



Shooting at the Moon: The Story of America's Clandestine War in Laos

Roger Warner

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THE CIA IN ITS GLORY DAYS and the mad confidence that led to disaster in Vietnam are the subjects of Roger Warner's prizewinning history, *Shooting at the Moon: The CIA's War in Laos* (first published as *Back Fire*, Simon & Schuster, 1995). For a few years in the early 1960s the CIA seemed to be running a perfect covert war in Laos - quiet, inexpensive, just enough arms to help Meo tribesmen defend their home territory from the Communist Pathet Lao. Then the big American war next door in Vietnam spilled across the border. How the perfect covert war ballooned into sorrow and disaster is the story Roger Warner tell in *Shooting at the Moon*, awarded the Cornelius Ryan Award for 1995's Best Book on Foreign Affairs by the Overseas Press Club. Warner describes his characters with a novelist's touch - soldiers and diplomats busy with war-making; CIA field officers from bareknuckle warriors to the quiet men pulling strings in the shadows; and above all the Meo as they realized they had been led down the garden path. This is a book about war, about secrecy, and its illusions, about the cruel sacrifice of small countries for the convenience of large ones. Nothing better has been written about the CIA in the years when it thought a handful of Americans in sunglasses could do anything with planeloads of arms and money to burn.

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