

A. The Testing of Scientific and Technological Developments Within the United States

While the research and development of new CIA scientific and technical devices is naturally undertaken within the United States, the evidence before this Commission shows that with a few exceptions, the actual devices and systems developed have not been used operationally within this country.¹

However, the Agency has tested some of its new scientific and technological developments in the United States. One such program included the testing of certain behavior-influencing drugs. Several others involved the testing of equipment for monitoring conversations. In all of the programs described, some tests were directed against unsuspecting subjects, most of whom were U.S. citizens.

1. The Testing of Behavior-Influencing Drugs on Unsuspecting Subjects Within the United States

In the late 1940's, the CIA began to study the properties of certain behavior-influencing drugs (such as LSD) and how such drugs might be put to intelligence use. This interest was prompted by reports that the Soviet Union was experimenting with such drugs and by speculation that the confessions introduced during trials in the Soviet Union and other Soviet Bloc countries during the late 1940's might have been elicited by the use of drugs or hypnosis. Great concern over Soviet and North Korean techniques in "brainwashing" continued to be manifested into the early 1950's.

The drug program was part of a much larger CIA program to study possible means for controlling human behavior. Other studies explored the effects of radiation, electric-shock, psychology, psychiatry, sociology and harassment substances.

The primary purpose of the drug program was to counter the use of behavior-influencing drugs clandestinely administered by an enemy, although several operational uses outside the United States were also considered.

Unfortunately, only limited records of the testing conducted in these drug programs are now available. All the records concerning the program were ordered destroyed in 1973, including a total of 152 separate files.

In addition, all persons directly involved in the early phases of the program were either out of the country and not available for

¹ A few audio-surveillance devices developed by the Science and Technology Directorate have been used by the Office of Security in the course of investigations of persons within the United States. In addition, several devices developed by the Agency have been used by other federal agencies in operations conducted within the United States.

interview, or were decreased. Nevertheless, the Commission learned some of the details surrounding several tests of LSD conducted on unsuspecting subjects between 1953 and 1963.

The possibility, and the importance, of testing potential behavior-influencing drugs (including LSD) on human subjects was first suggested in 1953. It was also suggested at that time that Agency trainees might be utilized as test subjects. Any such testing was to be carefully supervised and conducted only in the presence of a qualified physician.

Following laboratory testing of LSD and other potential behavior-influencing substances, a few tests were run on voluntary participants. Commencing in 1955, under an informal arrangement with the Federal Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, tests were begun on unsuspecting subjects in normal social situations. Testing was originally conducted on the West Coast. In 1961, a similar testing program was initiated on the East Coast.

In 1963, the Agency's Inspector General learned of this program and questioned the propriety of testing on unsuspecting subjects. The Inspector General reported that in a number of instances, test subjects became ill for hours or days following the application of a drug. There was one reported incident of hospitalization, the details of which could not be learned by the Commission because of the destruction of the records and the unavailability of witnesses.

The Commission did learn, however, that on one occasion during the early phases of this program (in 1953), LSD was administered to an employee of the Department of the Army without his knowledge while he was attending a meeting with CIA personnel working on the drug project.

Prior to receiving the LSD, the subject had participated in discussions where the testing of such substances on unsuspecting subjects was agreed to in principle. However, this individual was not made aware that he had been given LSD until about 20 minutes after it had been administered. He developed serious side effects and was sent to New York with a CIA escort for psychiatric treatment. Several days later, he jumped from a tenth floor window of his room and died as a result.²

The General Counsel ruled that the death resulted from "circumstances arising out of an experiment undertaken in the course of his official duties for the United States Government," thus ensuring his survivors of receiving certain death benefits. Reprimands were issued by the Director of Central Intelligence to two CIA employees responsible for the incident.

² There are indications in the few remaining Agency records that this individual may have had a history of emotional instability.

As a result of the Inspector General's study of this drug program in 1963, the Agency devised new criteria for testing substances on human subjects. All further testing of potentially dangerous substances on unsuspecting subjects was prohibited. Between 1963 and 1967, some testing of drugs continued, but only on voluntary subjects, primarily inmate volunteers at various correctional institutions. In 1967, all projects involving behavior-influencing drugs were terminated.

It is presently the policy at CIA not to test any substance on unsuspecting persons. Current practice in all experimentation is to adhere strictly to Department of Health, Education and Welfare guidelines concerning the use of human subjects, and all current CIA contracts carry language to that effect.

2. The Testing of Communications Intercept Systems Within the United States

Monitoring of foreign conversations is an important aspect of modern intelligence collection. Several new systems developed by the Agency for use overseas have been tested in the United States. In the process of this testing, private communications, presumably between United States citizens, have sometimes been overheard.

In many cases conversations were overheard but not recorded. In other cases, conversations were recorded for evaluation purposes but the recordings were kept only until the testing was concluded, at which time they were destroyed.

No evidence was found that any such tests were ever directed against persons for the purpose of learning the content of any communication. In most instances, the speakers were never identified. Nor was any evidence found that the Agency disseminated or ever attempted to exploit the contents of any intercepted or recorded conversations.

3. Other Testing Within the United States

Various branches of the Science and Technology Directorate are involved in the testing of other new devices and procedures such as chemical warfare detection equipment, new means of measuring physiological responses in humans and photographic interpretation systems.

Conclusions

It was clearly illegal to test potentially dangerous drugs on unsuspecting United States citizens.

The testing of equipment for monitoring conversations should not be directed against unsuspecting persons in the United States. Most of the testing undertaken by the Agency could easily have