the real truth is tucked away in the fine print in back. In an evaluation of the border crack-down *printed on page 62*, the New York Times (Nov. 16, 1971) admitted that "officials close to the drug scene have noted little impact on the streets, where it counts. They say that the price of heroin has remained steady in recent months and that there has been no panic."

#### Why is the campaign so ineffective ?

Internationally, the U.S. government hesitates to put too much pressure on foreign governments to cut off the drug traffic. In Indochina and in Turkey, the U.S. depends politically and militarily on the



same corrupt generals and businessmen who profit from the opium trade. The U.S. can't afford to throw these regimes out or offend them too much because they are all that prevents popular revolutionary movements from taking power and kicking out American businesses and military bases. The CIA, instead of tracking down and breaking up the international heroin network, spends most of its time and our tax dollars propping up these right-wing governments.

Stepped-up enforcement campaigns in South Vietnam have received even more publicity than those at home. But after more than one year of official effort the only result seems to be that more of the heroin traffic has shifted from civilian to military flights. Wherever a GI goes in South Vietnam, according to reporters on the scene, he is still offered heroin almost constantly. The price is the best measure of a drug's availability and the price of heroin has not gone up a penny since the so-called "crackdown" began.

Here at home, the Narcotics Bureau is the smallest of all the federal law enforcement agencies, with only 2 per cent of federal police personnel, and they waste half of their time worrying about grass and acid. You might expect our super-cops, the FBI, to help out by concentrating their energy on busting heroin suppliers. But in their eyes, drugs seem to be only a minor problem. When the Citizen's Commission to Investigate the FBI ripped off the files from the Bureau office in Media, Pa., they found that *only 1% of the FBI's caseload there concerned organized crime!* More than half of the official





documents dealt with draft resistance, AWOL GI's, and above all the surveillance and infiltration of the peace movement, the black liberation movement, and other progressive political groups. It seems that J. Edgar Hoover would rather have his men listening to speeches at Earth Day rallies than putting away the men behind the heroin trade.

### Local Police

On the local level, cops—even narcs—are notoriously ineffective at getting to heroin suppliers. Part of the problem is legal and procedural. Possession of narcotics is just as much a crime as is supplying, and in most cities narcotics agents are rewarded on the basis of the number of arrests they make. Any cop can pick up hundreds of junkies nodding on the street in the time it would take to track down one big behind-the-scenes supplier. Now President Nixon has declared pushers "Public Enemy No.1" and has set up a special command post to focus law-enforcement efforts on getting them "off the streets." But this isn't much better than chasing ordinary addicts: most pushers are just junkies trying to support their habits without stealing. The real villains are the businessmen and mobsters who make their millions without even touching the dope. Until the cops dare to go after these people, they'll never stop smack.

### Corruption

Corruption is an even bigger problem. Every big-city junkie is full of stories of cops on the take. Many narcs are known to be pushers on the side. The New York narc who starred in *The French Connection* has been thrown off the force for being unable to explain what he did with heroin he had confiscated in raids. The Knapp Commission, an official group set up to investigate police corruption, heard public testimony that many cops in Harlem pay off their informants with heroin seized in busts. Some cops have junkies sell the heroin on the streets for them, while others exchange their smack for hot goods. One detective even gave an addict a "shopping" list of twelve brands of liquor he wanted to serve at his daughter's bridal shower; in return for a quantity of junk, the junkie went out and shop-lifted the liquor. A captain in the New York police testified that he saw "a pattern of organized corruption within the narcotics units of both the Police Department and the Federal Government."





*"So when us syndicate fellers heard these Black Panthers was chasin' our pushers outta da ghetto we seen our duty was to help you law n' order fellers! "*

And it's not just the cop on the beat who's taking bribes to protect the junk trade. Vinnie Teresa, the ex-Mafioso who testified before Congress last year, revealed that the mob regularly buys off police higher-ups, judges, and politicians. Big dealers in heroin make so much money that they can easily afford substantial investments to protect themselves.

The men who run this country might once have tried to plead ignorance about the extent of the heroin trade, but not now---not after all the publicity of the last few years. Yet, although law enforcement might be tightening somewhat, the scag continues to flow. There's no sign of a crash program to stop heroin such as the government launched to send men to the moon or keep the NLF out of Saigon. Why not ?



## Profits From Heroin

*Profit* is a big part of the answer. Heroin, in fact, may be the most profitable business in America today. Ten kilos of opium (22 lbs.) bring hill-tribe growers in Laos only a few hundred dollars, but they can be refined into heroin worth some \$16,000 when imported into this country. Watered down and divided up, it's worth about \$300,000 on the streets of our cities! Experts estimate that heroin sales in this country total a cool \$5.5 *billion*---making heroin the nation's largest consumer import!

That's what makes it so hard to wipe out the heroin traffic---too many people up and down the line have too big a stake in maintaining the business. Opium merchants in the Far East, corrupt cops in Harlem, the dope financiers who control the international trade, Cuban exiles and Mafia bosses who run the distribution network in this country---they all use their influence to make sure the pressure doesn't get too heavy. In a society like ours, where profits come before people, *it's damn near impossible to stop a product that makes as much money for as many people as heroin does.* If the junkies suffer, that's their tough luck.

But profits aren't the whole answer. Even if they couldn't make a penny off it, the people in power would still have a lot to gain from seag. Heroin is an escape. For black people in crowded tenements, for white kids on the street corner, for GI's forced to fight against the people of Indochina, it's an escape from the oppressive existence this society offers. Heroin makes people forget about the miserable realities of their lives and the rich and powerful who live in luxury off of their suffering. When you're spending half your time in a euphoric nod and the rest in a desperate search for your next fix, where will you get the time to fight to make this a decent society for everyone?

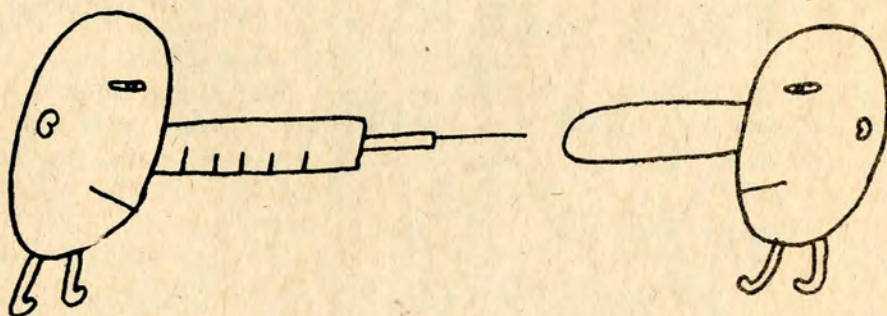
## Escape From Reality

Such is the role heroin has always played in the ghetto, where conditions are worst and people are angriest. Now that white kids are starting to fight back too, smack is pouring in and getting them strung out. And in Vietnam smack may be the only thing prevent-



ing full-scale mutiny in an army that's sick of fighting the bosses' war. When it comes right down to it, Washington and Wall Street know they'd have a lot more angry people on their hands if they couldn't rely on smack to cool things out.

That's not to say that the rich have to run around drugging the rest of us against our will. As long as people are as frustrated and miserable as so many are in this society, they'll look for a way to escape. If it isn't junk it'll be something else. The only long-term solution is to build a new society, a society that people won't need to escape from.



# DRUGGING THE GHETTO: THE NEW SLAVERY

**I**n 1970 the news media suddenly announced a "heroin crisis." White America woke up to the problem of hard drugs only when it began to strike at the middle class.

But for decades, while most of America turned away in silence and contempt, heroin has been destroying thousands of lives in black and brown communities. Today, when there is indeed a heroin problem among young whites, the problem in the ghetto remains overwhelmingly greater and still growing faster. Increasing numbers of white addicts lead haunted outlaw lives—*but the entire ghetto is consumed by addiction. The community itself is strangled.*

Take Harlem, for example. Surveys there have found 40,000 addicts. That's about one out of every six people. Here's how Harlem's black congressman describes the scene:

Walk along nearly any street uptown and you'll see Harlem's great addict army—slumped over in doorways, stumbling along in a trance, nodding in front of bars and soul food joints, standing in the cold without enough clothes on. Chances are you'll also see other all too familiar Harlem scenes: the dope pusher who sets up shop on a street corner and deals like

he had a license; the junkie couple who have established residence in an abandoned building and are playing man and wife; the teen-ager who is wearing \$100 alligator shoes and a \$300 silk suit.

The streets of Harlem used to serve the same purpose as the cafés in Europe. The sidewalks would swing with men smiling and rapping with each







other and everywhere you'd go there would be crowds, noise and laughter.

But it's not quite so anymore. Fear now pervades Harlem. The derelict horde menaces our streets and parks, lurks outside our homes and stores, and preys on neighbors and friends. Whole neighborhoods have declined; others have been completely abandoned to junkie squatters.

Heroin has destroyed the functioning of our school system. Eight-year-olds experiment with heroin bought in the grade school yard and in Benjamin Franklin High School, where drugs are as available as chewing gum, young girls shoot up in the locker room and 13-year-olds buy dope from 15-year-old peddlers.

According to a survey of Harlem conducted by the Small Business Chamber of Commerce, 51.2 per cent of those interviewed said they were crim-

inally assaulted in 1970. Sixty-nine per cent named a narcotics addict as the offender. The study also reveals that thefts to support the narcotic habit in Harlem amount to a staggering \$1.8 billion and "90 per cent of all businesses in central Harlem have been robbed, held up or pilfered."

But most devastating of all is the effect heroin has had on our young—the hope of the black nation. It used to be that a mother would pray that her son would finish high school. Now, she dare not admit to herself her worst fears: that her son's corpse will be found on some rooftop, a needle sticking from his arm. I personally know of a mother who has four sons, all of them addicts, and such a situation is not unique.

The sad fact is that junk is so readily available in Harlem that any kid with some curiosity and some small change is bound to try it.

*Congressman Charles B. Rangel  
New York Times, January 4, 1972*

For some young blacks, pushing seems like the only route out of poverty—easy work, high profits, lots of glamor, and free dope. But most of them quickly discover that such independence is only an illusion. In reality, they remain at the mercy of the big operators and the police. The profits flow out of the ghetto to pay the white suppliers and the junkie vendors quickly shoot up their own earnings. While the Mafia has been able to use the profits it makes in criminal activities to invest in established businesses, black operators have been unable to accumulate enough capital to break the grip of white businessmen over their communities.

In the end, it's the black community that pays for its heroin problem. A follower of Malcolm X put it this way: "The only way for a junkie to exist is by stealing. The only one he steals from is the black community, because he is not allowed to exist in the white community. The white community gets the benefits from the drug traffic because all proceeds from any financial transaction end up in the white economy (no black economy exists)."



But the costs of addiction in the ghetto aren't merely economic. The worst of it—and the reason the white power structure has allowed the heroin business to thrive in the ghetto—is that smack makes its slaves politically helpless. It makes isolated outlaws of those who might otherwise lead the attack against injustice in American society. As one addict recently wrote: "When you're a junkie, you've got to look out for yourself and only yourself, cause no one else is going to look out for you. So you are constantly trying to fuck people, and people are constantly trying to fuck you. In a way that's how the system works, people fuck over each other. Instead of trying to help your neighbor, you're just trying to help yourself."

"Everything Ceases to Matter . . ."

Religion, promising pie in the sky after this life, once provided for millions the illusion of escape from the despair of poverty. Now heroin provides a similar escape. As Michael Tabor said:

The plague, poisonous, lethal white powdery substance, sold by depraved, money-crazed beasts to Black youths who are desperately seeking a kick, a high, a means, anything that will help to make them oblivious to the squalor,









to the abject poverty, disease and degradation that engulfs them in their daily existence.

Initially the plague does just that. Under its sinister influence, the ghetto prison is transformed into a virtual Black Valhalla. One becomes impervious to the rancid stench of urine-soaked tenement dungeons, unaffected by the piercing cries of anguish of Black folks driven to the brink of insanity by a sadistic social system. Unaffected by the deafening wail of pig-police car sirens as they tear through the streets of the Black Hell en route to answer a 1013 call from some other pig-police who is in a state of well-deserved distress. Unaffected by the trash cans whose decayed disease-carrying garbage has overflowed to fill the ghetto streets . . . Everything ceases to matter except heroin, the plague . . . ”

Faced with the daily horrors of slum life many young people turn on to scag, directing their anger and frustrations against themselves rather than outward against their oppressors. Opium is a form of genocide in which the victim pays to be killed.



MALCOLM X



# WOMEN ON JUNK

JUDY:

**I** THINK A GIRL'S problems are always different from a guy's. Girls are brought up differently. They are taught to be ashamed of almost everything they do.

I remember when I first made it with my boy-friend. I felt terrible. I didn't want anyone to know. It was the most secret part of my life. I was torn because to feel part of the group I had to have a boy-friend. But everything that went on with us had to be kept secret.

I had to be dishonest to survive. I made my mother spend a lot of money on clothes. Everything had to be perfect on the outside. Inside I felt terrible. I was always scared and ashamed. That's what I liked about drugs. They made me feel like there was nothing wrong. Just like the other kids. By the time I was sixteen I was doing a lot of speed and LSD. A year later I started doing heroin.

I was lucky that I didn't have to be a prostitute or anything like that. Mostly I let people use my apartment to get off. In return they'd give me some drugs. Most girls are controlled by their addict boy-friends. They either become prostitutes or are used to cash bad checks. The guy usually keeps most of the money.

No one can keep their respect living that way. Not knowing who you are going to wake up next to or anything. Everyone lying and stealing. One of my best friends even died in my apartment, and I was too stoned to realize it.

