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PROGRAM The World of Science

STATION WRC Radio and
NBC Network

DATE October 4, 1964 6:15 P.M.

CITY Washington, D. C.

DISCUSSES LIE DETECTION

CPYRGHT

DR. ALBERT HIBBS: "We're going to devote today's program to a discussion of lie detectors and the problem of their growing use by various agencies of the Federal Government. Serious doubts as to the accuracy and reliability of polygraphs as lie detectors were established by a Congressional committee which recently investigated the use of these instruments by agencies of the Federal Government. One almost immediate result was the sharp curtailment in the use of lie detectors, ordered by the Defense Department, which previously had been the government's heaviest user of these machines.

"Contrary to what may be popular belief, the polygraph itself does not detect lies. That is done by the person operating the device, in his interpretation of the results. In the words of Representative John E. Moss, Democrat of California and Chairman of the House Government Operations Sub-committee which conducted the inquiry, quote, 'The human being is the lie detector, not the machine,' end of quote. And 80 percent of the persons who administer lie detector tests are not qualified for the task, testified an expert, whose frightening statistic, given to the sub-committee, went unchallenged.

"In opening the hearings on April 7th, Congressman Moss said his sub-committee sought to explore whether polygraphs should be used by the government; and if they should, to determine the proper extent and conditions of their use. He said, quote, 'Serious questions have been raised by responsible persons as to whether the polygraph is an instrument which should be used for any purpose,' close quote.

"In a preliminary survey the sub-committee found that polygraphs were widely used in questioning applicants for federal jobs, checking personnel for security clearances, and in various forms of investigative work. 19 federal agencies were found to own 512 polygraphs