

J. R. M. P. 29/8/1975

\$30m drug haul at airport

By TOMMY LEWIS

Customs officers have some idea of the people involved in the attempted smuggling of 60 lbs of No 3 heroin, which was seized at the airport yesterday.

It was the largest single seizure so far this year.

Officers from the Investigations Bureau, led by Superintendent K. S. Tong, were early this morning probing the background and movements of the suspected consignees.

And the head of Custom's Investigations Bureau, Senior Superintendent Jim Prisk, said last night that the authorities in Singapore and Bangkok had been informed of the seizure and are assisting in the inquiries.

Supt Prisk said that the heroin, with a purity about 30 per cent, has a street value of \$30 million.

But it could be double that figure if diluted as 0.1 of a gram of heroin with a purity of between nil and 10 per cent is currently being sold for between \$120 and \$150.

Supt Prisk said the bureau had received word a week ago that racketeers were attempting to smuggle a large quantity of drugs into Hongkong by air because of the acute shortage here.

Two customs investigation teams at the airport and the Joint Customs-Police Investigations Unit were placed on full alert.

Supt Prisk disclosed that two unmanifested cartons were found on a Singapore Airlines flight which arrived on Sunday from the island republic via Bangkok.

The cartons were addressed to Dodwell Trading Co in Star House, Tsimshatsui, which had been defunct since March.

Customs officers opened the cartons and found 32 one-pound packets of No 3 heroin in one and 28 packets in the other, Supt Prisk said.

He said his officers took over investigations and waited for two days for someone to collect the consignment but no one showed up.

The drugs were seized yesterday and will be handed to the Government Chemist today for analysis.

"We are conducting in-depth investigations into the people involved in Hongkong and we are waiting for the results of investigations in Singapore and Bangkok," Supt Prisk said.

He added that the people who worked for Dodwell Trading Co are not involved.