You feel so bad that your appearance goes way down. All you care about is getting high. Controlled and manipulated not only by junk but by male junkies. You feel completely rotten. That was my life for two years.



MARCELLE: I got into dope at sixteen or seventeen in San Francisco. I'd been around dope since I was fourteen or fifteen, like, I wasn't frightened by it. I'd heard things people warned you about marijuana, like it was a terrible thing, but I'd been smoking it and it was cool. So I wasn't frightened by heroin. At that time it was just another drug, just another high. When you get into it heavily, that's when the real problem begins.

In San Francisco I lived with a bunch of guys. I cooked, mothered, was mother and sister, everything to them. I only had sex with one of them. I really loved him and even got pregnant. We fucked around, ran around the house naked. I liked being everything to a bunch of guys.

But then the guys started taking me for granted. They went up to Oregon for the week-end. I was alone. I got sick and started aborting. I was bleeding, there was blood everywhere. I had only the energy to get to the bathroom. I couldn't drink the water. No one came by, no one came to visit. Finally the thing dropped and I had to cut the cord. I was really sick, I found out later. I had hepatitis.

Later on I went to live with my brother and his girlfriend. They were using dope pretty heavily. That was the first time I went to a drug clinic. They took me. That place was a joke. I did not really have a habit. The methadone was nice to have, but I did not really need it. That was how I really got strung out.

Next I got busted. I had \$150 saved up. My brother just took it from me and said I would get it back. But junkies don't ever give money back. I was put in a jail which has the reputation of being one of the worst jails in the country. It's incredibly cold in the winter. When I got in, they made me take a bath. They took my clothes and made me take clothes from a big hamper of old ones. They have no provisions for junkies there. They give you some aspirins and that's about all. I got pretty sick. When you are a junkie in jail, they treat you like you are one of the eight wonders of the world. Someone came up, put his head right near the bars and said, "How can you sell drugs? It's like putting a gun to a kid's head." They don't understand. I was pretty lucky, considering I had a Public Defender. I got one year suspended sentence and one year probation.



So I left jail then, but I could not continue living with my brother after what he had done to me. I got pregnant from a guy I liked, but I didn't want to have his baby. I miscarried before I got an abortion. I started bleeding one day and went into the hospital. This nurse takes me into this room, undresses me, and puts me on that bed. And they leave me there two fucking hours, I know, because I watched the clock. Two hours before anyone came, and I'm bleeding and shouting and they don't even bring me a Kotex. To me it was like a slap in the face. I felt like I was nothing. When they finally came in, the doctor told me I had not had a miscarriage and should go home and stay in bed.

I flipped out. I was crying and hysterical. That nurse was a bitch. I told her I was shooting dope. That's why they treated me so shitty.

Eventually I went to another hospital. I turned out I really had had a miscarriage. And then the first hospital sent me a fucking bill. I'd had a miscarriage right there in their fucking hospital and they didn't evn know and sent me home. And then send a bill!

RED FOX: Straight people haven't got any idea whatsoever. They only know what they've read...

OK, why don't I start from the time I got on the program. Before I got on this program, I was at another program at another hospital. I have a very hot temper. I had to leave that methadone program because I hit a nurse with a lit cigarette. The nurses have a tendency to play god. Once I came a minute before closing for my methadone, and because it inconvenienced the nurse, because she wanted to close, she told me I couldn't have it. Now I couldn't go back that day to get my methadone because I was working. I only had that one lunch hour, and I had to take the stuff.

I flipped out. I said, "I've got to get it now. I was here on time. Please, you've got to give it to me." The woman put her hands on her hips with a big smile on her face and said, "It looks like you're going to have to go sick today, doesn't it, Red Fox?"





I reached right over the methadone bar, you know, and I grabbed her, hit her, and I had a lit cigarette in my hand, and I just stuck it in her eye. I really did.

Then I passed out, and the cops came in and grabbed me, and right way I was put off the program with a ten-day detox. I was *sick*. So I came to this program begging to be let on. Because of the incident with the nurse, they wouldn't take me right away. Because I was sick, I had to go out on the street and cop dope. So I got right back into that hustling thing. You know, stealing and whatever, buying my dope to keep my sick off. So that when I was accepted into this program--it was two months before I got in--- I had a big heroin habit.



I've always gone with straight men, because I couldn't see going out with a junkie. They'll rip you off any time. But it was a real hassle, because as soon as the straight men found out I was a junkie they were gone. They'd say, "What's that on your arms?" and I'd say, "Well, when I was a kid, I used to rip the IV's off my arm when I had my appendix out!" or I'd say, "I put my hand through a window and I scar real easy." You know, I had to make up these incredible stories to tell them. Some of them took it in, some of them didn't.

So then I met this guy that had just got released from prison--- named Pepe--- who was a notorious junkie, you know, he was like super notorious. And then my troubles started. And this is where I was really susceptible and really stupid because I put up with it. Things went along pretty smoothly for a while, but he was using dope. I'd be sitting there watching him get off, and pretty soon I started using too. You know when you are a junkie you can't watch somebody get off, because you know how beautiful it is to be so fucking high you can't feel any hurt or pain or anything anymore--- you're just way out and you just don't give a shit.

So I started getting off just because he was--- that's how he fucked me up so bad. I wasn't even feeling it. I was just doing it to stick needles in my arm. Well, it's not that you don't feel it, you do a little even with methadone. You feel it for a second or two. But really I was doing it because I saw him doing it. It was like monkey see, monkey do. Most junkies are like that.

I've been hassled by the police all my life, all my life. There was this one cop that had a crush on me when I went in the State Penitentiary. I had a whole list of charges on me. There wasn't any way I was going to get out of it, I knew I was going to jail.

Well, when I was waiting trial, Lenny, this cop, came over to see me. You know, every drug addict is on a first name basis with all the narcotics agents. When you see them in the streets, it's "Hi, Gene, how you doing? Made any busts lately?" . . . things like that.

Anyway, this cop Lenny says, "You want to get out of here?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I'll get you out. I'll just drop it to



'idle and disorderly' if you'll go to bed with me." I said, "Yeah, sure." So that night he meets me—now this is a cop, mind you—and we go to a hotel and I ball him. As I'm leaving, he says he wants to go through my pocketbook, like he was just being a general pig. And that sonofabitch drops three bags of scag in my pocketbook! Just in case I get sick when I go to court. He must have gone down to the police stash and got them for me. Like he knew I didn't want to ball him and he did this for me.

Next day when I went to court, he had kept his word. Everything was reduced to "idle and disorderly", and I got sent to the drug center at Framingham. I got a year and I did four months.

The drug center at Framingham is supposed to be different from the prison, but it isn't. You eat with the prisoners, work with them, and everything. The only difference was that after two months we got passes. Then we got a pass every two weeks.

There really wasn't any treatment. There was one half-assed psychologist. I conned my way through the whole thing. It was ridiculous. I had the director wrapped all the way around my little finger.

I'd say, "I really want to rehabilitate. I know you people can help me." And they believed me. Like I had been into raps with the psychologist and got him to feel he had solved a problem for me. I'd say, "I don't understand why I do this." Then I'd let him talk a little bit and pick out a few things from what he'd said, add a couple of things of my own, pause a little, and say, "Gee, that's it. Why didn't I think of that? Oh, Mr. F., you're such a help! '" And





they pushed me right out the door in four months. I left there at eight in the morning and by 8:30 I was high. Now, how can you rehabilitate someone in a place like that! They don't do anything.

If I was talking to kids now, I wouldn't tell them only the bad things about dope. I'd tell them it feels good. Sure, you can get a bag, you'll get so high you won't even know your own name. But you've got to be prepared the next morning to retch yourself to the bathroom on your knees because the cramps in your legs are so bad you can't stand up, and your nose is running, and you're swallowing the slush, and you can't shut your mouth.

And out on the street you smell so bad because you're sweating so badly. And you've got to get that high again. And if you're a woman, you've got to be prepared to sell your body. There's no such thing as morals. Morals go right out the window. You know if a guy's going to pay you \$25 or \$30 to fuck him, you know you're going to do it.

I'd tell them what it's like to lose your family's respect. To feel so alone and so dirty that you don't have any respect for yourself. And how easy it is to get into it and so hard to get out. And how it can destroy your body.

The trouble with shooting dope is you get caught up in it, you forget you had another life. You forget the things that made you high before then. Every now and then you remember them, but that high seems to become the most important thing in your life. There doesn't seem to be anything else to do.

**CRYSTAL:** When the mafia, or the government, or whoever it was, took the reefers off the market, I was really lost. On the week-ends I really depended on my reefer and my bottle of booze just to relax. Well, then heroin came on the scene. My boyfriend started snorting heroin. He said, "Here, just try it, it won't kill you. I never would give you anything that would really harm you." I tried a little. Being greedy that I was, I went out and got it on my own. . . .



I think a program should be geared to have patients wanting to get off methadone. The one I'm in scares the patient about making an attempt to get off of it. They don't like to give you the detox. Why I don't know. They tell them they're not ready. I don't think anybody knows better than the persons themselves.

If I had my way, I think I'd rather go cold turkey than get addicted to methadone. Whenever I plan on doing anything, I close my eyes and all I can visualize is a great bottle of methadone blocking me.

To me the reason they have methadone is so that people won't steal from stores. Money is the big thing in this country of ours. They don't give a shit about us. They just don't want us ripping off stores and houses.





# THE NEW ACTION ARMY

**R**ECENT REPORTS of tens of thousands of GI's strung out on heroin, and the havoc created by their return brought the heroin problem to the attention of millions of Americans. For many Vets, however, addiction did not begin in Vietnam. As one soldier told a Senate special subcommittee on alcoholism and narcotics:

*Joe:* . . . I was back on the street hustling again, stealing money, stealing everything.

I told my family that I would go into the Army when I turned 17 years old.

I came into the Army. I thought they would catch me when I was inducted, but they didn't.

*Senator Hughes:* Can you tell me how you got by when you were inducted, when you were a confirmed heroin addict? What happened at your physical examination?

*Joe:* They had a real hard time getting blood out of me then they took the blood. They kept switching doctors.

*Senator Hughes:* Didn't they see the needle marks?

*Joe:* No sir. No scars.

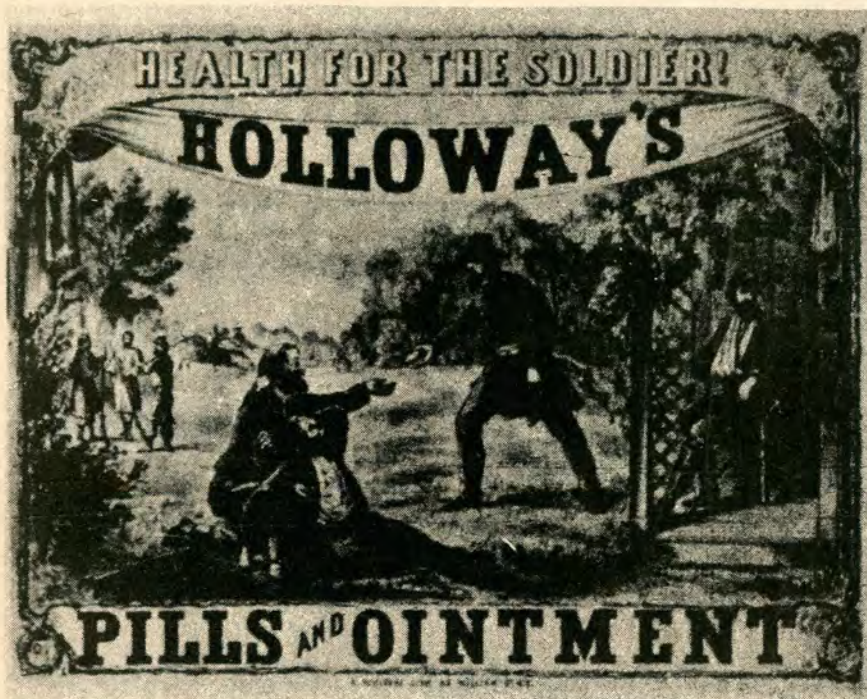
*Senator Hughes:* Could you see them?

*Joe:* I could see them, sir, but they weren't real dark. It was more or less like a shadow. My veins weren't very good to start off with, anyway.

*Senator Hughes:* Were you shooting up every day at that point?

*Joe:* Yes.





*Senator Hughes:* Excuse my interruptions. I am just trying to determine how you got in the Army, a confirmed heroin addict, by induction, if you know. I know it happens repeatedly, but I just wanted you to describe your own case.

*Joe:* I got in the Army, sir, and I went to basic training. After around three weeks of basic I met a contact, a first lieutenant, and I copped some heroin from him.

*Senator Hughes:* You did what?

*Joe:* Copped some heroin, bought some heroin.

*Senator Hughes:* From the lieutenant?

*Joe:* Yes, sir . . . I shot heroin around ten times in basic training. I couldn't do it every day because if I did I would never have made it through basic training.

The reason I came in the Army was to get away from it, to try to find something I was interested in. But it didn't work out that way.



## **Heroin in AIT**

I went to Advanced Infantry Training. I was going home on week-ends and bringing back stuff to shoot. I started ripping thins off and stealing things, and fencing them where I was taking AIT.

So after AIT I came down to Fort Bragg. I wasn't really sick. I was just mentally sick there for a while. I just had the urge to shoot drugs so bad, like life was coming down on me.

They knew I was taking drugs. They kept on bothering me about it. So I went AWOL. . . . I was back out on the street shooting dope, and I got to where I didn't care about what happened to me when I was AWOL. My life was distrous. Finally my family called the police and had me arrested.

