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CIA 4-01 MK ULTRA

Org Ionia State Hosp

Org Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology

(orig under Magnusson)

# Patients Stood In For Spies In tests

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John Doe was a two-time loser when he was sent in 1954 to Ionia State Hospital as a criminal sexual psychopath. Doe (a pseudonym) had been convicted in Detroit Recorder's Court of two rapes; one of his victims was his 13-year-old niece. Doe's stay at Ionia was to last until he was cured.

So when he was asked by doctors at the hospital for the criminally insane if he wanted to take part in an experiment that doctors said would be "beneficial" to him, Doe quickly agreed.

"But they never did say what that benefit would be," Doe recalled in an interview last week. "I never did find out."

Doe was cautioned not to eat breakfast and given a pill on three separate occasions. Two hours later, doctors questioned him about his crimes and recorded his answers.

What Doe never knew was that he was taking LSD as a stand-in for a mythical, captured CIA agent. Doe was an unwitting soldier in the Cold War with the communists.

DOE WAS an infantryman in one part of a massive CIA project, code-named MK-ULTRA. It began in the early 1950s when the CIA suspected that communists had discovered a way to control men's minds.

They had developed techniques, the CIA feared, to elicit false confessions and to plant stories that might be parroted on command by brainwashed agents and political dissidents in court or before television cameras.

The CIA decided to search for the methods the communists might be using. The experiments on Doe were part of only one of some 140 separate subprojects involving drugs and behavior modification on prisoners, students, volunteers and the unaware.

Interviews last week with doctors, hospital and clinic personnel and former patients like Doe showed a well-intentioned effort at uncovering the secrets of mind control, but one slated to failure.

The Ionia project began sometime in 1954 when the CIA approached Alan Canty, a criminologist at the Detroit Recorder's Court psychiatric clinic, which conducted sanity examinations for the court.

CANTY, THE CIA believed, could conduct experiments with hypnosis and LSD, a drug thought to have the properties of a truth serum. The subjects of the experiments would be child molesters, who might be questioned under the influence of drugs and hypnosis the same way the communists might interrogate captured CIA agents.

Child molesters might be expected to try to withhold the details of their heinous crimes as a captured agent might try to conceal his contacts, CIA scientists thought.

Although the experiments were failures, it was reassuring to experimenters that the mind could not be so easily controlled. And the project proved another in a series of embarrassing public relations disasters for the embattled intelligence agency.

CIA Director Stansfield Turner has called the projects "abhorrent" and agreed under pressure from a Senate subcommittee to co-operate with the Justice Department in locating the victims and, if necessary, punishing wrongdoers.

Prosecutions are unlikely. There is a general five-year statute of limitations; most of the records of the projects have been destroyed and many of the participants are dead, including Canty.

MOREOVER, the experiments were conducted with the consent of the subjects, although years later the courts would decide mental patients, by definition, could not give their fully informed consent.

And the mind-control experiments were the result of Cold War fears that communism might somehow subvert our minds as well as our political and economic systems.

To many, that excuses the experimenters' zeal and the violations of the CIA's congressional charter prohibiting intelligence activities in this

The Canty doctors, 1,000 were permitted to look at the C people to determine sexua were guilty misco doctors said he was cured.

THEY WERE the most miserable of criminals. Though they sometimes were highly intelligent, they frequently would not admit even to themselves that they had abused children. This made them challenging subjects for three psychiatrists at Ionia State Hospital who were picked to do the actual experimentation.

John Doe was interviewed by the three, Dr. John Cook, Dr. John Haarer and Dr. Perry Robertson, the medical superintendent.

Only Dr. Robertson knew if the pills given to the patients contained sugar or LSD.

The routine for some 30 patients was the same. They were asked how they felt, if they were dizzy or nauseous. Some were, even those who received the placebo.

Then the doctors asked the patients about their crimes and about a mythical, made-up crime. In nearly all cases, the patients denied the crimes, recalls Dr. Haarer, the only surviving member of the team of doctors. He is now a psychiatrist in Sarasota, Fla.

"They didn't change their stories, not one iota," Dr. Haarer said. "We were supplied with the police records and we just went down the list and they just denied everything."

THE INTERVIEWS were tape-recorded and sent to Canty, who mailed both the tapes and a typed transcript of them to a post office box in Washington where the CIA retrieved them.

Sometimes Canty corresponded with Dr. Lawrence Hinkle Jr., at the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology at Cornell University, which was established, in part, to channel CIA research funds.

As the project at Ionia continued, problems developed. An expert in brainwashing, declined requests to make the

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