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Report of Ad Hoc Medical Study Group

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RDE 242/1

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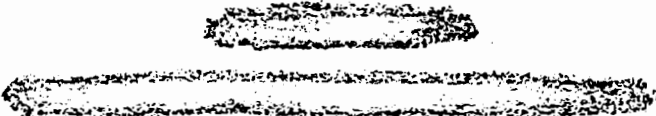
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1. Existing Techniques and Agents

1.1 Capacity to Endure Assaults

The capacity to endure assaults designed to break down resistance and thus reveal secret information varies greatly from individual to individual. No one can meet every load to which he might conceivably be exposed, a fact highlighted by World War II experience. In short, everyone has his breaking point. Personal conflict in excess of an individual's current integrative capacity may be a precipitating factor in such a "break".

Whatever reduces integrative capacity may serve to increase the possibility of an individual being overwhelmed by frustrations and conflicts, hitherto managed successfully. Thus a host of deprivations, denying of sleep; as well as exhaustion, pain, starvation, malnutrition, infection, sepsis, and intoxication make conflict relatively excessive. Likewise, acts that humiliate, destroy self esteem, and create a conviction of being isolated, rejected, abandoned or unwanted may impair this integrative capacity. Threats of punishment by beatings or chemical poisons, threats of harm to loved ones, or falsehoods about the state of one's associates, family or country may be similarly damaging.

1.2 Methods of Persuasion or Seduction

But equally pertinent are methods of persuasion or seduction, as contrasted to punitive methods, that can be used to induce an individual to reveal secret information wittingly or unwittingly. Combinations of

these means can also be effective. Given sufficient time and the essential interrogative skills, it is possible to elicit by persuasive methods, without the use of chemical agents or severely punitive means, much of the desired information from almost any person.

1.3 Usefulness of Chemical Agents

However, chemical agents exist such as: alcohol, cannabinal, caffeine, barbiturates, benzedrine, diethyl amide of lysergic acid (LSD 25), mescaline, and hyescine, and it is altogether likely that others will be found, that hasten or facilitate the process of persuasion.

It must be emphasized, however, that the pharmacodynamic actions of these agents do not in themselves prevent an individual from lying or withholding information. Such chemical agents have been found helpful in allowing an individual to express himself when, for whatever reason, he is ready to yield.

An atmosphere of friendliness and sympathy promotes the exchange of confidences, a feature of human nature which is profitably exploited in the obtaining of secret information. Again, certain chemical agents can be used to promote feelings of serenity, well being, comradery, freedom from restraint and anxiety. On the other hand, chemical agents as ancillary means of interrogation may not only fail to yield rich rewards, but may actually block progress. For example, anxiety or panic induced by the awareness of being "drugged" may cause subjects to become especially suspicious, cautious and taciturn, thus defeating the purpose for which the agent was given and jeopardizing future chances of success.

1.4 Subsequent Unawareness of Act

As regards the giving out of information and having thereafter no knowledge of the deed, several points are familiar:

(a) One may simply by talking conversationally (especially to a skilled interrogator) say something unknowingly which may be of great use to the enemy. Certain chemical agents by increasing talkativeness may augment this process.

(b) Secret information may be told outright and forgotten by the teller through mental processes of repression. Here, too, the involved mental processes may be furthered by chemical agents, making it easier to forget that one has revealed information.

(c) It has been suggested repeatedly that "subtle" and even "occult" means such as "Black Psychiatry", hypnosis, "secret drugs" and brain damaging procedures are being used by unfriendly nations to make an individual "say and do things against his will". Some of these means are conceivably being tried but they seem elaborate, impractical, and unnecessary in order to cause a man to reveal secret information. It cannot be predicted that the methods will act on every man in the manner desired. Further, it is extremely likely that equivalent results would be achieved by experts using the simpler and tried methods mentioned above.

(d) The hypnotic state has been singled out by some as being specifically pertinent to performing acts against one's will and having thereafter no memory of the act. Through its use certain individuals can rarely be induced under specific conditions, to perform acts concerning which there is much conflict in the mind of the subject; (i.e. sexual

indiscretion, or perversions, acts of violence against members of the family, rivals, enemies, superiors, or intimates). Post-hypnotic suggestion may operate for some days under these circumstances, and be followed by amnesia. But even more rarely would acts of treason against the state or sabotage occur under these conditions and only if the individual capable of being so hypnotized were in great conflict about his loyalty. The practical importance of such phenomena as regards loyal persons or those of undivided loyalty is negligible.

Further, by a combination of methods an individual with conflict concerning his loyalty may be induced to commit acts of treason and thereafter have no knowledge of the act. But again, such a possibility is considered to be remote and practically unimportant among those with undivided loyalty.