## **Hepatitis at Fort Dix**

Fort Dix, New Jersey, the Army's largest training base for enlisted men in the Northeast, currently contains 27,000 men, only 10 per cent of whom are Vietnam veterans. As of July 21, 1971 there had already been 56 cases in 1971 of serum hepatitis contracted from the use of dirty hypodermics, compared with 35 in all of last year, and none in 1968. This is at a hospital 80 per cent of whose patients are recruits.

One addict undergoing therapy at Fort Dix (who said he too had joined the Army with the hope of ending his heroin addiction) reported on the widespread availability of scag on base: "But then these guys in my barracks started talking to me and asking me if I wanted to buy some heroin, and pretty soon I was hooked again." Revealing knowledge of five men in his training company who were selling drugs, he continued, "There's dope all over this place. It's no different than the rest of this country."

## **Junk in Vietnam**

While more and more GI's enter the Army as junkies, it's in Vietnam that addiction has reached the epidemic level. It is difficult for civilians stateside to grasp the degree of demoralization of the U.S. Army in Indochina. GI's have seen through their indoctrination and







by now they know they're not in Vietnam to defend their own freedom or anyone else's. They're no longer willing to join in the destruction of Indochina to help Nixon save face or to keep Saigon safe for American businessmen. They know that the policy that keeps them there has been overwhelmingly repudiated by the people back home. They're frustrated and angry at all the petty rules and regulations the lifers still try to impose on them. They don't do much fighting any more— the bombers have taken over that job— but in a country where nearly everyone wants them out, they can never quite relax. Who wants to die in a war that makes no sense?

In every war the officers try to channel the tension of living in the war zone into a "fighting spirit", or hatred for the enemy. But the GI's in Vietnam have had enough of that. They need something else to make life and the risk of death bearable. Some of them turn to organizing against the men and the system that keep them there. But shooting up seems easier. Junk is dirt cheap, and the supply is abundant. Opium, morphine, and heroin of nearly 100% purity are available around or even on every U.S. base.

And at least until recently—if not still today— the brass have looked the otherway. After all, whatever else smack may do, it keeps the men quiet. Sometimes the officers themselves do the pushing, instead of leaving the profits to Vietnamese dealers.

### **Extent of Heroin Addiction**

The extent of heroin addiction among GI's in Vietnam remains a matter of some controversy. A House investigation team headed by Representatives Murphy (Ill.) and Steele (Conn.) cited official addiction estimates of ten to fifteen per cent. The Nixon Administration, however, quickly moved to calm public fears of massive addiction. Dr. Jerome Jaffe, Nixon's chief drug advisor, reported after a hasty tour of Asia that only 4.5% of





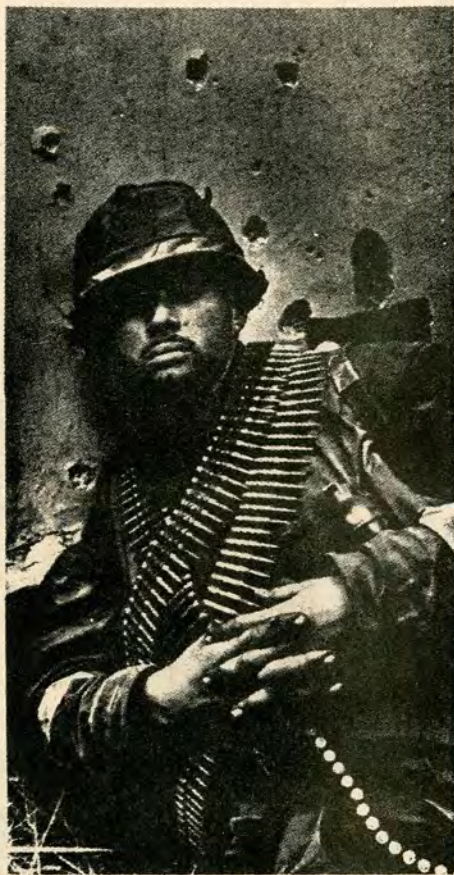


22,000 men who were tested were confirmed heroin users. But subsequent reports have exploded Jaffe's claims. Experts noted that he did not include soldiers who had been arrested, granted amnesty, or those who temporarily stopped taking heroin a few days prior to leaving Vietnam. In the first half of 1971 alone, nearly 12,000 GI's were arrested or turned themselves in for treatment under the so-called "amnesty" program. Moreover, Jaffe himself was later forced to admit that for those below the rank of sergeant the figures ran "over 10 per cent"—how far over he neglected to say.

### "Rehabilitation" of Veterans

Whatever the actual magnitude of heroin addiction among Vietnam GI's, public scandal has finally forced the government to take some action. The House of Representatives recently voted to expand the Veterans' Administration's drug rehabilitation program, expected to cost \$89.3 million for the next five years. A series of highly publicized busts, each "the most spectacular of all time," have been staged in an effort to prove that the U.S. military and the governments in Saigon and Laos are doing something about the problem (although the only real result has been to provide further evidence that officials of these puppet regimes are deeply involved in the trade).

Now tens of thousands of young draftees are coming home strung out. Accustomed to cheap and pure Vietnamese heroin, they've developed habits that cost a fortune to maintain at the prices American suppliers charge for their watered-down scag. Their chances of finding a





decent job are slim: unemployment among Vietnam vets is running over 10 per cent. (For vets under 24 year old, it's 14.6 per cent; among all black vets it averages 15.1 per cent; and among black vets under 24 the rate reaches almost 21 per cent.) The VA's counselling and rehabilitation programs are still ridiculously inadequate. In the midst of all the fanfare accompanying Nixon's campaign against drugs, these young men are being left to rot, with little care and virtually no hope.





# WINTER SOLDIERS

**T**he first of the following interviews was conducted at the Veterans Administration hospital in Jamaica Plain, Mass. The rest of the chapter is taken from testimony given by Vietnam veterans at the Winter Soldier Investigation held in Boston on October 7, 8, and 9, 1971, by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Most of the names have been changed.

**LARRY:** I started using grass at Rever High. It felt good, and I'd often get high with the other guys. We popped a lot of pills, too, just for kicks. Then the older guys started coming around. They were doin' smack. A bunch of us started doing it. We used to go to this gas station to get off. The attendant would blink the lights if the cops were coming. Sometimes I'd get off in my bathroom at home, too.

I started just doing one or two bags a day. I would hustle at night and go to school the next day. I had been doing good in school, and I was on the track team. But pretty soon I got kicked off the team and my grades went way down. It was difficult, hustling and going to school.

Then they sent me to the trade school. There was a lot of smack there and I made contacts soon. I was up to five or six bags a day. We would steal tape decks out of cars and sell them to a guy in Boston. I would steal anything. I remember one time looking in this car and seeing a complete wet suit. Oh boy, I thought, this will really bring in the dough. I opened the car and put it on. There I was walking down Commonwealth Ave. with this wet suit, tanks, flippers, and all on. A cop car spotted me, though, I just dropped everything and ran.



Most of the time I didn't have to be too careful of the cops. They didn't mind as long as things weren't too obvious. Once I was stopped in Roxbury with my works and everything. I just gave the cop ten dollars and went around the corner and got another set.

They finally did get me. I was just getting off, in the gas station. I had enough wits to flush my works down the toilet. But I forgot my needle was still in my arm. Really stupid. I got out on bail, and I decided to go into the Army. It was that or jail. I withdrew at basic training. They just thought I had a bad cold. It was pretty bad.

I wanted to go overseas because I had heard about all the dope and everything. They sent me to Korea. Boy, when I stepped off the plane, I couldn't believe it. I thought we were at peace in Korea. Well there was bombers, machine guns set up around the base, the whole works. It was unbelievable.

The government just sends the poor kids over there. It's like Hitler killing the Jews. They just want to get rid of us. No one used to care about the heroin, when it was in the ghetto. Now when the rich white kids are taking it, everyone's worried. It's always like that.

For a while we were in the South. I got some junk on my first trip to the village. The moment I walked in, some little kid comes running up and says, "Want to buy my sister? Dirty pictures?" I said, "I want some . . .," and I made a motion with my hand. The little kid's eyes lit up, and he said, "Wait here!" He was back in ten minutes with a small package and a syringe. It was pure black opium. It was terrific.

I made a deal where I could go to the village and meet this kid. He would bring me the opium. You know they really hate us over there. We just use their women and screw up the place. Even with this kid you could just see it in his eyes. I don't really blame them.



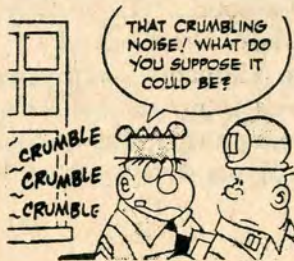
We finally got our orders to the DMZ. I took enough stuff for a while. The medic gave me sterilized water so I wouldn't get hepatitis.

Over there everyone's doing drugs. You can buy grass everywhere. The MP's don't bother you. Even my sarge smoked a bowl with us. The young officers did a lot of drugs, but the old-timers were all juicers. You have to be high in the Army.

I only saw one bit of action on the DMZ. We were running a patrol behind the lines. We were also carrying automatic weapons. It's against the Geneva rules, but we always carried them. We were sleeping and these four North Korean agents started sneaking up on. I saw them and tried to wake my stupid sarge. He finally gets up and yells, "Halt!" But I wasn't in to talking. I opened fire. I'm sure I wounded one of them. But one of my buddies got it. I really freaked. It was so bad they sent me back stateside after a couple of days. It couldn't have been batter with me. I'd had it with killing.

Here, though, everything is the same, pretty much. I couldn't take it. I started hustling and doing smack again. I tried a methadone clinic. That was bad. Those methadone maintenance guys are just government puppets. The government says go here and they go. It says go there and they have to go. That's just what the government wants, puppets it can control.

Now I'm doing this therapy. It helps a little. I'm in a group with non-drug addicts. It's OK, because I have basically the same problems as them. I mean, smack is just another way of coping with the same things. I hope this helps.





**FOREST:** I was in the Special Forces, and Executive Officer of a Special Processing Detachment, Fort Carson, Colorado. When I got to Vietnam, one of my first memories was of a GI shoving a needle into his arm, and this was back in '68. I was an officer in Vietnam. I was clearly identifiable, and the officers I worked with were, as such. We'd walk the streets of Saigon. It was like Haight--Ashbury. People were selling just about anything except heroin at that time. One guy was trying to peddle some acid. I asked him where he got hold of the acid. He was very apologetic and said that his shipment was late and that he didn't have any, but would I like some French amphetamines or some barbiturates. They were readily available to anybody. The prostitutes that walked the bunkerlines out there could sell marijuana and drugs.

It was mainly the French amphetamines and barbiturates at that time. Then probably the most serious problem we have over in Vietnam is heroin addiction, and one of the most tragic. The United States government pays rent on the land they occupy to the Vietnamese government. Not only do they pay rent, but they have concessions, Vietnamese concessions---steambaths, bars, gift shops, whatever---right on the military post, which are South Vietnamese jurisdiction. The U.S. military has no jurisdiction, although they are located on major U.S. installations. Out of these steambaths all sorts of drugs are sold, openly.

**JOE:** I've been addicted to heroin for six years. I was in Okinawa, was stationed with the Ninth Marine Amphibious Brigade, at Camp Hanson. I know quite a bit about the drug movement in Okinawa because I was involved in it myself. Down at Naha airbase, which is down in the southern part of Okinawa, it's the main operating station for drugs in Okinawa. The majority of drugs that are brought into the country are brought in by pilots, B-52 pilots, C-140 pilots, or crew members. We used to buy 100-lb. quantities of marijuana, or fifty-lb. quantities of marijuana, at \$20 and \$25 a pound, and it can be sold on the island for \$500 a pound. These people were also bringing in vials of liquid opium, vials of raw opium, black tar opium. They were bringing in heroin from Vietnam. There were a lot of people involved in Okinawa, officers and Okinawan officials that were paying for the narcotics that were coming into Okinawa. Up at the Marine air base, they have C-130 pilots flying dope in from Vietnam. There are flights going out every hour, B-52's, four planes. They go and drop their payload on Vietnam and re-fuel in Thailand. While they were re-fueling, they were also re-fueling their narcotics supplies.



I'd say they were bringing in an average of 500-600 lbs. every day of marijuana. I have no idea how much heroin or opium was being brought into the country, but when I was on Okinawa I knew over a hundred heroin addicts that had a constant supply of heroin. In Vietnam the accessibility of heroin during the latter part of '68, the early part of '69, became very increasing. They had a big crack-down on the marijuana users in Vietnam. I don't know if many of you people know it, but in Vietnam enlisted men cannot drink, he can't drink liquor. A lot of people, you know, like to get high after they come back from the bush and shit. You can't do it--if you want to drink, you have to be an E-5 or above. So what are the younger people supposed to do? They turn to narcotics. A lot of them were doing narcotics in the States before they left for Vietnam. When they started cracking down on the marijuana, these people had nothing else to do but shoot heroin, and invariably quite a few of them did. They say in the Boston area there's 2500 Vietnam veteran junkies. I'd estimate it more at 7,000 or more. You can't go about getting them surveyed, the VA survey on junkies, because a lot of them won't talk to anybody.

