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CIA Prolonged Research On Germ War, Group Says

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The CIA funded a project aimed at maintaining biological warfare "harassment systems" for nearly three years after President Nixon renounced the use of such weapons, according to a Church of Scientology study of CIA records.

The Scientologists said the CIA spent more than \$100,000 through 1972 on a program established years earlier to develop "operational capability (and close investigative work) in the field of covert BW (biological warfare) and CW (chemical warfare)."

In a report scheduled to be made public today, the Scientologists traced the history of the project, originally known as MK-ULTRA 78, from 1957 until it ended eight years ago.

The program involved the use of a Baltimore laboratory that was assigned to obtain specimens of various microorganisms and breed large quantities with a machine called a Biogen, according to the study.

Using documents made public under the Freedom of Information Act, primarily CIA financial records, the Scientologists said receipts for repairs and replacement parts indicated the machine was steadily used for 13 years and may have produced hundreds of pounds of various biological agents and microorganisms.

President Nixon stated on Nov. 25, 1969, that the United States was renouncing use of any form of biological weapons that kill or incapacitate. He also ordered disposal of stocks of bacteriological weapons.

According to a July 10, 1972, memo for the CIA deputy director of plans, however, CIA work—known as MK-SEARCH—was still being carried on "to maintain an operational support capability in the cover-utilization of chemical and biological materials and techniques."

The Scientologists said the Baltimore-based project became part of MK-RESEARCH around 1965 in an effort to single out some MK-ULTRA activities that, as another CIA memo put it, "can now be carried under some other administrative and fiscal mechanism."

Citing one invoice from the early 1960s, the Scientologists said there was evidence that at least two disease-causing agents, one that could touch off undulant fever and another that could bring on tularemia, were mass produced in Biogen.

According to the July 10, 1972, CIA memo recommending termination of all MK-SEARCH projects, the agency had received "no approved operational requests" for its biological and chemical materials or techniques for four years but had not abandoned the funding needed "to maintain an operational capability."

The CIA had no immediate comment on the study. It is scheduled to be submitted today to several congressional committees. Church of Scientology spokesman Brian Anderson maintained that "Congress should demand the full story from the CIA regarding its chemical and biological tests, research and stockpiling" before any further debate on the CIA's calls for an exemption from the Freedom of Information Act.

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