

cia secret war in laos

****The CIA Secret War in Laos: Unveiling a Hidden Chapter of the Cold War****

cia secret war in laos is one of the lesser-known but deeply impactful conflicts during the Cold War era. Unlike the more widely publicized Vietnam War, this covert operation remained under the radar for decades, shaping the fate of Laos and the broader Southeast Asian region in profound ways. The CIA's clandestine activities in Laos not only influenced military outcomes but also left lasting social and political consequences that continue to resonate today.

Understanding the Context of the CIA Secret War in Laos

The origins of the CIA secret war in Laos trace back to the broader geopolitical struggle between the United States and communist forces during the Cold War. Laos, a small landlocked country in Southeast Asia, became a strategic battleground due to its proximity to Vietnam, China, and Thailand. After the French colonial withdrawal in 1954, Laos found itself embroiled in a civil conflict between the communist Pathet Lao and the Royal Lao Government.

The Geopolitical Stakes

Laos was critical to the U.S. strategy to contain communism in the region. The Ho Chi Minh Trail, a vital supply route running through Laos, was used by North Vietnamese forces to support the Viet Cong in South Vietnam. The U.S. sought to disrupt this supply line without directly involving American troops in large-scale combat. This is where the CIA stepped in, orchestrating a covert war to counter communist influence and support anti-communist factions.

The Nature of the Secret War

Unlike conventional warfare, the CIA secret war in Laos was largely fought through espionage, proxy forces, and air power. The agency recruited and trained a secret army primarily composed of Hmong tribesmen, an ethnic minority group in Laos, to fight the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops. This guerrilla force became the backbone of covert operations, engaging in sabotage, reconnaissance, and direct combat missions.

The Role of the Hmong and the CIA's Covert Operations

The partnership between the CIA and the Hmong people is one of the most fascinating aspects of the secret war. The Hmong had a deep knowledge of the rugged Laotian terrain, making them invaluable allies in the fight against communist forces.

Recruitment and Training

The CIA established training camps in Laos and neighboring Thailand, where they equipped Hmong fighters with weapons and tactical training. These fighters operated in difficult jungle terrain, often outnumbered and outgunned, relying on their familiarity with the landscape and guerrilla tactics. The agency's support extended beyond military aid; the CIA also provided supplies, intelligence, and air support to maximize the effectiveness of these irregular forces.

The Impact on the Hmong Community

While the alliance with the CIA gave the Hmong a powerful role in the conflict, it also exposed them to significant risks. The war devastated many Hmong villages and led to widespread displacement. After the war ended in 1975 with the communist takeover of Laos, the Hmong faced persecution for their alliance with the U.S. Many fled to refugee camps in Thailand or resettled in Western countries, particularly the United States.

The Air War and the Bombing Campaign

One of the most intense and controversial aspects of the CIA secret war in Laos was the extensive bombing campaign carried out by the U.S. Air Force. Laos became the most heavily bombed country per capita in history, even though its involvement in the war remained largely classified.

Strategic Importance of Air Power

Because the U.S. sought to avoid overt military engagement, air strikes became the primary method of disrupting enemy supply lines and supporting ground forces. The CIA coordinated with the Air Force to target Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese positions, as well as critical infrastructure along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Consequences of the Bombing

The bombing left a lasting humanitarian crisis. Millions of unexploded ordnances (UXOs) remain scattered across the Laotian countryside, causing injuries and deaths decades after the fighting stopped. Efforts to clear these bombs continue today, highlighting the war's enduring legacy on civilian life.

The Aftermath and Legacy of the CIA Secret War in Laos

The secret war officially ended with the communist victory in Laos in 1975, but its effects lingered in numerous ways.

Political and Social Ramifications

The fall of the Royal Lao Government led to a communist regime aligned with Hanoi and Moscow. Many former CIA operatives and Hmong fighters faced reprisals. The Hmong diaspora became a significant community in the U.S., advocating for recognition of their sacrifices and seeking justice for their people.