1.5 Damaging the Person

Success in suitably influencing persons depends on exploiting already familiar facets of an individual's nature. Damaging the person, as in delirium resulting from toxic amounts of chemical agents makes the individual of little practical value as a source of information or an agent for treason. Furthermore, damage to the brain by surgical, chemical, or physical means (e.g. electrical, ultrasonics, freezing) while it sometimes lowers restraint, may also reduce the capacity to remember. Experience with prisoners who have had damaging brain operations is not available, but experience with civilian patients who have undergone such operations does not suggest that these procedures make an individual any more likely to reveal confidences of an important nature. It is a fact that such opera-

tions and procedures make persons less rigid, but certainly less effective in planning and carrying out instructions. Furthermore, the results are unpredictable and could not be counted upon for the achievement of an exploitable alteration of personality.

1.6 Methods of Selection and Screening for Security Risk

With reference to security risk, a careful survey of the character and past performance of the individual is the best method and would screen out most susceptible individuals. In all events, there is no single test or procedure which is invariably reliable in detecting those who dissociate readily, such as very suggestible persons, or those who constitute poor security risk.

1.7 Safeguarding Information

The only sure method of safeguarding secret information is to limit the amount possessed by any one person and to prevent those who must know much from coming under the influence of the enemy.

1.8 Indoctrination

On the other hand, it is possible to accomplish a good deal by proper indoctrination. This should engender awareness of the simple techniques of persuasion or seduction, the danger of any talk, caution about establishing friendships; and in "drinking". Also, engendered should be an awareness of the feelings associated with being under the influence of chemical agents, thus enabling an individual to exercise even greater caution as regards his utterances and acts. Moreover, it should be recognized that agents used therapeutically for medical or surgical emergencies may also create opportunities for the enemy to extract military information.

1.9 The Committee recognizes but reiterates that the most important features of indoctrination and protection against persuasion are high morale and firm discipline. These strengthen those features of human nature that may, when weak, be exploited by the enemy.

2. Comments on Existing Programs

The applicable and related military research and development projects, as indicated in Appendix A, have been reviewed as to content and susceptibility to ascertaining whether effective and practical techniques exist, or could be developed, which could be utilized to render an individual subservient to an imposed will or control.

Although the present state of knowledge indicates little threat, if any, to National Security, through special "interrogation" techniques or agents, it is the considered opinion of the study group that the existing programs offer little hope of establishing the existence of, or of developing, effective and practical techniques or agents. Much work is required and many promising avenues of approach are available for research which are not being followed. Promising areas of research are indicated in Section 3, Recommendations.

Specific comments on the content of existing projects follow:

2.1 Massachusetts General Hospital (Becher)

Studies, such as this, on the psychological effects of chemical agents, are of minor value when accomplished without detailed knowledge of the personality structure of the individual tested and his mental state at the time of administration.

2.2 University of Rochester (Wendt)

This study of the effects of drugs on psychological processes, particularly as adjuncts in interrogation has revealed little new in methodology and results as thus far presented. Intensive experimentation with chemical agents as potential adjuncts to interrogation was carried out during World War II. A series of agents and combinations of agents were tested and little of practical importance was revealed. Although not released for publication, these data are available to responsible persons. Much waste and repetition could have been avoided if this material had been thoroughly familiar to those who approved and undertook such experimentation.

It is understood that this study is being terminated.

2.3 WVRI, Bethesda

Early (1947) WVRI studies of drugs reported to be utilized by the USSR in interrogation procedures revealed that these drugs played little part in such procedures. Work became inactive due to lack of subjects. Reactivation in 1950 resulted in University of Rochester (Wendt) project. Little, if any, work applicable to interrogation is presently underway at WVRI.

2.4 Indiana University (Ellson)

On the basis of present knowledge, it is not considered profitable to pursue studies aimed at adding additional biological, etc. indicators to the polygraphic techniques in order to make such techniques more precise. It is understood that studies to date under this project have reached the same conclusion and that the project will not be extended.

2.5 John E. Reid & Assoc. (John E. Reid)

This is a new project aimed at use of feedback delay to develop a stress situation and although promising cannot be evaluated at this time.

2.6 Army Chemical Center (Psychochemical Warfare)

- New York State Psychiatric Inst (Hoch)
- New York State Psychiatric Inst (Lansis)
- University of Michigan (Stewars)

These projects comprise the Army program on psychochemical warfare and as such are not directly applicable to interrogation techniques. Results may be applicable and should be closely followed by those responsible for the development of interrogation techniques.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Those having to do with immediate military needs.

(a) Skilled and experienced interrogators, as well as those who have been exposed to enemy interrogation should be encouraged to analyze, with appropriate scientific support, their own and each other's methods and experiences with the aim of formulating procedure for purposes of instruction and protection.