PHIL: When I went to Vietnam, I had, oh, every drug I could possibly think of, it was easily accessible to me. Now there I became a drug addict, a true, strung-out drug addict. When I returned to the United States, I got a 45-day leave. Then I got sent up to Fort Devens. When I got up to Fort Devens, I couldn't handle it no more. My mind was so confused. I was supposed to be in the Army, like, I volunteered for the Army, and here I am a drug addict. So I says let me seek help, and I went to Fort Devens and I says, well, let me go to the psychiatrist. I went to the psychiatrist there and they said, "Well, you're a drug addict, well, what can we do with you?" This is back in 1967, so they must have made progress from then, you know. I mean, they had to make progress. But then they put me, they were going to give me an undesirable or dishonorable or bad-conduct discharge, because I admitted to them that I was strung out on drugs. Now the only reason that they couldn't give me a discharge is because the Judge-Advocate said, "Did they ever catch you?" And they had never actually caught me taking drugs; I admitted it to them. So I would have gone through that whole Vietnam horror show, and I went through a horror show in Vietnam, for nothing, for a dishonorable, an undesirable discharge. I got an honorable discharge, and if I didn't, I don't know, I probably would have broke down, I don't know what I would have done if I got a dishonorable discharge.







Since that date, I've been to the Bedford VA hospital., they didn't know how to treat me there. Oh, excuse me, the way they discharged me from the service: they said, "Well, we don't actually know what to do with you. What can we do with you here? We'll give you this, we'll give you that." I said, "Well, you know, that's not really helping me." They said, "OK, we'll give you a discharge." In other words---"Screw, kid. You're a junkie; like get out of here. We don't want nothing to do with you." This is what they say, actually. Now to this day I haven't got any help, any rehabilitation at all, except for at the Court St. clinic, the outpatient clinic. Since it's begun, I've gotten a considerable amount of help, and my head has gotten so strong that it's unbelievable.

SAM: A lot of people can't kick in a clinic and have to go into a hospital. Most people won't go into a hospital, especially veterans who have done time in military hospitals; that's just what it is, it's time. It's like being in prison, being in a military hospital, especially if you've been on the psych ward or anything, where they do nothing but harass you all the time, and make you feel more or less like a POW.



VIETNAM GI'S LINE UP TO BE TESTED FOR ADDICTION



DAVE: A heroin addict can very rarely get help in a VA hospital unless they have a drug program in the hospital or a clinic, which they have just started. Over at Court St. here in Boston, they have a clinic which is a methadone maintenance clinic. Methadone maintenance is good for some people, but it's not good for a lot of people. A lot of people can't kick maintenance, because you get on this frustration thing. You're being maintained on another narcotic, you know. You can function more easily on methadone, but you're still addicted to it, and you just feel the same as you do when you're shooting heroin.

I was in Court St.. I was on methadone, and I had a bad heroin habit, and I started getting into barbiturates. I was doing a lot of barbiturates. My doctor at Court St. tried to get me into a VA hospital, which was almost impossible for him to do. He finally got me into the VA hospital in Bedford. When I finally got there, they refused to give me that medication that the doctor at Court St. had prescribed. And this is the VA system working within the VA system. It's incredible that one doctor from one VA hospital cannot get a patient into another VA hospital.

And I was having barbiturate withdrawals. I was going around with a bag of pills to keep you from going into convulsions, because I couldn't get into a hospital and get help. It took two brothers from the VVAW to get me into a VA hospital and get the medication, which I should have been taking right away for barbiturate addiction, which is a medical problem. They're not doing this in the hospitals. They won't treat you for heroin addiction unless you have a medical problem, such as hepatitis, or you were hurt in the service, you were hurt in Vietnam, and so forth, gunshot wounds.

They will not detoxify you from heroin addiction no matter what kind of a heroin habit you have. Right now there's a few people kicking in the Jamaica Plain hospital. The only reason they are in there kicking is because of VVAW brothers getting them in. It's pretty sad that you can't get any help from your own government to get rid of a habit that's ruining society, that they want stopped, that they say is such a bad thing. If it's such a bad thing, why don't they do something about it?



Q. You were treated at the Court St. clinic?

RICK: Yes, both of us were.

Q.: What hours were they open?

RICK: They were open, I believe, from eight o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon.

Q.: What happens if you have a problem at two o'clock in the morning? Or on the week-end?

RICK: You're out of luck. You stay sick---either that or you go out and cop dope.

STEVE: You see, when you go into a lot of clinics like over at Boston City Hospital, they have a long waiting list. When you go in there and you ask them for help, they tell you to sign your name to the list but you're going to have to wait a couple of months. You ask these people, well, what am I going to do for the next couple of months? They tell you to just shoot dope.

Q.: Who tells you to shoot dope?

STEVE: The doctors, the people you're talking to when you go into the clinic. Or they advise you to get help someplace else. You try and tell them that you've been through nine clinics already, that you don't want to go to any more clinics, you know. You just want to get help and get off. You can't fight it. It's really hard to fight.

CHUCK: I sought help in different places. I ended up in Court St. I just began this July, this past July. I've made quite an improvement since I've been there, but the clinic has many shortcomings. It doesn't fit the needs of hardly anybody over there. I feel the progress I've made towards my addiction problem is through my own personal desire to overcome this problem. There's insensitive doctors, it's understaffed, there's no hospital facilities, no follow-up treatment for after detoxification.



I'm presently being maintained. I haven't yet reached the point where I feel I can be detoxified from methadone yet. I'm slowly reaching that point, and when I do reach that point, and I do become detoxified, there's nothing left for me after that. I'm just left to face the society that I withdrew from in the first place. I feel we need something. The government got me into this. I know I helped. I'm going to help get myself out of it. But I feel the government should help me get out, too. I'm just hoping they will. They're going to wake up. There is more of me than they seem to believe.





THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1972

## City Drug Statistics Grim

At least three people dead. Upward of \$3-million in property stolen. More than 100 persons arrested. These are the narcotics-related statistical facts of life in New York City on a given day like yesterday, when President Nixon came here to highlight his concern about the problem of drug addiction.

The city's army of addicts numbers about 150,000, according to recent estimates. Law enforcement officials and other experts say the number is rising, and they note that addicts account for deaths, destruction, injury and demoralization out of all proportion to their numbers.

According to the Medical Examiner's Office, a total of 1,259 persons died of narcotics-related causes here last year, more than in any previous year. Narcoticism is, moreover, the largest single cause of death for New Yorkers between the ages of 15 and 35.

Of the total of narcotics-related deaths last year, more than two-thirds were attributed to overdoses of heroin or other drugs and such diseases as hepatitis brought on by drugs. The rest were recorded as narcotics-related homicides, suicides, fatal accidents or deaths attributable to diseases exacerbated by drug-abuse, such as tuberculosis or alcoholism among addicts.

Estimates of the value of property and cash stolen by addicts annually vary widely, though most sources agree that shoplifting, burglary and muggings are the major sources of theft funds for drug users.

A study commissioned by the Ford Foundation last year indicated that addicts steal about \$1-billion in property and cash annually in the city. Another study by the Small Business Chamber of Commerce put the annual loss in Harlem alone at \$1.8-billion.

The Police Department reports that a total of 41,266 arrests were made here last year for the possession or sale of dangerous drugs. This was 11,213 fewer than in 1970, a circumstance attributed by the police to a new policy of concentrating more on pushers than addicts.

Of 196,662 persons arrested for felonies or misdemeanors in all crime categories here last year, the police recorded that 30,351 admitted they were drug users. Sources in the Police Department's narcotics division estimate that more than half of all crimes committed in the city are related to narcotics traffic and abuse.



# CHINA : FOREIGN MUD

*The collective white man had acted like a devil in virtually every contact he had with the world's collective non-white man. The blood forebearers of this same white man raped China at a time when China was trusting and helpless. Those original white "Christian traders" sent into China millions of pounds of opium. By 1839 so many of the Chinese were addicts that China's desperate government destroyed 20,000 chests of opium. The first Opium War was promptly declared by the white man. Imagine! Declare war upon someone who objects to being narcotized!*

—Malcolm X

**E**VER SINCE THE SEVENTEENTH century, when white men began to colonize Asia, opium along with guns and religion has been a major weapon. For several centuries opium had been known to Asian peoples. But the addiction of millions of Asians was brought about by the Western powers as they created the great colonial empires. Opium was the key which unlocked the door, the *only* import that brought British and American traders colossal profits in China and other parts of Asia.

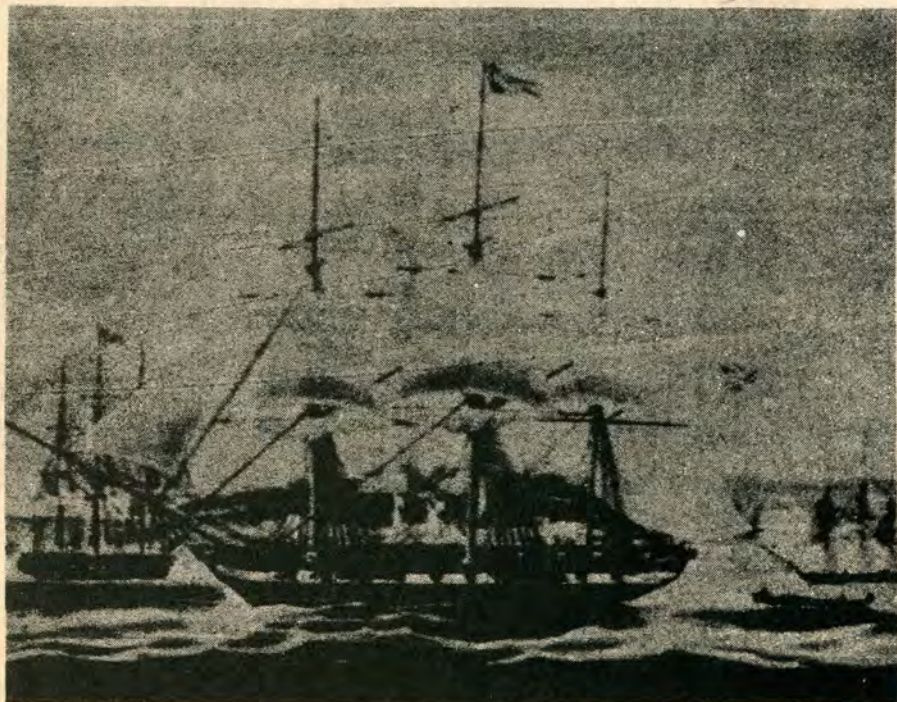
As early as 1729 Chinese laws prohibited the sale and smoking of opium. In the face of these legal barriers Western merchants with the cooperation of their governments turned to *piracy* in order to sell the drug in China. By the mid-nineteenth century the global trade in opium probably represented the largest commerce of the time in any single commodity. It is not too much to say that Britain's domination of world commerce in the nineteenth century was substantially



based on "foreign mud," as the Chinese called opium. Opium lay at the heart of the vast financial empire of the British East India Company and provided a major source of revenue for the administration of Britain's Indian colony. As one nineteenth century pamphleteer observed, "From the opium trade the Honourable Company have derived for years an immense revenue and through them the British Government and nation have also reaped an incalculable amount of political and financial advantage. The turn of the balance of trade between Great Britain and China in favour of the former . . . benefits the nation to an extent of 6 million pounds yearly without impoverishing India."

### Opium Crisis

By the 1830's China faced an economic and moral crisis. Illegal opium imports growing from 5,000 chests in 1820 to 40,000 in 1839 shook the Chinese fiscal system to its roots. While foreigners pocketed profits of more than \$1,000 a chest, China faced a huge outflow



THE *FALCON*, FLAGSHIP OF JARDINE AND MATHESON'S OPIUM-CLIPPER FLEET



of silver to pay for the drug. The opium traffic posed a direct challenge to the Chinese state: the continued influx of the poisonous drug showed that the state was unable to protect its people against the foreigners; and the loss of silver placed heavy economic burdens on Chinese peasants. The result was the opium crisis of 1839 in which China's Commissioner Lin seized and burned 20,000 chests of British and American opium at Canton. The British government, the defender of civilization and legitimate commerce, swiftly shattered this presumptuous challenge to its authority. The Opium War in which the British virtually destroyed the Chinese fleet began a new era of gunboat diplomacy. For the next century foreign soldiers and merchants held a whip over China. The immediate outcome of the war was Chinese payment of \$6 million for the burned opium and acceptance of humiliating British terms, including the opening of the Chinese ports to opium and other imports.



THE OPIUM WAR

### The Taiping Rebellion

The Chinese government by now was completely incapable of protecting China from the foreign invaders. Ten years later, a menacing peasant rebellion broke out in South China. The Taiping rebels refused to deal with foreigners except on terms of strict equality. ("We are all brothers under God," they told the British minister.) In the Taiping-administered areas the peasants reduced or abolished



rents and women were liberated from footbinding and other oppressive evils. *Opium was strictly outlawed.* The leader of the Taipings preached to his followers, "The opium pipe is like a rifle pointed at your head. It can only maim or kill you." The Taipings had the only effective anti-opium stance in China until the establishment of the People's Republic. But after 15 years of bloody fighting the Taiping Rebellion was suppressed with the help of the British and Americans.

Throughout the nineteenth century the opium traffic overshadowed all other trade with China. It produced millions of addicts, further weakened the Chinese state, and created a class of merchants who thrived on the illegal traffic and were tied dollar and soul to foreign interests. From 1842 to 1884 China imported an estimated 233,000 tons of opium. By 1906 the Shanghai Opium Commissioner estimated that 13 million Chinese were smoking opium.