Recognition and Declassification

For many years, the CIA secret war in Laos was shrouded in secrecy. Only decades later did the U.S. government begin to declassify documents and acknowledge its role. Veterans, historians, and activists have worked to bring this hidden conflict into public awareness, emphasizing the need to understand its historical importance and humanitarian consequences.

Continuing Efforts for UXO Clearance

The unexploded bombs remain a deadly reminder of the war. Multiple international organizations and governments have collaborated with Laos to clear these remnants, improve safety, and assist victims. This ongoing effort underscores how the CIA secret war's impact transcends the battlefield and continues to affect Laotian society.

What Can We Learn From the CIA Secret War in Laos?

The CIA secret war in Laos is a compelling example of how covert operations can shape global politics and local communities in profound ways. It teaches us about the complexities of proxy warfare and the unintended consequences that often follow.

The Complexity of Proxy Conflicts

The war highlights how external powers use local groups to pursue geopolitical goals, often without fully considering the long-term impact on those communities. The Hmong's involvement illustrates both the agency and vulnerability of indigenous populations caught in larger conflicts.

The Importance of Transparency and Accountability

The decades-long secrecy surrounding the CIA's activities in Laos delayed public understanding and

hindered aid efforts. Greater transparency in such operations can help ensure that ethical considerations and humanitarian concerns are addressed promptly.

Human Cost Beyond the Battlefield

More than just a military conflict, the secret war's human toll reminds us that war's effects ripple through generations. Addressing these legacies requires sustained commitment from governments, NGOs, and affected communities.

Exploring the CIA secret war in Laos uncovers a hidden chapter of Cold War history that is as complex as it is poignant. It underscores the interplay between global strategy and local realities, revealing a conflict where shadows shaped destinies and courage emerged in the most unexpected places.

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the CIA Secret War in Laos?

The CIA Secret War in Laos was a covert operation during the 1960s and early 1970s where the CIA supported Laotian forces against the communist Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops, primarily through guerrilla warfare and bombing campaigns.

Why was the CIA involved in Laos during the Secret War?

The CIA was involved to counter the spread of communism in Southeast Asia, particularly to disrupt the Ho Chi Minh Trail used by North Vietnam to supply its forces during the Vietnam War.

How did the CIA conduct its operations in Laos?

The CIA conducted operations by recruiting and training local Hmong tribesmen as guerrilla fighters, organizing air support missions, and coordinating extensive bombing campaigns targeting enemy supply lines and bases.

What were the consequences of the Secret War for Laos?

The Secret War resulted in massive destruction and displacement within Laos, with heavy civilian casualties and unexploded ordnance remaining a danger to this day, as well as long-lasting political and social instability.

When did the CIA Secret War in Laos officially end?

The Secret War effectively ended in 1973 following the Paris Peace Accords, with the withdrawal of U.S. forces and the eventual takeover of Laos by the communist Pathet Lao in 1975.

How has the Secret War in Laos been revealed to the public?

The Secret War remained classified for many years but has been revealed through declassified documents, veteran accounts, journalistic investigations, and films, shedding light on the covert nature and impact of the CIA's involvement in Laos.

Additional Resources

CIA Secret War in Laos: An Unseen Chapter of the Cold War

cia secret war in laos represents one of the most covert and controversial episodes of Cold War history. Conducted largely out of the public eye between 1964 and 1973, this clandestine operation entailed the Central Intelligence Agency's extensive involvement in Laos, aimed at countering North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces. Despite its secrecy, the war had profound geopolitical implications, humanitarian consequences, and lasting effects on Laos and the broader Southeast Asian region.