(b) It is recommended that a careful analysis and evaluation be made of the pertinent factors in those cases where individuals have proven to be poor security risk after having been ascertained as a "good" one. This would add greatly to the usefulness of existing methods and indicate areas to be emphasized in collecting data. Provision should also be made for a continuing follow-up study and report, after entrance on duty, of those considered initially to be in the "doubtful" or "borderline"

category.

(c) For investigations designed to improve methods of interrogation, study under field conditions and near depots of recently captured prisoners of war is strongly recommended. The opportunities now made available by the situation in Korea should be immediately utilized by assigning appropriate research teams with adequate freedom of movement for this purpose.

(d) It is suggested that research design be incorporated into the operations of intelligence agencies and advantage be taken of the stressful aspects of the polygraphic test situation and preliminary and attendant interviews with the aim of coordinating this information with the psychiatric and psychological approach.

(d) The Study Group wishes to emphasize the importance of the utmost care in screening and selecting of persons who must be entrusted with secret information and exposed to dangerous pressures. It also wishes to express confidence in adequate life history studies and character appraisal as the best, though not infallible method of selection.

(e) It is realized that the enemy will continue to contrive new devices that bewilder, frighten and injure. Indoctrination procedures should take into consideration the fact that the best protection for the exposed individual is high motivation and familiarity with persuasive techniques, drug effects and other assaults plus an awareness of the limitations of these measures in the face of firm personal discipline and high morale. It may be important to know that even the intensity of pain has a ceiling beyond which further increases in stimulus do not yield

any greater intensity of pain.

3.2 Those having to do with the collection of data which may improve basic understanding and thus ultimately prove to be of military use.

(a) To increase understanding of the mental processes involved in the retention and revelation of secret information, intensive studies of the action of chemical and physical agents on neural and psychological processes should be fostered. Studies on psychological effects of chemical agents are of minor value unless much is known of the personality structure of the individual being tested and his mental state at the time of administration. It is strongly recommended that better criteria of behavior be developed.

(b) It is equally fundamental to promote investigations on the nature of interpersonal relations, with the aim of establishing the underlying principles of human behavior, their limits and applications.

(c) It would be particularly relevant to study persuasion, seduction, and resistance as they relate to individual values, loyalties, attitudes, and opinions.

(d) Studies on patients with psychoses aimed at ascertaining how chemical agents augment specific features of disturbed mental processes and behavior are approved. It is hoped that suitable assaying and testing procedures will be elaborated by the investigators, since unless such methods are evolved, relatively little advance will have been made.

3.3 Recommendations Concerning the Future of the Study Group

The Ad Hoc Study Group recommends that hereafter no regular schedule of meetings be planned, but that the committee be called together when fresh information from the Armed Forces and the C.I.A. requiring interpretation

becomes available. Also, it is recommended that there be included in an organization such as the Research and Development Board having intimate contact with the C.I.A. and Military Services, an individual who will be responsible for bringing to the Committee fresh developments in civilian and military experience and scientific activity pertinent to the Committee's interests. Committee meetings could then be held presumably at long intervals, to advise and make recommendations. Also, the Committee at such occasions could review presentations of work under contract and consider projects to be undertaken. It is estimated that, barring emergencies, two meetings a year should suffice.

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Contract No. Project No.	Laboratory or Contractor Investigator	Funds \$/1000			Scope and Status
		FY '51	FY '52	FY '53	

NAVY:

NA 001-056.06	NMCI, Bethesda, Md. Cdr S. V. Thompson (iC) Lt. C. Savage (iC) Lt. H.D. Baldrige, MSC, NR Consultant: [REDACTED] University of Rochester, NY	?	300	300	Evaluation of the effects of certain drugs on the performance of personnel involved in flying.
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NR 143-060
(Joint A-N-AF)

University of Rochester, NY -	100	150	Motion sickness. FY '52 Funds: 9-1-51 - 7-31-52 FY '53 Funds: 8-1-52 - 1-31-54
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NR 173-071

Indiana University	100	35	Detection of deception. Joint A-N-AF contract to determine reliable indicators for deception measurements through graphic recordings of physiological and motor responses. Extended to 30 August 1952 - will probably be removed for additional year.
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NR 173-181

John E. Reid & Assoc., Chicago	-	34	Interrogation devices and procedures. Project to develop novel and easily used methods of causing lying subjects to think they have betrayed themselves.
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AIR FORCE:

NONE

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APPENDIX C

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

First meeting - 15 August 1952

Second meeting - 1 October 1952

Third meeting - 11 November 1952

Fourth meeting - 9 December 1952