

(b)(3)

24 October 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: MKULTRA Subprojects 7, 27, 33, and 40 - [REDACTED]

1. The earliest document of substance in the file of subproject 7 is a letter to the Geschickter Fund from Dr. Harold A. Abramson dated June 8, 1953. The letter acknowledges support for the previous year's research on LSD 25 and requests support during the year July 1953 - July 1954. There is a separate reference in the file to "RD-37", presumably a research and development contract or project. Searches through TSS and Office of Logistics records failed to produce anything bearing such an identification. The Office of Security file on the principal investigator, Harold A. Abramson, was opened in May 1952 with a request from RDD/TSS for a Top Secret clearance. The clearance was granted in August 1952. This suggests that CIA interest in the research began in 1952 around the time the clearance was requested.

2. The request for support during the 1953-1954 year says that a psychiatrist will "analyze the verbatim recordings in over 100 experiments in which LSD 25 has already been given," inferentially during the first year. Among the things to be studied were the reaction time to light and sound and eye-hand coordination. This, together with the item in the budget for payment to the subjects suggests that subjects were aware that they were participating in experimentation. The proposal also says:

"One of the difficulties of determining explicitly the effect of the drug itself is that the subject and the observer are both conscious of the fact that an experiment is being performed. It is hoped in the next year that subjects on the Neurology Service who are essentially normal from a psychiatric point of view will be given unwitting doses of the drug for psychotherapeutic purposes. In this way more valuable experiments will probably be carried out in spite of hospital conditions."

3. Subproject 27 is a continuation of subproject 7 to carry the research through from July 4, 1954 to July 3, 1955. A letter to the Geschickter Foundation dated February 22, 1954 requests a terminal grant to permit consolidation and analysis of the data gathered during

the first two years, to search for a suitable antidote, and to determine what happens during rapid desensitization following repeated high doses of LSD 25. Part of the work was to be done at the [REDACTED] to continue the work on the metabolism of nerve and brain tissue and to investigate the action of LSD 25 on the development of the nervous system by studying the embryological development of the developing embryo as a whole and the effect of LSD 25 on the organizer itself." Funds for the purchase of animals were included in the budget.

4. Subproject 33 was established for the purpose of correcting an error in the payment of the service charge to the Geschickter Fund for subproject 27.

5. Subproject 40 was established to continue support to the research of Dr. Harold A. Abramson from 4 July 1955 to 4 July 1956, primarily at the [REDACTED]. Some of the equipment at [REDACTED] was to be used if transfer/purchase could be arranged. About half the time was to be devoted to study of commercially important compounds with the rest of the time devoted to antidote and synergy experiments on man as well as lower forms. Additional funds were to have been sought from other sources "as well as O. N. R." (Office of Naval Research?) Abramson suggested that he would apply to the Public Health Service for a grant "if that is not contra-indicated." [REDACTED] furnished "many compounds" and "cooperated in many ways in facilitating the program of the experiments."

6. By letter dated June 12, 1956 Dr. Abramson requested financial support for continuation of the work under subproject 40. At the request of TSS/CD, Dr. Abramson agreed to investigate the feasibility of using aerosols as delivery systems. He was also to explore the blocking of LSD reactions by investigating what might be causing a blocking reaction in tissue extracts, keeping in mind possible application of these compounds to experimental and clinical psychoses in man."

7. Neither the [REDACTED] knew of CIA interest in the research. Both institutions, however, knew the research was being conducted. The [REDACTED] have not responded to correspondence addressed to them by the General Counsel. A letter from the [REDACTED], dated December 8, 1977 acknowledges receipt of copies of materials from Agency files and says they have reviewed all available details of the research studies. The letter says "...we do not feel that the scientific nature of the work or the manner in which it was conducted at that time can be subjected to justifiable criticism, even by today's different standards." The letter urges the Agency to protect individual and institutional identities, but to notify the [REDACTED] if we are unable to do so, and to furnish copies of any information released. "At a minimum, this would require that any such

disclosure accurately portray the limited nature and scope of the research carried out at [REDACTED] in a scientific and ethical fashion and the fact that it was undertaken for legitimate scientific reasons without any knowledge that it was funded by the Agency."

8. The declination of the [REDACTED] to respond to correspondence from the General Counsel last year suggests that nothing will be gained by addressing further correspondence to them. The letter of December 8, 1977 from the [REDACTED] seems to make it quite clear that the [REDACTED] accepts full responsibility for the research and the manner in which it was conducted. No further action with respect to these two institutions will be taken.

9. Because the principal investigator, Dr. Harold A. Abramson, was used as a consultant in other MKULTRA operations in New York City, a separate letter will be addressed to him requesting his permission to have a representative of the Agency to pay him a visit.

[REDACTED]