Background and Geopolitical Context

In the aftermath of French colonial withdrawal following the First Indochina War, Laos emerged as a fragile sovereign state. However, the country quickly became a strategic chessboard in the Cold War, largely due to its geographic proximity to North Vietnam and China. The communist Pathet Lao movement, backed by North Vietnam and the Soviet Union, sought to overthrow the royal government in Vientiane. In response, the United States, wary of communist expansion in Southeast Asia following the "Domino Theory," initiated covert support for anti-communist forces.

The CIA's secret war was conceived as a parallel effort to the more visible conflicts in Vietnam and Cambodia. Unlike conventional military operations, this war was waged through proxy forces, local militias, and paramilitary groups, primarily the Hmong ethnic minority, who were enlisted as the backbone of the anti-communist resistance.

The Scope and Nature of the CIA's Secret War

The CIA's secret war in Laos was marked by an unprecedented scale of covert operations, including intelligence gathering, paramilitary training, and extensive aerial bombardment campaigns. Officially, the U.S. government denied direct military involvement in Laos due to the 1962 Geneva Accords, which declared Laos a neutral country. However, the CIA circumvented these restrictions by managing a secret army without conventional military insignia.

Paramilitary Operations and the Hmong Involvement

A defining feature of the secret war was the CIA's recruitment and training of Hmong guerrilla fighters under the leadership of General Vang Pao. The Hmong, a minority ethnic group with little

political power in Laos, were instrumental in conducting reconnaissance, ambushes, and sabotage missions against communist forces. This alliance was mutually beneficial yet fraught with long-term consequences for the Hmong population, many of whom faced persecution and displacement after the war.

Aerial Bombardment Campaign

One of the most controversial aspects of the secret war was the extensive bombing campaign orchestrated by the U.S. Air Force in support of CIA paramilitary operations. Between 1964 and 1973, more than two million tons of ordnance were dropped on Laos, making it the most heavily bombed country per capita in history. This campaign, intended to disrupt the Ho Chi Minh Trail and communist supply lines, resulted in widespread destruction of villages, civilian casualties, and long-term unexploded ordnance problems.

Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The primary objective of the CIA's secret war was to contain communist influence in Laos and prevent the spread of communism into Thailand and beyond. While the operation succeeded in delaying communist advances and gathering critical intelligence, it failed to secure a lasting anti-communist government. In 1975, after the U.S. withdrawal from Southeast Asia, the Pathet Lao assumed control, establishing the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Impact on Regional Dynamics

The secret war in Laos had significant repercussions for the broader Indochina conflict. It diverted North Vietnamese resources and attention, indirectly influencing the Vietnam War's trajectory. Moreover, the destabilization of Laos contributed to regional insecurity, affecting neighboring countries through refugee flows and cross-border insurgencies.

Humanitarian and Ethical Considerations

The covert nature of the CIA's secret war raises critical ethical questions. The massive bombing campaigns caused substantial civilian suffering, and many affected communities remain at risk today due to unexploded bombs. Furthermore, the reliance on the Hmong and other minority groups exposed them to severe reprisals, displacement, and marginalization in post-war Laos.

Legacy and Historical Reassessment

For decades, the CIA secret war in Laos remained largely hidden from public view, overshadowed by the Vietnam War. However, declassified documents, survivor testimonies, and academic research have gradually brought this shadow conflict to light. The war's legacy continues to influence U.S.-

Laos relations, Hmong diaspora communities, and international discussions on covert warfare and accountability.

Declassification and Public Awareness

Since the late 20th century, the United States has declassified thousands of pages related to the secret war, enabling historians and journalists to reconstruct a more complete narrative. This process has also fueled advocacy for unexploded ordnance clearance and support for Hmong veterans and refugees.

Comparative Analysis: Secret Wars and Covert Operations

The CIA's secret war in Laos offers a case study in the use of covert actions as instruments of foreign policy. Compared to other CIA operations during the Cold War, such as in Guatemala or Iran, the Laos campaign combined paramilitary engagement with large-scale bombing, blurring lines between clandestine activity and conventional warfare. This hybrid approach highlighted both the strategic flexibility and the moral ambiguities inherent in secret wars.

