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Scientologists suspect mistreatment Patient, inmate study is started

By GEORGE REDE
Capital Journal Reporter

Representatives of a Seattle-based human rights group have arrived in Oregon to kick off an investigation of whether prisoners and mental patients in state institutions in Salem have been mistreated through the use of electroshock treatment, experimental drugs or psychosurgery.

They say their reading of Central Intelligence Agency documents and related news reports and literature suggests that the CIA nearly 30 years ago actively encouraged research and development of various mind-control techniques — including those listed above.

They say that people in state institutions would have been the most likely victims of such research.

Stephan Kozachik and Chris Finn, members of the Citizens Commission for Human Rights, have investigated similar matters in Washington state, and claim to have affidavits from three former inmates at Oregon State Penitentiary that electroshock treatment was used punitively "during the '50s and early '60s" on some prisoners placed in segregation.

"There is absolutely no question it was for behavior modification," said Kozachik, director of the commission. "If you acted up, they gave you some 'juice.'"

The two men did not have the affidavits with them during an interview Wednesday. Kozachik said the documents are in his Seattle office.

Oregon prison officials Thursday denied the charges. They said shock treatment has been used on just two inmates during the past 12 years, and in both cases for therapeutic purposes.

Kozachik, 26, and Finn, 30, also claimed they have evidence in the form of prisoners' medical records and "10 or 12 affidavits" that an experimental drug with LSD-like qualities was administered by injection, as an alternative to shock treatment, at Washington State Prison beginning in the 1950s and ending in 1963.

Robert Sharpley, executive secretary to the Human Research Review Board of the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, denied the accusation in a telephone interview Thursday.

"We're still working on documentation up there," Kozachik said of the alleged injections. "But by the nature of the experimentation, it implicates the CIA. We've come down here to initiate a similar investigation."

Kozachik and Finn are members of the Association of Scientologists for Reform, a Seattle-based "umbrella agency" that funds the activities of several social reform groups, including the Citizens Commission for Human Rights.

The two men are members of the Church of Scientology, whose members have been accused by the U.S. Justice Department of stealing thousands of pages of documents from government files.

The president of the church, the Rev. Martin Samuels, is a defendant in a \$2 million damage suit filed by a former church member who alleges misrepresentation of the benefits Scientology could offer her. The suit is being tried in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland.

Kozachik and Finn, formerly director of the Committee to Re-Involve Ex-Offenders, also based in Seattle, recently obtained 23 documents from the CIA under the Freedom of Information Act.

The documents, they say, suggest that the CIA actively encouraged research and development of various mind-control techniques, all aimed at aiding CIA agents during interrogations.

A sampling of the heavily censored documents, most of which are dated from 1950 to 1964, shows that the CIA was interested in shock treatments — what documents called pre-frontal lobotomies — and speech and amnesia-inducing drugs.

One undated document quoted a psychiatrist — whose name was blacked out — as suggesting the use of radioactive ascorbic acid (vitamin C).

The document noted that use of the contaminated drug could produce symptoms characteristic of Addison's disease, which is caused by failure of the adrenal glands, and could result in death if not properly treated.

Kozachik and Finn said they believe that if the CIA authorized that type of research, it follows that the clinical testing was carried out in various locations throughout the country and that prisoners and mental patients were the most probable victims of such experimenting.

Kozachik said he hopes an investigation of state institutions in Oregon and in other Northwest states, will "reflect this CIA activity."

Kozachik said he and Finn will begin their Oregon investigation by requesting state agencies to produce any documents that they may have pertaining to the mind-control techniques described above.

Kozachik said they also hope to establish contacts with former inmates and mental patients to gain first-hand accounts of what has happened behind the walls of state institutions.

He said interested persons may telephone him in Portland at 239-4992 or write to him at 2121 Smith Tower Building, Seattle, Wash. 98104.

The goal, he said, is to pin down names, dates and places and then sue the individuals directly responsible for authorizing and carrying out whatever may have occurred.

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