### American Opium Merchants

British merchants enjoyed the lion's share of the drug traffic. But American businessmen also had a finger in the pie. In the early nineteenth century, American clippers ran Turkish and Persian opium to China. So heavy was the U.S. involvement in this traffic that the Chinese Commissioner at Canton believed Turkey was an American colony. Opium was central to the rapid development of the American economy and the earliest stages of U.S. expansion into Asia. By 1839, on the eve of the Opium War, an American firm (Russell & Company) ranked as the third largest agency for Indian opium in China. Major New England family fortunes were built on opium. One such family, the Delanos, later helped lift Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the Presidency. Money made in the opium trade even helped to finance the railroads that opened the American west.

As America's share in the Chinese opium trade declined in the 1840's, John Murray Forbes, a partner in Russell & Co., pulled out his capital from China to invest in U.S. railroads. Even Howqua, the richest of the Chinese go-betweens in the opium trade, invested half a million dollars in the new lines, thus further draining China of capital.

Merchants were not the only foreigners involved in the opium traffic. A number of missionaries also got in on the act. The Reverend Charles Gutzlaff served as a translator for Jardine-Matheson Company during a six-month voyage which firmly established its dominance

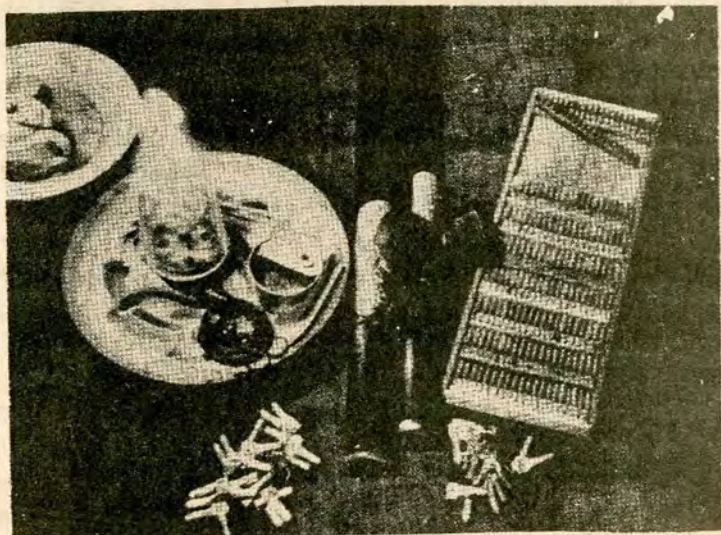


in the trade during the early 1830's. Nowhere in the good reverend's voluminous works about his gospel mission to China does the word or hint of opium appear to cast a profane shadow on the sacred.

### Missionary "Altruism"

Other glowing examples of missionary altruism may be cited. Dr. William Gould, a medical missionary, was astonished at the speed with which his 50,000 morphine tablets sold, and duty-free morphine, known to Chinese Christians as "Jesus opium", became a major import in the late nineteenth century. Missionaries were criticized for the hypocrisy of preaching the holy gospel while their countrymen went about drugging China, and some Christian "converts" took advantage of foreign protection to ply the drug trade. Eventually many missionaries became active partisans of the anti-opium movement when criticism of the traffic threatened their ability to win converts. Their pious preaching against drugs soothed the consciences of foreigners who were not involved in the trade, but at no time did it deter merchants whose profits depended on it. Not, that is, until foreign opium was forced out of the market by competition from home-grown Chinese varieties. By the 1920's China produced an estimated 90 per cent of the world's production of 14,000 tons.

Opium had done its work well. By the early twentieth century foreign merchants had used money made in the opium trade to seize control of other key sectors of the Chinese economy.



OPIUM-SMOKING EQUIPMENT



## Japanese in Manchuria

Even the small victories China had won in forcing foreign powers out of the opium trade were quickly undermined. For Japanese invaders in Manchuria and North China again seized control of the opium market. As early as 1919 the "secret" Japanese opium monopoly in Manchuria provided substantial government revenues which by 1939 had risen to over \$90 million a year. One Japanese gave the following account of the opium traffic in Manchuria in the 1920's:

In Dairen, on the piers and at the railway station, were groups of coolies. The first thing that the tourist entering Manchuria saw were their half-naked figures, black with filth. I visited Hekizanso, the coolie dormitory complex. It was shocking. Here opium facilities were openly established. Opium at this time was a monopoly for the Kwantung Civil Government and the system was said to be designed for protection against poison. At Hekizanso it was briskly marketed. I was unable to understand it: wasn't this too frankly colonialist? In later years while traveling in the interior of China this feeling deepened as I came to learn the details of how Japanese, utilizing extraterritoriality, went outside the treaty ports as morphine peddlers, spreading its poison.

And the fall of Shanghai in 1940 gave to Japanese forces seeking to conquer all China \$72 million in opium revenues. Japan's "Opium Suppression Bureau" licensed smokers, dens and stores on the pretext of effecting a "cure" for growing millions of addicts, in the process raking in enormous profits.

## Opium Wiped Out in People's Republic

After 1949, when the Chinese once and for all threw out the foreigners, they also developed effective methods to eliminate the ravages of opium. China is not only the land to suffer most deeply at the hands of the drug. It is also the only society which has effectively eliminated a major opium problem. Elimination of the opium traffic and addiction was brought about totally, rapidly and humanely in the People's Republic of China. Contrary to conventional wisdom in the U.S., the Chinese recognized that society, not individual sickness or aberration, lay at the root of the problem. Therefore, drastic social changes, as well as changes in the attitudes and life situations of individuals, were essential. The new government which valued people above profits eliminated entirely the involvement of the foreign powers





OPIUM DEN IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY CHINA



and Chinese profiteers. Swift and uncompromising crackdowns destroyed the entire corrupt network of traders and pushers.

### Addicts Not Criminals

More significantly, the Chinese provided new opportunities for addicts to rehabilitate themselves. Addicts were not seen as personally guilty or deranged. They were not viewed as criminals but rather as the victims of the corrupt old society. What counted was helping them understand that they were victims of the old order and that extraordinary opportunities awaited them and all oppressed people in a new society which they would help to shape. Free drugs were provided for registered addicts in programs of rapidly phased withdrawal. This was accompanied by intensive education and discussion



"PEOPLE'S COMMUNES" BEGAN ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS IN 1958. YAM SORTING ON THE FUA SHEN COMMUNE NEAR CANTON IS TYPICAL OF THAT LIFE.

about their personal problems and how they related to the old society and the new. Victims of addiction then received education and job opportunities. They were not treated to sermons about their personal



failures and then sent back to the filth, degradation and despair of ghetto life where opium provided the only relief. Moral rearmament, Christian or any other kind, which leaves untouched the social roots of oppression is a cruel mockery of a cure, as millions of addicts in this country have learned. Nor were Chinese addicts permanently fixed on some miracle drug offering the prospect of lifetime addiction as the methadone advocates now suggest. Chinese society was transformed to its very roots. Meaningful, non-exploitative work and communal relations among equals were open to men and women who were prepared to break with the old order. By the mid-1950's China's millions of addicts had been successfully re-integrated into a dynamic, developing and hopeful society.



# SOUTHEAST ASIA : THE OPIUM TRAIL

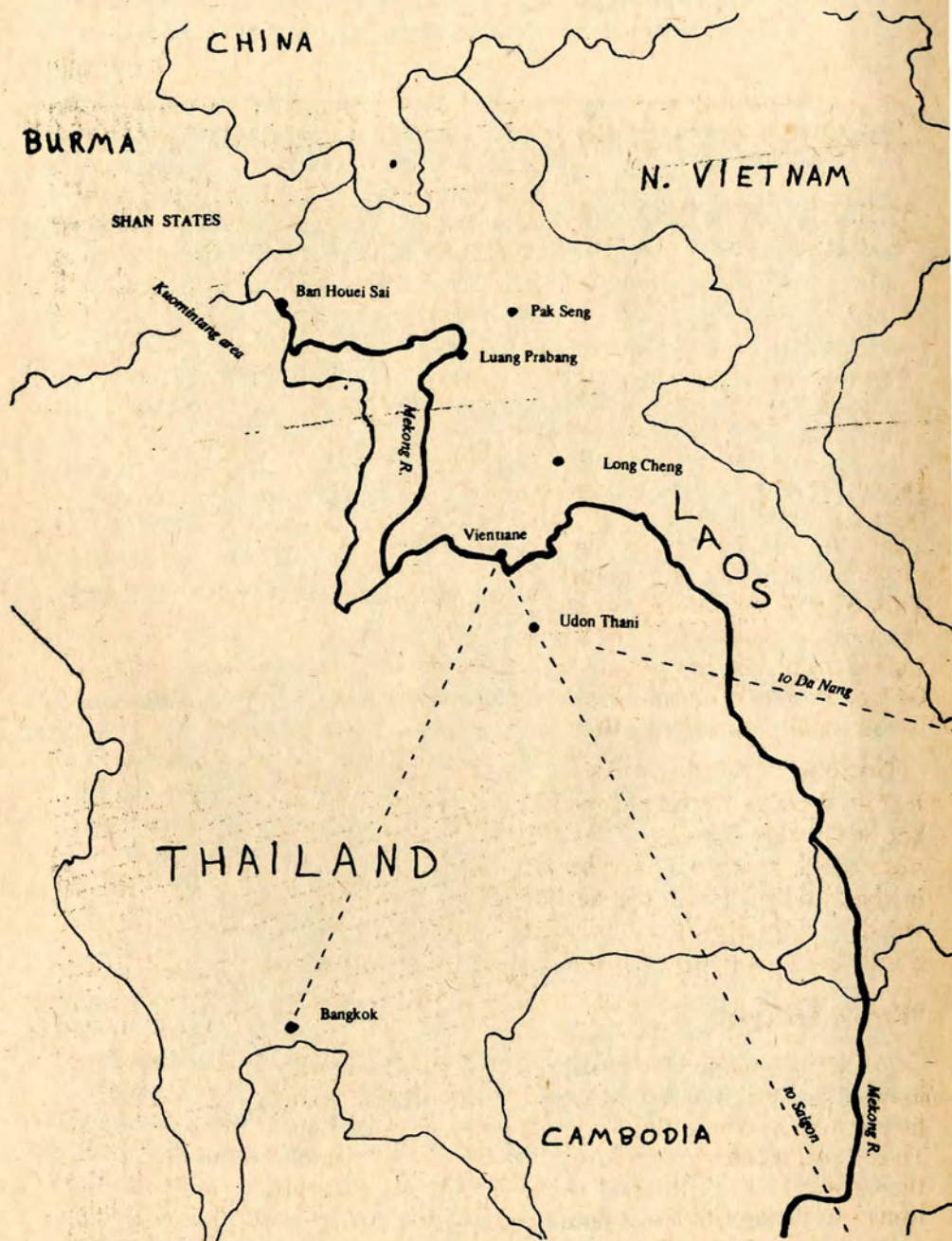
**W**E'VE JUST SEEN THE PLAGUE in action. But where does all the junk come from? And who carves up the incredible profits of \$200,000 per kilo (2.2 lbs.) between the grower and the addict on the street? As we all know, heroin is made from opium. And most of the world's illegal opium—1,000 tons of it a year—comes from Southeast Asia, though U.S. officials insist that our staunch NATO ally and anti-Soviet buffer, Turkey, still supplies the opium behind 80 per cent of the heroin entering our country. But the same officials admit that the heroin traffic from Asia has jumped tremendously in the past year. And as GI's come home under "Vietnamization," they are bringing their heroin habits home with them.

Not only is Southeast Asia the world's largest supplier of opium, but its share of the world market is growing. The world heroin market has always been very flexible; as old sources have dried up or been suppressed, new ones have been found and exploited. With production in the Middle East on the decline, and the growing heroin market provided by a quarter of a million GI's still left in Vietnam, it looks like Southeast Asia is where it's at for heroin's future.

## "Fertile Triangle"

Opium poppies are grown by the tribal minority groups who inhabit the mountainous area called the "fertile triangle", the remote border region where the northern boundaries of Laos, Burma and Thailand intersect (*see map*). There tribesmen smoke some opium themselves and sell the rest to the first group of profiteer middlemen: itinerant ethnic Chinese smugglers. But the growers, who know opium only as a pleasant high, have no idea that their only cash crop becomes







—just a few hundred miles away—the stock-in-trade of racketeers (both private and official) and the basis of human misery from Saigon to the U.S.