Conclusion: Unveiling a Hidden Conflict

Though once concealed, the CIA secret war in Laos is now recognized as a significant chapter in Cold War history. It underscores the complexities of covert intervention, the human cost of proxy conflicts, and the enduring challenges of post-conflict recovery. Understanding this secret war is crucial not only for historical completeness but also for informing contemporary debates on foreign policy and ethical warfare.

Cia Secret War In Laos

cia secret war in laos: Back Fire Roger Warner, 1995 From 1960 to 1973, the United States and the communist powers waged a hidden war in Laos, which led ultimately to the catastrophe of the Vietnam War. Warner's groundbreaking book offers the first full account of this secret war, based on his access to previously closed files and to interviews with intelligence players, military officers and government officials who have not spoken out before.

cia secret war in laos: Battle for Skyline Ridge James E. Parker, 2019-09-24 "An incredibly powerful account of a little-known chapter in the Vietnam War saga" written by a CIA veteran who fought in the Secret War (Booklist, starred review). In the 1960s and '70s, the Laotian Civil War became a covert theater for the conflict in Vietnam, with the US paramilitary backing the Royal Lao government in what came to be known among the CIA as the Secret War. In late 1971, the North Vietnamese Army launched Campaign Z, invading northern Laos on a mission to defeat the Royal Lao Army. General Giap had specifically ordered the NVA troops to kill the CIA army and occupy its field headquarters in the Long Tieng valley. The NVA faced the small rag-tag army of Vang Pao, mostly Thai irregulars recruited to fight for the CIA. But thousands more were quickly recruited,

trained, and rushed into position in Laos to defend against the impending NVA invasion. Despite overwhelming odds in the NVA's favor, the battle raged for more than one hundred days—the longest battle in the Vietnam War. In the end, it all came down to Skyline Ridge. Whoever won Skyline, won Laos. Historian James E. Parker Jr. served as a CIA paramilitary officer in Laos. In this authoritative and personal account, Parker draws from his own firsthand experience as well as extensive research into CIA files and North Vietnamese after-action reports in order to tell the full story of the battle of Skyline Ridge.

cia secret war in laos: *Shadow War* Kenneth Conboy, 1995-05-01 This is the first comprehensive history of the CIA's largest paramilitary operation during the cold war. It took 10 years to write and involved interviews with 650 CIA case officers, U.S. military officials, and senior Lao, Thai and North Vietnamese officers. Includes outstanding photos and maps and never-before-reported details on the secret war in Laos.

cia secret war in laos: *Covert Ops* James E. Parker (Jr.), 1995

cia secret war in laos: *John Willheim, War of Whispers* John Willheim, 2021-05

cia secret war in laos: *Secret War in Laos* Steven Schofield, 2019-10-06 The tale of a young Green Beret medic, Vietnam combat veteran with the top secret Studies and Observations Group (SOG) who was recruited by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Schofield worked 5 1/2 years providing medical support for the Hmong and other Hill Tribes who fought the CIA's secret war in Northern Laos, and was among the last Americans to leave SE Asia in May 1975. It was a surreal time and place that would be impossible to even imagine today. Schofield's book reflects a genuine love for the Hmong and their culture, as well as a vast knowledge of their efforts during our 'secret war' in Laos in the 1960s and 1970s. Read and learn some actual facts; not overblown rhetoric from another barstool hero. -Stephen R. Leopold is Colonel, SF, USA (Ret) Schofield's book will be a welcome, informative addition to recent books released on the early days of Green Beret history in Southeast Asia. De Oppresso Liber. -John Stryker Meyer is author of SOG Chronicles, Across the Fence and On the Ground

cia secret war in laos: *Mohawks Lost* Gerald Naekel, 2016-05-21 The eBook version of this book, here on Amazon, has most of the first chapter to read, while the print version preview is only a few pages long -- nothing I can control, but the eBook read is worth the couple minutes. The true stories of over 500 of my single-pilot combat flights, almost all of them in Laos and North Vietnam during the Vietnam War. I spent about 22-1/2 months flying in the only Mohawk unit with the armed OV-1 Mohawks - until my timing and luck all ran out at the same time and I was medevac'd to the Air Force hospital at Clark AFB in the Philippines and then a series of Air Force and Army hospitals. This book, or most of it, was previously published as WAR STORIES - From an Army Pilot Flying in the CIA's Secret War in Laos and was for years an Amazon great seller! Now it has been updated, grammatically corrected with over a thousand changes, but pretty much the same 5-Star book. The 131st Aviation Company, while based near Hue in South Vietnam (I Corps, just below the DMZ), flew entirely in Laos and North Vietnam for over seven years until the last months of the war. Our secondary base for over six years was Udorn RTAFB, Thailand where we flew nightly hunter/killer teams with the Air Force and Laotian forces attacking Chinese trucks and tanks across northern Laos, near (or sometimes across) the border far to the northwest of Hanoi. This was the war in the Plain of Jars (PDJ) and much of this was run from the secret CIA airfield at Long Teign (Lima Site-20a), the most secret airfield in the world and home to much of the Air America fleet. Our two dozen Grumman OV-1 Mohawks were the only armed ones, and of the five Army Mohawk units, the other four operating only in South Vietnam, the 131st lost more aircraft and men than all the other units - combined. Nightly, from Phu Bai we flew pairs of SLAR/IR hunter/killer teams in southern Laos (Steel Tiger North and South) with the AC-130 Spectre gunships attacking the Ho Chi Minh Trail around the clock. There we faced huge amounts of flak and other heavy anti-aircraft fire that were not an issue inside of South Vietnam. We ran SLAR, IR and VR (armed visual) missions around the clock in the southern ends of North Vietnam, including 24/7 SLAR missions right along the coast up to about Vinh. There the issue was Soviet SAM missiles, and flak and the rest of the heavy

machine guns. Ditto for Laos. And we never got a single man back out of Laos at the end of the war. You go down in Laos - and you are gone for good.

cia secret war in laos: Usaf Air Commando Secret Wars from Laos to Latin America

Eugene D. Rossel, 2016-07-15 The Air Commando secret wars happened mostly during the Vietnam War time frame and was a global effort involving USAF volunteer personnel who were given official military orders that did not necessarily specify the country they served in, and civilian clothes were many times authorized. Later they had great difficulty proving that they served in many of these countries, which affected their future VA care. These operations were used to strengthen normally a poor country with little military resources and training with secret warriors frequently being there doing some of their legwork behind the scenes. All the operations were tight-lipped, frequently forbidden to tell families where you were and what you were doing. As an example; Capt. Bob Simpsons death, the first fighter pilot KIA in Vietnam in August 1962, became a total fabrication of where, why, and how and took a number of years before the government came clean because of my efforts. Secret wars have a long history, and they will continue because of the interest of more-powerful nations with their less fortunate brethren.

cia secret war in laos: A Great Place to Have a War Joshua Kurlantzick, 2017-01-24 1960.

President Eisenhower was focused on Laos, a tiny Southeast Asian nation. Washington feared the country would fall to communism, triggering a domino effect in the rest of Southeast Asia. In January 1961, Eisenhower approved the CIA's Operation Momentum, a plan to create a proxy army of ethnic Hmong to fight communist forces in Laos. Kurlantzick shows how the brutal war lasted nearly two decades, killed one-tenth of Laos's total population, and changed the nature of the CIA forever.

cia secret war in laos: The CIA's Secret War in Tibet Kenneth Conboy, James Morrison,