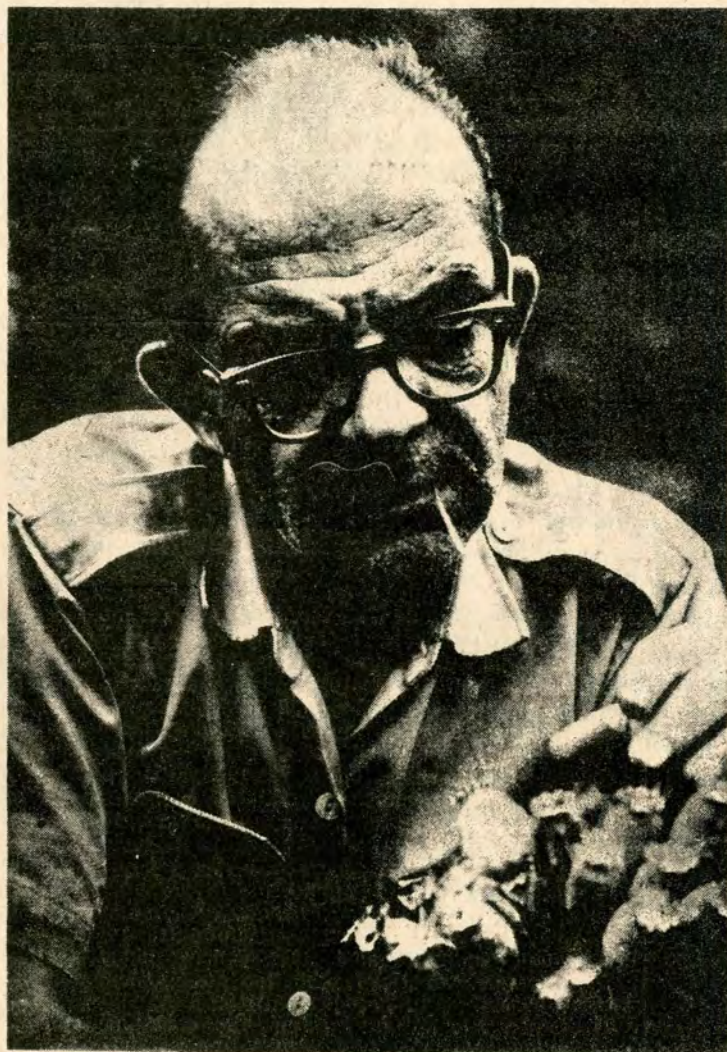
After the roving smugglers buy raw opium, their mule and pony caravans soon move across the turf of military gangs who extort tribute or protection money as a guarantee of safe passage. The biggest of these armed gangs haunting the opium trail out of Burma and northern Thailand are so-called “remnants” of Chiang Kai-shek’s Kuomintang armies that were chased out of South China and into Burma by the Chinese revolutionaries in 1949. Since then they have survived by moving opium and forcing independent opium traders to pay protection money—and by receiving regular supplies and troop replenishments from Taiwan. Operating in three groups in northern Thailand, after being kicked out of Burma in 1961, these gangs dominate “more than 80 per cent of the traffic from the [Burmese] Shan State as a result of their control of a strip roughly 75 miles long in the extreme north of Thailand along the Burmese border” (CIA sources cited in the *New York Times*, August 11, 1971). One group, the “First Independent Unit”, has run two games at once, making intelligence forays into China’s Yunnan province and collecting opium on the way back!

### Dividing the Rake-off

Besides the Chinese Nationalist bands, a few other official bodies get a rake-off at this stage: the separatist Shan States Army of Burma, the Burmese self-defense forces or K.K.Y., and the Thai Border Patrol Police. But the Kuomintang “irregulars” are the most powerful and best organized of the bunch. Needless to say, these rival gangsters occasionally get into squabbles, as in July 1967 when the big-time independent Shan operator Chang Chi-foo tried to slip past the Kuomintang without paying the routine \$80,000 protection money. But they cut him off near Ban Houei Sai in Laos, and the two gangs started shooting it out. When Laotian General Ouane Rattikone, then commander of northwestern Laos and long reputed to be the country’s opium king, heard about the fire-fight on his turf, he yanked his forces out of the Plain of Jars (where he was supposed to be battling the Pathet Lao) and hurried them to Ban Houei Sai. General Ouane’s airplanes (U.S.-supplied T-28’s) bombed and strafed both Chang Chi-foo and the Kuomintang, killing about 300 on both sides and ripping off a half a ton of opium for the general!

In Thailand, local opium and opium fed in from Laos is transported along the excellent U.S.-built Thai road system to Bangkok,





**"POP" BUELL, CHIEF CIA OPERATIVE IN LAOS, HOLDS A CLUSTER OF OPIUM POPPIES.**



where some is processed and consumed and some smuggled off to Hong Kong and Macao. But Laos remains the biggest opium and heroin chute of all—and the most treacherous. Here the third and most important group of middlemen comes into the picture: the Laotian generals, whose power and armies are wholly dependent on the American government. They protect the traffic for a price and move heroin themselves. They have captured this leg of the opium and heroin trade as a direct consequence of America's air war against the Pathet Lao and the rural people of Laos. For the air war has battered the countryside so badly that traditional land and river opium routes are no longer safe. Word has it that even Corsican *mafiosi*, once the key middlemen in Laos just as they are in *Marsilles*, have been pushed from the driver's seat because it is too hot. In their place have jumped the Laotian militarists. As U.S. bombing has cratered the Laotian countryside into a moon surface, airplanes have taken over the main burden of opium and heroin transport. Planes of the Royal Lao Air Force move heroin from collection points like Ban Houei Sai in the far northwest to "forwarding centers" in Laos and Thailand like Vientiane, the capital of Laos, Luang Prabang, and Udon Thani, the major U.S. air base in northern Thailand. Planes also pick up Meo opium at the "secret" base of the CIA's Clandestine Army at Long Cheng, 80 miles northeast of Vientiane. By the time the drug has reached the Udon Thani runways, it is already in the form of white heroin. Big cities in Laos and Thailand, like Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Bangkok, have served as the central markets, major processing centers, and final transshipment points of opium bound for Saigon and Hong Kong. But now, as GI's have turned on to smack, Lao generals are processing opium into heroin closer and closer to the point of production. The CIA has reported that seven new heroin plants were recently built along the northern border with Thailand.

### Planes the Vital Link

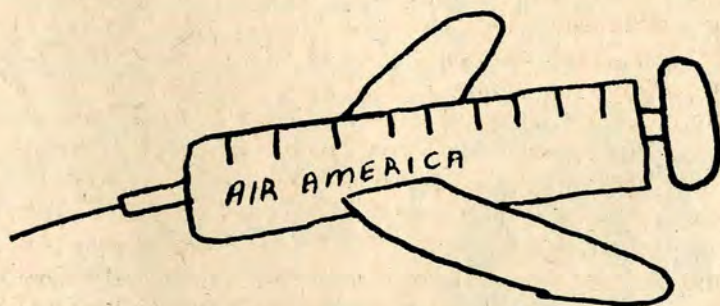
Since government airplanes are the vital link in the chain from the first Laotian collection points to the key relay stations and processing plants (and even American and Lao officials admit this much), the next big question is: Who flies the heroin to Vietnam? Officials say that most all flights to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport take off from Bangkok or Vientiane, and that airlines making the trip are Air Vietnam, Royal Air Lao, Lao Airlines, Thai International, and Air France. These flights alone, in addition to military runs, would provide opportunity enough for independent smugglers, especially given



the easily greased palms of the Saigon police. But there are other airlines that fly in Laos, and from Laos to Vietnam: *Air America* and *Air Continental*.

### Air America

With 11,000 employees and a fleet of 200 aircraft, Air America is one of the world's largest airlines. Most of Air America's contracts are with the CIA for its Asian missions. Those missions are revealed in the Pentagon Papers to range from air supply sorties for CIA mercenaries to secret air support stints for the CIA's subversion of unwanted neutralist governments. And Air Continental gets an even greater percentage of its contracts from the CIA, while its pilots are notorious soldiers-of-fortune who provide a willing and able pool of opium errand boys for hire.



Both airlines are widely known to fly opium. Until recently, however, there has been no proof of official CIA collaboration in the traffic. But now a former Green Beret has publically testified that he worked for the CIA buying opium from Meo tribemen and loading it aboard Air America planes (see inset on following page).

### American Technology

The opium trade is another example of the almost universally destructive effects of American technology on Southeast Asia. The old opium trade moved slowly by caravan down from the hills and then by riverboat, winding its way down the Mekong Valley through Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The trade was dangerous and the opium might pass through many middlemen before reaching its desti-



## HOW THE CIA BUYS OPIUM

A former Green Beret, Sgt. Paul Withers, 24, testified at the Winter Soldier Hearings in Boston on October 9, 1971. He spoke of his role in the Indochina war as a Special Forces agent in Laos. Paul was awarded nine Purple Hearts, the Distinguished Service Cross, and Silver and Bronze Stars during his tour of duty.

After completing basic training at Fort Dix in the fall of 1965, he was sent to Nha Trang, South Vietnam. Although he was ostensibly stationed there, he was placed on "loan" to the CIA in January 1966 and sent to Pak Seng, Laos. Before going there he and his companions were stripped of their uniforms and all American credentials. They were issued Czechoslovakian guns and Korean uniforms. Paul even signed blank sheets of paper at the bottom and the CIA later typed out letters and sent them



PAUL WITHERS

to his parents and wife. All this was done to hide the fact that there were American troops operating in Laos.

The mission in Laos was to make friends with the Meo people and organize and train them to fight the Pathet Lao. One of the main tasks was to buy up the entire local crop of opium. About twice a week an Air America plane would arrive with sup-

plies and kilo bags of gold dust. Paul gave the gold to the Meo in return for their bags of opium which were loaded on the plane. Each bag was marked with the symbol of the tribe. There was no mistaking the bags since the symbols were quite complicated.



The "... CIA has for some time been this Bureau's strongest partner in identifying foreign sources and routes of illegal trade in narcotics. Liason between our two agencies is close and constant in matters of mutual interest. Much of the progress we are now making in identifying overseas narcotics traffic can, in fact, be attributed to CIA cooperation."

—John E. Ingersoll  
Director, Bureau of  
Narcotics and Dangerous  
Drugs

nation, thus increasing risk and reducing profit. Now, American-supplied planes fly opium and heroin directly between major collection, processing, and relay points, bypassing the old networks. This has helped consolidate the trade, reduce the risk, and increase the profits, giving the Southeast Asian opium business a big boost.

### **Saigon Middlemen**

The last big middlemen on the heroin trail are our anti-communist clients of the Saigon regime. True, opium has been a core item in Vietnamese politics since the days of the French colonial opium monopoly in Indochina—which, by the way, coughed up 20 to 50 per cent of the colony's revenues between 1898 and 1920. But the importance of opium has grown over the past two decades since the French puppet emperor Bao Dai sold control of the Saigon Police over to the Binh Xuyen gangster sect for a sum of \$1.2 million in 1953. Running the casinos and warehouses of Saigon and extorting the Chinese merchants of Cholon, the Binh Xuyen held the reins of the city's opium traffic until the fledgling U.S.-propped dictatorship of Ngo Dinh Diem smashed the sect in a bloody coup in 1955. With the Ngo family in the saddle, opium traffic came under their control, mainly in the hands of secret police chief Ngo Dinh Nhu and his wife, the famous Madame Nhu. It was under the Ngo family's personal dictatorship that the ambitious Air Force officer, Nguyen Cao Ky, became a wheel in the trade by using his airplanes (assigned to commando-terrorist air-drops over North Vietnam) for smuggling opium from Laos. Now Vice President, Marshal Ky has been implicated in the Vietnamese branch of the opium circuit, as has General Dzu, commander of Region II. But the major paid protector of the heroin trade seems to be Premier Tran Thien Khiem. Khiem appointed a brother to the post of Chief of the National Customs In-



vestigation Division at Tan Son Nhut Airport (the funnel for opium coming in from Laos) and another brother, Director of the Saigon port. Premier Khiem also controls the National Police and is related by marriage to Saigon's Police Chief. In short, the Premier's family stands guard over the check-points on the Vietnam heroin trail leading into the GI mainline.

### U.S. Government Involvement

From the Kuomintang bandit gangs in northern Thailand to the Lao generals and the Saigon ruling clique, there is one horribly clear and consistent pattern: *the U.S. government firmly supports the same people who bring heroin to the GI's in Vietnam.* By turning their eyes away from the obvious official corruption, American authorities have effectively used opium profits to reward Asian elites for their support of U.S. goals in Southeast Asia. Opium bricks are being turned into gold bricks by the millions and deposited in Swiss banks to insure the comfortable retirement of Vietnamese, Thai, and Lao officials if their regimes fall. Our government not only supplies arms and aid to the middlemen and protectors of the heroin trade, but it also supplies a captive body of consumers—over 200,000 GI's in Vietnam. The bankrupt imperial policies of counterrevolution abroad and "benign neglect" of domestic social evils promote heroin addiction by worsening the despair and alienation on which heroin feeds. It seems that anything goes if it is in the "national interest" as defined by the handful of corporate and moneyed elites who run the U.S. government.



## THE BIGGEST PUSHERS IN THE WORLD?

### *BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PACIFIC CORPORATION (PARENT COMPANY OF AIR AMERICA, INC.)*

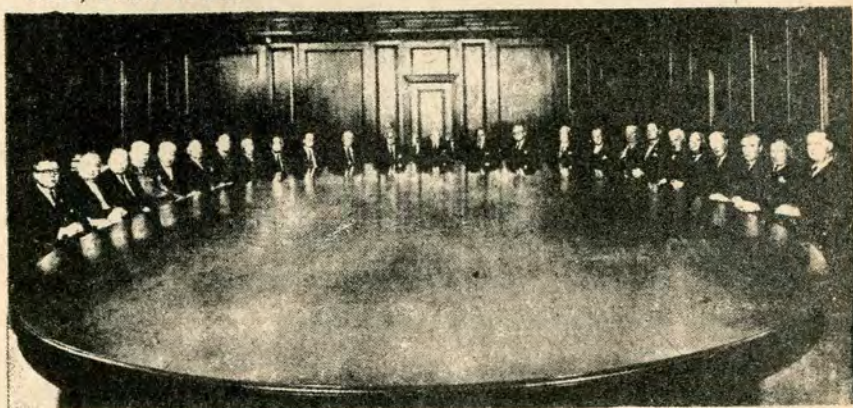
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**ARTHUR BERRY RICHARDSON**—Foreign service Russia, China, England 1914-1936; ch. bd. Chesebrough-Ponds Inc. 1955-1961; dir. United Hospital Fund, NYC; dir. Lenox Hill Hospital.