2002-04-04 Defiance against Chinese oppression has been a defining characteristic of Tibetan life for more than four decades, symbolized most visibly by the much revered Dalai Lama. But the story of Tibetan resistance weaves a far richer tapestry than anyone might have imagined. Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison reveal how America's Central Intelligence Agency encouraged Tibet's revolt against China-and eventually came to control its fledgling resistance movement. While the CIA's presence in Tibet has been alluded to in other works, the authors provide the first comprehensive, as well as most compelling account of this little known agency enterprise. The CIA's Secret War in Tibet takes readers from training camps in the Colorado Rockies to the scene of clandestine operations in the Himalayas, chronicling the agency's help in securing the Dalai Lama's safe passage to India and subsequent initiation of one of the most remote covert campaigns of the Cold War. Establishing a rebel army in the northern Nepali kingdom of Mustang and a para-commando force in India designed to operate behind Chinese lines, Conboy and Morrison provide previously unreported details about secret missions undertaken in extraordinarily harsh conditions. Their book greatly expands on previous memoirs by CIA officials by putting virtually every major agency participant on record with details of clandestine operations. It also calls as witnesses the people who managed and fought in the program-including Tibetan and Nepalese agents, Indian intelligence officers, and even mission aircrews. Conboy and Morrison take pains to tell the story from all perspectives, particularly that of the former Tibetan guerrillas, many of whom have gone on record here for the first time. The authors also tell how Tibet led America and India to become secret partners over the course of several presidential administrations and cite dozens of Indian and Tibetan intelligence documents directly related to these covert operations. Ultimately, they are persuasive that the Himalayan operations were far more successful as a proving ground for CIA agents who were later reassigned to southeast Asia than as a staging ground for armed rebellion. As the movement for Tibetan liberation continues to attract international support, Tibet's status remains a contentious issue in both Washington and Beijing. This book takes readers inside a covert war fought with Tibetan blood and U.S. sponsorship and allows us to better understand the true nature of that controversy.

cia secret war in laos: Codename Mule James E. Parker, 1995 At the same time the Vietnam

War was being broadcast into the living rooms of Americans across the country the CIA was conducting a large-scale secret war in northeastern Laos that few heard about. Agency case officer Jim Parker's five years of combat and immersion in Southeast Asian culture had a lasting influence on him and his family. His dramatic, provocative reminiscence of those years is the first account by a participant to portray America's involvement in Laos and the people who served there.

cia secret war in laos: The Secret War in Laos Vance Ferton, In the mist-shrouded mountains of Laos, a war raged for nearly fifteen years that few Americans knew existed. While the world's attention focused on the battlefields of Vietnam, a parallel conflict unfolded in the shadows of Southeast Asia, involving secret armies, clandestine air operations, and a level of bombing that would make Laos the most heavily bombed country per capita in human history. This was the Secret War in Laos, a forgotten chapter of the Cold War that would profoundly shape the region and leave scars that remain visible today. The origins of this clandestine conflict can be traced back to the complex geopolitical landscape that emerged following World War II. As European colonial powers retreated from Southeast Asia, newly independent nations found themselves caught between competing ideologies and superpowers. Laos, a landlocked kingdom nestled between Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, China, and Burma, became a crucial battleground in this larger struggle between communist and capitalist forces. The Geneva Accords of 1954, which ended French colonial rule in Indochina, had specifically declared Laos a neutral nation. This neutrality, however, proved to be more theoretical than practical. The Ho Chi Minh Trail, North Vietnam's vital supply route to communist forces in South Vietnam, snaked through eastern Laos, making the country strategically essential to the broader Vietnam conflict. The communist Pathet Lao, backed by North Vietnam and the Soviet Union, controlled significant portions of the country's territory, while the Royal Lao Government struggled to maintain authority over its own domain.

cia secret war in laos: Cash on Delivery Thomas Leo Briggs, 2009 Briggs presents a detailed accounting of a CIA program that sent small teams of irregulars behind enemy lines in Laos to destroy North Vietnamese Army units, capture NVA soldiers or encourage them to defect, intercept NVA radio communications, and recruit NVA soldiers to spy and report on their comrades.

cia secret war in laos: Secret War Billy G. Webb, 2010-09-13 If war really is an extension of politics by other means, as Carl von Clausewitz declared back in 1827, then few wars have served as better examples than the Secret War in Laos from 1961-1975. A clandestine conflict fought in parallel with the Vietnam War, the Laotian Secret War ostensibly set the United States, Thailand, and various Laotian factions against Ho Chi Minh's North Vietnamese Army (NVA). In practice, the conflict was as much a civil war as an invasion; and ultimately, it devolved into a slow-motion act of suicide on the part of the Lao nation itself. The U.S. military and its Laotian Hmong allies, led by the resourceful General Vang Pao, made a disciplined effort to prosecute the war though from beginning to end, that effort was steeped in self-serving politics, and hamstrung by factional infighting, irrational decision-making, and self-imposed constraints that ultimately hurt more than they helped. Micromanagement by officers and clueless politicians far from the front was bad enough; far worse was the corruption of the head-butting Lao factions, who seemed unable to see beyond their own immediate needs and certainly had no vision for a strong, united Laos. The so-called Rightists, Leftists, and Neutralist factions simply could not wrap their heads around the concept that their only hope of survival lay in coming together against the relentless, well-equipped NVA. In fact, one faction, the Pathet Lao, repeatedly allied with the NVA against their own countrymen. But the Americans and Vang Pao's Hmong, those who repeatedly found themselves on the sharp end of the spear in the face of waffling, lack of discipline, and, occasionally, sheer cowardice on the part of their allies, refused to give up until, finally, their political leadership turned their backs on them. This is the story of those brave men, and the civilians who helped them fight an increasingly painful and mismanaged war. It was a war in which the political leaders involved proved conclusively that they had learned nothing from history or simply didn't care. Through ineptitude and back-room politicking, the leadership of both Laos and the United States eventually gave Laos to the Communists who proceeded to crush the Lao people into the dust, in the name of a morally bankrupt

ideology that they themselves neither practiced nor truly believed in. Billy G. Webb lays out their story with both great precision and compassion in this lively, well-researched book, outlining the events that led us into the morass of the Secret War, and then detailing each bloody campaign of each bloody year. In addition to following the key characters on the U.S./Laotian side, especially the charismatic Vang Pao, he peppers the story with tales of courageous individuals who fell victim to the NVA and the Pathet Lao and, occasionally, the stupidity, incompetence, and gutlessness of people they trusted. Some survived to fight again; but many of these men, military and otherwise, paid the ultimate sacrifice in their fight to keep Laos free. Webb takes special care to showcase two organizations: the brave Forward Air Controllers who called themselves the Ravens, and Air America, a civilian company (run by the CIA) that supported the military effort and aided the Lao populace whenever they were called upon. Few people have ever heard of the Ravens, those USAF and Army airmen who risked life and limb in tiny Cessna aircraft to locate targets for bombers and fighters to strike. Air America is more famous, due to the 1990 movie of the same name, a film that unfairly maligned Air America as a parcel service for Laotian powerbrokers moving drugs and gold out of the country. Webb sets the record emphatically straight. That's not to say that such things weren't happening in Laos; they were. In hindsight, it's easy to condemn the CIA and the U.S. military leadership for allowing the corruption to spread; but as Nietzsche has pointed out, when you look long in

cia secret war in laos: The CIA's Black Ops John Jacob Nutter, Ph.D, 2009-12-04 The vast array of CIA black ops (operations) has turned the agency into a policy maker dangerously independent of the government that created it. This is an unprecedented declassification of foreign exploits and domestic secrets.