**JAMES BARR AMES**—Law partner in Ropes & Gray, Boston; dir. Fiduciary Trust Co.; dir. Air Asia Co., Ltd.; corporator Suffolk-Franklin Savings Bank; corp. Cambridge Savings Bank; corp. North Avenue Savings Bank; dir. United Community Service; dir. Animal Rescue League; dir. International Student Assn.; Pres. Hospital Council; member adv. com. Cambridge Civic Assoc.; trustee Mt. Auburn Hosp.; dir. Buckingham School.

**CHARLES P. CABELL**—Retired general; deputy director of CIA, 1953-1962.





# KICKING IT : METHADONE, THERAPY, OR REVOLUTION

**E**ARLY LAST SUMMER twenty-one sailors and marines stationed in San Diego went off to an old ranch house in the California mountains to spend a weekend listening to records and rapping with twelve officers and seven chaplains who accompanied them. They were junkies, and they were the first to participate in a new program called CREDO (Chaplains Relevance to the Emerging Drug Order).

As the "drug order" emerges, Navy chaplains aren't the only ones rushing in to get a piece of the action. All over the country clinics, halfway-houses and counseling centers are springing up. Local governments, big hospitals, churches, settlement houses—nearly everyone seems to be moving in on the drug scene.

## A Growth Industry

Like pollution control, drug prevention has become a growth industry. The same big businesses and institutions which contributed to the problem in the first place now race to control new avenues of profits in the field of prevention. Their "cures," however, never touch the heart of the problem, for they are themselves part of it. Drug companies turn out new miracle drugs to "substitute" for and cure the heroin habit; police who stood idly by while racketeers preyed on the poor now use the drug panic to demand police reinforcements to control the poor; medical empires which could have cared less about helping poor people solve their addiction problem call for millions for research and drug prevention centers.

And now President Nixon, announcing that drug addiction has "assumed the dimensions of a national emergency", has asked Congress for \$155 million to support rehabilitation projects. Where is all this money going? What are these programs all about?







## Methadone Treatment

Most of the new government money will be used to expand what are known as "methadone maintenance" programs. Supporters of this approach hold that addiction is primarily a physical problem, a sickness that needs to be treated medically. Once someone is hooked on heroin (the reasons this happened are not inquired into), the chemical make-up of the body's cells is changed, they argue. A permanent physiological need is created that can only be satisfied by a fix, of heroin or of some substitute drug like methadone.

Methadone was invented by the Germans during World War II. (They called it Adolfene, in honor of Hitler.) Its effects are almost the same as heroin's: both get you high, both tend to require ever-increasing doses, and both produce extremely painful symptoms in withdrawal . . . In fact, the biggest difference between the two is that methadone is legal.

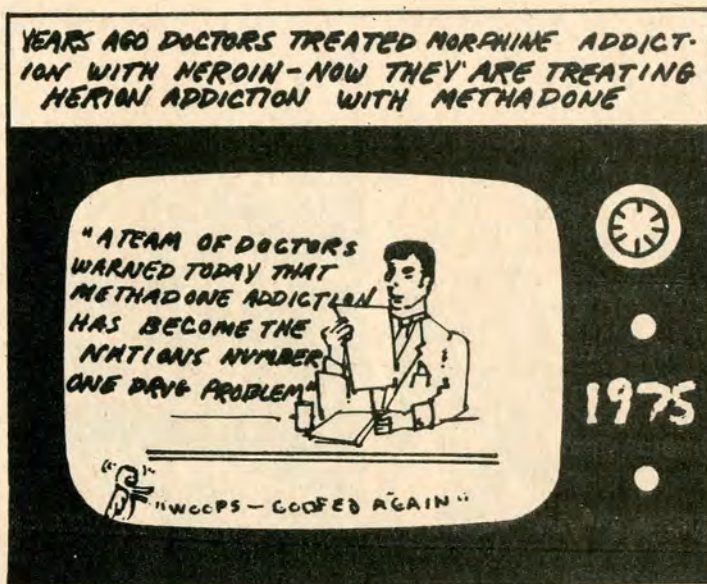
Many hospitals and clinics use small doses of methadone to ease the pain of withdrawal from heroin. Nearly everyone agrees that such treatment, known as "methadone withdrawal" or "methadone detoxification", can be very helpful to junkies trying to kick their habits. The controversy comes over methadone "maintenance" programs that provide daily doses of methadone, presumably for the rest of the addict's life. Defenders of methadone maintenance point out that no program of complete withdrawal has ever worked very well, that at least methadone addicts don't have to steal to support their habits, and that doses can be regulated so that the patient won't nod out or get sick. They hope that by providing methadone they can help addicts to function normally, at home, school, or work.

## Scientific Evidence Skimpy

Methadone programs have gotten lots of publicity, but the scientific evidence backing up their claims of success is pretty skimpy. A study reported in *Biomedical News*, July, 1971, showed that after fourteen months of methadone maintenance, 37 out of 40 patients studied were using heroin again, and of the other three one was using speed and another barbiturates.

A similar study, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, December 6, 1971, revealed that many people in a methadone maintenance program had *not* been addicted to





junk when they started receiving methadone, but that after six months 95% of the patients were using *heroin as well as methadone*. In other words, methadone maintenance may be increasing, instead of cutting, the number of junkies!

Even for people who stay "clean" on methadone, it has proven hard to return to the straight world. In New York City the three largest employers have a firm policy of refusing to hire methadone patients. Most maintenance programs have no job training, no sex education, no legal counselling, and only minimal efforts at therapy---in short, next to nothing to help their patients function better in society.

But the problem isn't just that methadone doesn't keep junkies straight. For one thing, what little research has been done on its long-term effects has produced some frightening results: one study suggests that methadone may be dangerous to blood marrow, causing severe pain in bones if used too long. Yet methadone is being distributed all over the country, to tens of thousands of black and brown people, GI's and working-class kids. One scientist doing research on methadone recalls that heroin was first introduced as a cure for morphine addiction, before doctors realized how dangerous the new drug was. "The way methadone is being used today, he said, is "so similar it sends shivers up my back."



# White Lightning Comix

Reggie Vitz

## METHADONE MAINTENANCE BULL









And methadone is going out to even more people than the government admits. A survey of fourteen major cities found methadone on sale illegally in the streets of every one of them. As methadone maintenance programs increase in size and number, both supply and demand for black-market methadone are also growing. The new drug may soon rival heroin as a cause of addiction. In Washington, D.C., more people died of overdoses of methadone than of heroin in 1971!

Methadone maintenance substitutes a legal drug for an illegal one, but it still leaves the patient strung out, still unable to function without a chemical prop and sluggish with one. And once you're on methadone maintenance you're on it for life (unless of course you go back to junk). With heroin spreading and methadone following, we seem to be on the verge of a "brave new world" where millions of people live out their lives on government-supplied drugs. Instead of dealing with the real problems that push people to drugs, methadone maintenance merely tries to return them to "normal"; that is, to keep them quiet and under control.

And in the process it gives the government an incredible degree of power over the addict's life. Patients who have to report to a clinic once or twice a day can't go very far away, and they can't very well afford to disobey any orders from their official suppliers. Clinics always reserve the right to screen applicants for methadone and reject those they don't wish to maintain; in New York some clinics have refused to help addicts who wear black liberation pins to the clinic. Puerto Rican and black people are realizing that methadone is another weapon of the white power structure to pacify their communities. As methadone programs move to white neighborhoods as well, white people are starting to have the same fears. Larry, the vet who told his story in a previous section, came back from the Army to find most of his old friends on methadone maintenance. "Puppets," he called them, "puppets—that's all they are. Go here on Monday, there on Tuesday, whatever the government says, they have to do."

### **Law and Order**

Methadone maintenance, for all its disadvantages, may be the only humane solution now available for a few hard-core addicts. But



it should only be used as a last resort, after all else has failed. Unfortunately, that's not what's happening: many clinics only provide methadone maintenance, not even giving the addict a chance to withdraw. The Federal government is spending a fortune to open new methadone maintenance centers all over the country. It may be a dead end for junkies, but that doesn't bother Nixon and his friends. As long as it'll produce a little of their kind of law and order (where everyone else shuts up and they run the country), they're for it.

A doctor who heads one of the better withdrawal clinics in the Boston area summed it up this way: "The question is, does one want to create this type of society—a society where people come once or twice a day or whatever to drink their Tang spiked with methadone, after waiting in long lines like robots, dependent not only on the methadone, but dependent and subservient to the government policy and system that is supplying the prop?"

### **The "Therapeutic Community"**

NEXT TO methadone maintenance, the most widely discussed technique is the "therapeutic community", the live-in rehabilitation center. Such communities also assume that addiction is an individual problem; like methadone programs they put the emphasis not on the social conditions that encourage addiction, but on the weaknesses of the individual addict. But they consider the psychological aspects of addiction much more fundamental than the physical ones. They too try to return their patients to "normal", but by transforming their personalities.

In the therapeutic communities the patients live together in large communal houses, under the supervision of a director and a staff of trained aides (most of them ex-junkies). The residents live under a set of rules that rigidly enforce the standards of behavior that people in our society are told to live by. In most communities the rules say no drugs, no alcohol, no physical violence, no homosexuality (in some cases no heterosexual relationships are allowed either), no criticism of the program, and no deviation from traditional sex-roles. Men take leadership and do the physical work; women obey the men and serve them by cooking and sewing. A strict system of punishment and rewards backs up the rules. Addicts who are "good" are rewarded with praise from the staff, privileges like free time and the use of a car, and responsibility over other patients; those who behave "negatively" are punished





"DISCIPLINE"—A SHAVED HEAD AND A SIGN



by loss of position and sometimes by having their heads shaved.

### Encounter Groups

The key to the whole process is supposed to be the encounter group. In these sessions a dozen or so addicts assemble to discuss their experiences and feelings, usually under the leadership of ex-addict staff members. In each meeting one individual is singled out for the rest of the group to question, bait, and criticize. These "verbal street fights" go on anywhere from three to 36 hours, with the staff encouraging addicts to be as honest as possible and as violent (verbally) as they feel. The goal is to expose the addicts' personality—to shatter the fears, the illusions, the defense mechanisms, the techniques of manipulating others and fooling oneself that are part of everyone's psychological make-up. Ideally, the self-awareness this process develops will make it possible for the addict to cope with life without drugs.

Different communities work in different ways, and every junkie responds differently. Some of the programs rely so heavily on rules and regulations and punishments and rewards that the residents come to need them; as soon as they go back on the street, where there is no such discipline, they go back to smack. If they do stay straight, it's often because their community experience has trained them to accept the same kind of arbitrary authority and cultural strait jacket that society asks them and all of us to tolerate.

Sometimes it works better than that. The rules and punishments, strict as they are, may help the ex-junkies to recover some order and stability in their lives. Good encounter groups can help participants to understand how smack serves as an escape from the real problems and restore their confidence in themselves and in their ability to function in society.

### From "Community" to . . . ?

Even when it works, more often than not it doesn't last. Back on the street, in the middle of a hostile and competitive society, the ex-junkie loses the security and support that the good community provided. For black and Puerto Rican kids, it's back to the ghetto, where there are still no jobs, still no decent housing, still enough despair to infect all but the most determined, and still smack on every corner. For white kids too it's getting to be pretty much the same story. They may have a better chance at a job, but it's likely to be so boring and oppressive they'd rather go back to drugs.





AN ENCOUNTER GROUP

### Enormous Expense

In any case, therapeutic communities can handle only a tiny percentage of the addicts who want treatment. In fact, New York, the site of some of the best-known therapeutic communities, closed ten residential centers and cut the number of resident addicts from 6,435 to 2,167 between April and December of 1971. The therapeutic procedure takes years, and the expense is enormous. (Synanon, the pioneer therapeutic community, now demands \$1,000 in cash from each resident, thus automatically excluding nearly all black and Puerto Rican junkies and most whites, too.

Besides, most of these programs will only take the junkies they believe will fit in. Before they are admitted, applicants are intensively tested and interviewed. Their clothing is judged for neatness, and they are often required to take part in a trial encounter group. After all that, anyone the staff doesn't like can be ruled out.

Some new programs are borrowing from therapeutic community techniques without accepting them completely. For instance, many withdrawal clinics, such as some of those now being opened by the VA, combine medical care with optional "rap groups" (less intensive versions of the encounter group) under the leadership of ex-junkies. At their best, these programs can provide a friendly environment in which addicts can share their feelings, recover their confidence, and learn that their problems are not unique.



Such clinics, if combined with good rap groups and necessary services like job-training and placement, are probably the best hope among the official programs. But their effectiveness has not been proven either. Like every other program, they turn their graduates back out into the street to face the same society from which they needed to escape into drugs originally. So far, experience has shown that only a small percentage of rehabilitated addicts can resist these pressures for long. In any case, such decent facilities are few and far between. The VA, for instance, has only 19, serving a maximum of 3800 patients a year. More are opening, but with most federal money going into methadone maintenance, things aren't likely to get very much better soon.

### A Day in the Life

*This section was written by Rona Bernstein, an ex-junkie who has been enrolled in several therapeutic communities. It is taken from a longer article that appeared in White Lightning, the newspaper of the Spirit of Logos (see p.80).*

The following is a description of the life you lead (sorry, the life that is led for you) in a Therapeutic Community. Let's start from the beginning:

When a person enters a T.C., he or she is told to sit on "The Prospect Chair." It's just an ordinary chair put in the hallway of the residence and it is used for people seeking admission or for people who they are thinking of throwing out of the house. Since you don't know what is happening and you want to help you sit on the chair. You can be made to sit there for up to five hours. As you sit you see people passing you by and if you say anything to them, even a hello, you're told to shut up because you're not a part of the house yet. The reason you have to sit and wait so long is because the staff wants to see if you really want their help.