cia secret war in laos: WAR STORIES - from an Army Pilot Flying in the CIA's Secret War in Laos Gerald Naekel, 2013-01-10 This is the 12th Edition and contains a number of updates, not only from some earlier structure issues, but from feedback from a wide variety of readers, from our unit, other Mohawk units and from USAF pilots that filled in more details of missions, call signs, and threats we all faced, mostly over Laos during this Not So Secret War. There are nearly 380 action packed pages of the true accounts from flying over 500 combat missions in Laos, North & South Vietnam in a Grumman OV-1 Mohawk, the armed, single-pilot, ejection-seat aircraft that was a key player in the secret war run by the CIA in Laos. The 20th ASTA/131st Aviation Company was the only Mohawk unit, of five in SE Asia, that flew only outside of South Vietnam until the last months of the war and was flying the machine gun and rocket equipped attack versions of the Mohawk. There are more than 25 great photos weaved through this interesting book. The book is filled with these events and is not written as a novel or narrative, but goes directly to the mission action, losses, crashes, shoot downs, missiles and MiGs faced by this truly unique Army combat unit. From a separate base in northern Thailand we, along with Air America, flew for years in the CIA's Secret War in Northern Laos. Nightly we flew our Mohawks up against the Chinese border and working on real-time night attacks of Chinese trucks and tanks moving across the north end of the Laotian Plain of Jars. We would find the targets--and attack, night after night after night. Unfortunately, our unit losses were staggering and shocking, even to us--losing more aircraft and men than all four of the other Mohawk units combined. Many of our men ended up MIA's in Laos and North Vietnam never to be seen again--even after the war. They disappeared. You get shot down in Laos, or up along the Chinese border, and you disappeared,-- forever.

cia secret war in laos: Locating the Transatlantic in Twentieth-century Politics, Diplomacy and Culture Gaynor Johnson, 2024-01-25 Written in tribute to the work of Professor Alan Dobson, this collection of essays brings diplomacy and the Anglo-American relationship together, considering politics and foreign policy in tandem with cultural interactions. Uniquely placed to define exactly what transatlanticism is, and to explore the ways in which this idea has evolved in the last 150 years, this book asks to what extent can it be argued that there was a transatlantic world, how can it be defined and what was unique about it? With contributions from leading scholars it offers an overview of the field as well as a comparative exploration of

Anglo-American relations. From emotion in foreign policy decision making, to the RAF in the Vietnam War, as well as leader personalities and transatlantic reactions to women's rights in China, *Locating the Transatlantic in Twentieth-century Politics, Diplomacy and Culture* explores this 'special relationship' at many levels and from many angles. It further asks how this relationship has evolved over the years, and considers how it might survive in a globalized, post-industrial world.

cia secret war in laos: *Codename Mule* James E. Parker, 1997

cia secret war in laos: *Historical Dictionary of Laos* Martin Stuart-Fox, Simon Creak, 2023-02-06 Laos has the smallest population, the weakest military, and despite rapid economic growth in recent years, one of the lowest levels of per capita income in mainland Southeast Asia. Yet a glance at the map reveals its strategic location, between China and Cambodia and Thailand and Vietnam. As Laos was formerly a crossroads for trade routes, the socialist government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic seeks to transform the country into a prosperous crossroads at the heart of this rapidly developing region. *Historical Dictionary of Laos, Fourth Edition* provides an in-depth examination of one of the least-known countries in Southeast Asia through a detailed chronology, comprehensive introduction, and extensive bibliography. The dictionary section has more than 1,000 cross-referenced entries on important personalities, as well as aspects of the country's politics, economy, foreign relations, religion, and culture. This book will be an excellent resource for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about Laos.

cia secret war in laos: *The Cia's Secret Operations* Harry Rositzke, 2019-07-09 I am grateful to those of my colleagues in this first generation of American spymasters who were willing to share their experiences with me even after I retired to my unclassified farm . I am indebted to Howard Roman , who worked with Allen Dulles on his intelligence writings , for his assistance in the preparation of the early chapters, and to Nancy Kelly, my editor at Reader's Digest Press , for the sharp edge of her pruning shears .

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