The reality is, though, that most people go into a T.C. because they are involved in a court case and the judge or their parole officer has paroled them to a T.C.. So leaving means going to jail. Another reason is that you are just so uptight and you have nowhere else to go. The staff knows this, so therefore you are in their power to do with you as they please.



When you go into the room, all you can see is a group of strange people and you have to sit with your chair facing them. They ask you all sorts of questions, what's your name, where do you live, etc. Then comes the massacre, they start calling you a baby because you use dope, and you are a mentally ill person. If you're a woman, you're called a whore, tramp, hole, etc. If you are a man, you're called a pussy, faggot, etc. After about fifteen minutes of this, you are told you have to give them an investment, give them something of yourself to prove that you really want their help.

Some people have to yell for help for about five minutes, Men have to shave off their mustaches and beards if they have them. If you are a woman, you may be told that you have to cut your hair real short short (like I had to), and all sorts of sick things like that.

After being mocked by these strangers, you are approached with open arms and told, "Welcome to our family." What they are really saying is "We have decided to bless you with our help and therapy."

If you are new and you are a woman, you are put to work in the dining room, serve people their food and clean up after them. If you are a man, you are put on the service crew; this means that you have to clean the house about five times, and that that includes the director's office and rooms. Other jobs are the business office, a job given to women of course; the kitchen, cooking all the meals and serving the staff; "expeditors", the police force of the house (their function is to make sure that everything gets done, and they are also there as a tool to create feelings among the residents); the hustling department (they go out and solicit donations from businessmen; this job is mostly given to the men because women are supposedly incompetent to do this; they only use women in the hustling department as a sex symbol to act seductive to the men being hustled for donations--just like women are used to hustle dope in the streets); if you know about carpentry or electrical work, you are put on the maintenance crew (men).



The residents start their day at 7:00 in the morning. At 8:00 before you start your job function you go to what is called "Morning Meeting". Any announcements that have to be made are made there and pull-ups are made (eg., if you saw someone drop an ash on the floor or something unimportant like that, you pull them up on it). Then people are made to sing songs or tell jokes. The purpose of Morning Meeting: to get you into a good mood for the rest of the day. BULLSHIT.

Your therapy comes after dinner. This is called "encounters". (or how to mentally kill a person in one easy lesson). Encounters are on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights. The purpose of encounters is to strip you of everything you are and then build you and mold you to a robot. The main uses of encounters are:

1. If people in the house have bad feelings for the staff, they are pushed to take it out on each other instead of the real enemy.
2. The motivation in a T.C. that is given to a person so that they won't fuck up is fear, because if you fuck up you'll hear about it in an encounter by everybody dumping on you (verbally).
3. You are dealt with as an individual with individual problems, therefore keeping a division within the residents of the house.
4. You are made to think that you are socially sick, so that anything that you have to say is of no value.

The encounter teaches people how to be oppressed citizens and what tools you can use to oppress others. This way you will have no knowledge and time to fight the real enemy.

### **Rehabilitation Picture Bleak**

All in all, the rehabilitation picture is bleak. Drug treatment programs are turning into the biggest hustle since the war on poverty, and they generally seem to produce just about as little. As we saw in the section on addiction in the ghetto, only a handful of people have ever been cured of their habits, despite all the money and publicity some of the programs have received. One New York State Narcotics official whose agency provides some "care" for about 11,000 addicts to the tune of \$50 million a year said there have been "a couple hundred cures." And New York City's Addiction Services Agency, with a \$29 million budget in 1970, claimed 79 "cures,"



out of the 2500 addicts they treated between 1967 and 1970. Phoenix House, the largest therapeutic community in the U.S., has enrolled over 3,000 addicts since it opened in 1967, but fewer than 200 have actually graduated successfully. New York boasts the nation's most extensive treatment program, but it has been estimated that *fewer than 3%* of those addicted were receiving any care at all. Even Mayor Lindsay admits that the city's "incomparable" drug programs have produced no visible net gains either in stopping heroin traffic or in rehabilitating junkies.

### Political Groups Fighting Drugs

The only rehabilitation efforts that seem to have much hope of success are those that try to fight addiction by involving the addict in struggling to change the society that produced the plague. Political groups in the ghetto have found that fighting scag has to be one of their highest priorities if they are to have any chance of winning their liberation. The Black Muslims have probably the largest and most effective withdrawal program in the country. Community-controlled clinics in black ghettos, like The Community Thing in Harlem, have tried to offer black pride and commitment to the struggle for freedom as alternatives to drugs.

On the other hand, some programs set up to deal simply with drugs have found themselves moving against the social roots of addiction. Daytop House, one of the big therapeutic communities in New York City, was most successful when it began to encourage its residents to become politically active. When the white businessmen and professionals who sat on the board of trustees fired the director and 60 staff members and insisted that Daytop return to the traditional inward-looking model for the therapeutic community, many of the residents returned to the street and to junk. But a year later, when a similar situation developed in another New York therapeutic community called Logos, the addicts kept fighting: they set up their own program, called *Spirit of Logos*, Working in separate Third World and white collectives, they opened a storefront, began putting out a newspaper for junkies, and are now doing some of the most exciting and effective anti-smack work in the country. (See their Platform and Program on p. 82-83)



### The Best Form of Therapy

Politically-oriented programs like these don't deny that the individual junkie needs to change. But they understand that the best context for these personal changes, as well as the best hope for a long-range solution to the whole problem, is a mass movement fighting against racism and poverty. After all, many of the psychological problems that hang up junkies (and a lot of other people, too) come down to self-hatred. We're all told from age one that any of us can succeed if we try hard enough. The other side of that is if you don't succeed, it's your own fault; if you're trapped, if you're poor, if you can't get a job, it's because you're a piece of shit. Once you get on that kind of self-hate trip, *self-destruction* is the next step, and that's what junk is all about.

The movement, on the other hand, tries to show people how the cards are stacked against most of us from the beginning. If people are miserable, it's not because of their failings, but because a few people are getting rich off of their misery. By providing an alternative explanation and another focus for anger, as well as collective support and some sense of direction, the movement can be the best form of therapy.

More important than helping current addicts, the movement points toward a solution that can save others from the plague in the future. Eliminating poverty and racism, slums and disease, sexism and exploitation, unemployment and alienation would remove the conditions that encourage addiction in the first place. Junk won't disappear from this society until these conditions are dealt with by the people they harm. That will take time, and meanwhile the powerful men who profit from the status quo will seek to bring repression down on every program and movement that threatens them.

China was able to solve its opium problem by starting to build a new society. A revolution for life in this country will hardly be the same as China's. But no matter how long it takes, and how hard it seems, fighting for a better life is the only hope there is.



**PLATFORM AND PROGRAM OF THE SPIRIT OF LOGOS,  
A GROUP OF BLACK AND WHITE EX-JUNKIES  
IN NEW YORK CITY.**

**I. WE WANT AN END TO THE USE OF NARCOTICS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROFIT-MAKING OPPRESSION AND GENOCIDE BY CAPITALISTS.**

*Throughout history up to the present, oppressive (capitalist) governments have used drugs as a tool for pacification and extermination of those people that are most oppressed.*

**II. WE WANT AN END TO THE CONDITIONS THAT CAUSE OUR PEOPLE TO USE NARCOTICS.**

*The reasons that our people relate to narcotics as a way of life is because there are a number of realities that are hard to deal with. Ex.: Sexism, Racism, living conditions (class), etc. We have been taught to think in such a way that we don't see a solution to our problems. In order for our people to stop relating to narcotics, these conditions have to be abolished.*

**III. WE WANT ALL NARCOTICS PROFITEERS OUT OF OUR COMMUNITIES.**

*As confused as we may be, we would not relate to narcotics if they were not available to us. The pushers that profit from the narcotics traffic are backed by the pigs.*

**IV. WE WANT COMMUNITY EDUCATION ON THE TRUE NATURE OF NARCOTICS ADDICTION.**

*One of the ways of preventing our people from relating to narcotics as a way of life is for our people to understand the purpose of narcotics in our communities and how the system we live under directs us toward the use of narcotics.*

**V. WE WANT COMMUNITY-WORKER-PATIENT CONTROL OF ALL NARCOTICS REHABILITATION PROGRAMS.**

*Programs that are set up to deal with narcotics addiction have always been run with the purpose of profit-making and with the ideals of whoever is running it. The patients, workers, and the community have never had a say in the running of the programs, and subsequently they do not meet the needs of the people.*

**VI. WE WANT ALL NARCOTICS PROGRAMS TO TEACH THE TRUE NATURE OF NARCOTICS ADDICTIONS.**

*Programs have always related to therapy, usually based on Freud. Therapy does not deal with the problems of Third World and Poor White people in this society. It does not deal with the realities of narcotic addiction. These things must be taught in order for addicts to be able to deal with their problems.*



**VII. WE WANT THE ELIMINATION OF LEGAL ADDICTIVE DRUGS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO NARCOTIC ADDICTION. EX.: METHADONE, HEROIN, ETC. . . .**

*Making any drug legal to deal with the problem of narcotic addiction is only an open way of keeping our people enslaved by the government. It is not dealing with the problem of the individual under the influence of such drugs.*

**VIII. WE WANT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL NARCOTIC ADDICTS TO BE RESPECTED.**

*Narcotics addicts are the victims of this capitalist system. In this society, narcotics addicts and ex-narcotic addicts are treated like beasts. The pigs have been brutalizing them mentally and physically.*

**IX. WE WANT THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS BUSTED ON NARCOTICS OR NARCOTICS-RELATED CHARGES.**

*The government does not have the right to put narcotics addicts in concentration camps for narcotics or for crimes committed to support narcotic habits, because "they" are the cause of narcotics addiction.*

**X. WE WANT THE PIGS TO STOP USING DRUGS AS AN EXCUSE TO INVADE OUR COMMUNITIES AND OPPRESS OUR PEOPLE WITH THE BACKING OF LAWS. EX.: THE NO-KNOCK LAW.**

*The government has been using drugs as the reason why there are so many police in our communities that do not protect our people, why they abuse many individuals, and why they have passed no-knock that are not used to arrest narcotic pushers but to invade the houses of those people who are moving on the conditions that are oppressing our people.*

**XI. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE.**

*The problem of narcotic addiction cannot be solved until the people have control of their own lives in their own hands. This is only possible under a socialist society.*

*from WHITE LIGHTNING newspaper*



# FURTHER READING

Frank Browning and the Editors of *Ramparts* have recently edited an anthology called *Smack!*. (This book, like all others mentioned below, is available in paperback.) Its point of view is similar to this pamphlet, and it includes interesting articles on addiction among veterans and GI's, on the international heroin traffic (notably the text of the report of Congressmen Murphy and Steele), and on other aspects of the problem.

*The Addict*, another collection edited by Dan Wakefield, is much older and lacks an over-all analysis, but also includes useful material on many aspects of the heroin problem. The Health Policy Advisory Committee devoted its June, 1970, *Bulletin* to the history of addiction in this country and to a powerful critique of contemporary treatment efforts. (Health-PAC, 17 Murray St., New York 10007, N.Y.)

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X* remains the best description of ghetto life and the conditions that push people toward drugs— and toward political action. Michael Tabor's *Capitalism + Dope = Genocide*, originally published in the Black Panther newspaper, is an eloquent attack on junk from the point of view of a black revolutionary ex-junkie.

Rosalie Diabalo tells her brother's case history in "Story of a White Working-Class Addict", in the *Liberated Guardian*, January 27 and February 10, 1971. *White Lightning* is a superb newspaper written by and for junkies and ex-junkies. It includes many personal accounts of life on junk and in treatment. (109 East 184th St., New York, N.Y.)

Jeremy Lerner and Ralph Tefferteller have edited a series of interviews with New York junkies under the title *Addicts in the Street*. As for junk among GI's and vets, over the last year virtually every newspaper and magazine has published some expose. *Smack!* (mentioned above) has good material on this subject. A 25-minute videotape of testimony by vets about drugs (filmed at the Winter Soldier Investigation) is available from Earth Light, 354 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Maurice Collis' *Foreign Mud* is the most readable of many available accounts of the Opium Wars in China. On the politics of heroin in South-east Asia, see Frank Browning and Banning Garrett, "The New Opium War", *Ramparts*, May, 1971. Also in *Smack!* Peter Dale Scott, "Heroin Traffic: Some Amazing Coincidences", *Earth*, March, 1972, goes into much more detail about the connections among the CIA, the underworld, Wall St., and Washington.

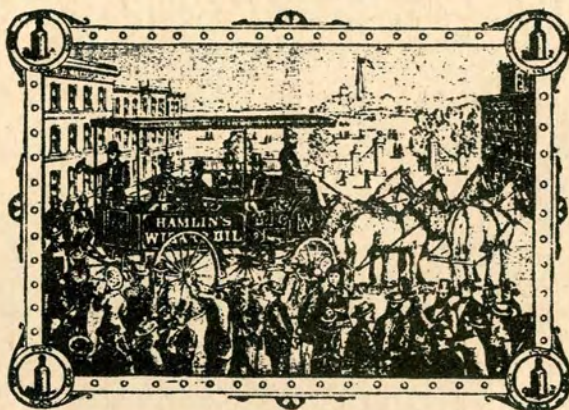
A team of British cameramen have made a documentary movie tracing the flow of opium from the Shan States in Burma to Bangkok and thence to Hong Kong. The movie illuminates the culture of the mountain tribes and the workings of the opium network, although it overlooks the role of the Americans. Unfortunately, the movie, called *The Opium Trail*, is not readily available. Harvard's Ethno-Botany Department (Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138) owns a copy and sometimes rents it out.



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