



OBSERVER REVIEW

SUNDAY 7 AUGUST 1977

...not mentioned and highly sensitive reports...
 The Kennedy Rights Groups Latest Reports:
 • ASIA WATCH • THE ARABIAWAKES
 • WEST EUROPE'S Migrant Workers • CIPRUS
 • JEWELRY'S WITNESSES IN CENTRAL AFRICA
 • THE ORIGINAL AMERICANS • U.S. INDIANS
 Available from: MRG, 26 Crown Street, London
 W20 0JG, and most good bookshops.
 Price 45p each plus 15p post and packing.

Can you kill a man without leaving any trace . . . and then can you wipe the memory of the deed out of the murderer's mind?

ON 29 NOVEMBER 1949 an American wrote a letter to a friend, 'My Dear Bill', in the Central Intelligence Agency. He apologised for having taken so long to give him his thoughts on 'the problem which you raised when I saw you last', but he would now 'set down the means that I think might be most efficacious'. The problem was how to make a murder look like death by natural causes.

He first described two chemicals that left almost no trace. 'One of these, sodium fluosacetate, when ingested in sufficient quantities to cause death does not cause characteristic pathologic lesions nor does it increase the amount of fluorine in the body to such a degree that it can be detected by quantitative methods. The other chemical substance which I have in mind is tetraethyl lead which, as you know, can be dropped on the skin in very small quantities, producing no local lesion, and after a quick death no specific pathologic evidences of the tetraethyl lead would be present.

'If an individual could be put into a relatively tightly sealed small room with a block of CO₂ ice, it is highly probable that his death would result and that there would be no chances of the circumstances being detected. It is highly probable, though, that there would be a period of hyper-activity in the course of such a death.

'Another possibility would be the exposure of the entire individual to X-ray. When the whole body is exposed, a relatively small amount of radiation is sufficient to produce effects that would lead to death within a few weeks, and it is highly probable that sporadic deaths of this kind would be considered as due to blood dyscrasias.

'If it were possible to subject the individual to a cold environment, he would freeze to death when his body temperature reached around 70 degrees, and there is no anatomic lesion that is diagnostic in such cases.

'There are two other techniques which I believe should be mentioned since they require no special equipment besides a strong arm and the will to do such a job. These would be either to smother the victim with a pillow or to strangle him with a wide piece of cloth, such as a bath towel.



RICHARD HELMS
Ordered the files destroyed.

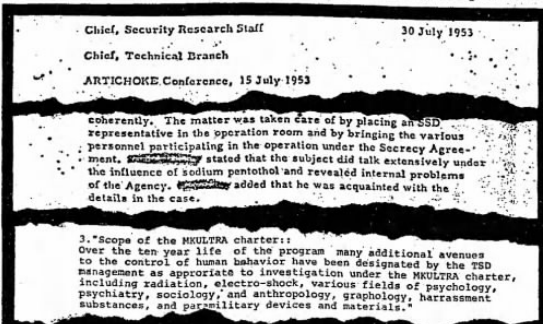
1975 asked the CIA to let him have all the material on its experiments with behaviour-influencing drugs which it had shown to a commission, headed by then Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, that investigated possibly illegal CIA activities within the United States.

What happened was that the CIA man who conducted the document search for Marks turned up seven boxes of relevant documents that had not been shown (simply because their existence was not known, says the CIA) either to the Rockefeller Commission or the Senate Committee on Intelligence Activities under Senator Church which produced its report last year.

The documents show that in the 1950s and 1960s the CIA spent a large amount of money and time on the 'research of chemical, biological, and radiological materials capable of employment in clandestine operations to control human behavior'. (The words of a 1963 report on the project for the Head of the CIA.)

Admiral Stansfield Turner, the new head of the CIA, told the Senate last week that the CIA was eventually being helped in its research by 44 colleges and universities, 15 research foundations and pharmaceutical companies, 12 hospitals and clinics and three penal institutions.

On one occasion the Agency



They read like pages from a sinister science-fiction thriller. But they are the documents which revealed how the CIA spent 25 years secretly trying to find a sure way of using drugs to control human behaviour and gave up only because it became too risky for the men at the top of the American intelligence service.



ADMIRAL TURNER
Some had been wrongly filed.

posters on black silk mounts and red curtains. There were also two-way mirrors. The man who ran the house called the operation 'Midnight Climax'. But it was not the sleaziness or downright immorality of the thing that worried senior CIA officers.

The 1963 Inspector General's report emphasised that the trouble with the drug experiments in the New York and San Francisco houses was that there was 'no effective cover story' for them. The whole thing could easily go wrong.

'A test subject may on some occasion in the future correctly attribute the cause of his reaction and secure independent professional medical assistance in identifying the exact nature of the substance employed and by whom.

'An extreme reaction to a test substance could lead to a Bureau request (i.e. Narcotics Bureau) for co-operation from local authorities in suppressing information of the situation. This would in turn broaden the circle of individuals who possessed at least circumstantial evidence of the nature of the activity.

'Weighing possible benefits of such testing against the risks of compromise and of resulting damage to the CIA has led the Inspector General to recommend termination of this phase of the

in the scientific community who willingly co-operated with the CIA.)

No aspect of the MK-Ultra programme was too distasteful or too ridiculous to deter the senior CIA men involved. They had even financed four projects into 'aspects of magicians art useful in covert operations: e.g. surreptitious delivery of drug-related materials'. This, Admiral Turner explained to the Senators last week, meant little more than how to slip drugs into people's glasses.

'Putting the mickie into the inn' was how he put it.

It is worth repeating: the drug experiments on unwitting American citizens were ended because they involved too many 'high risks' to the senior command of the CIA, and for no other reason.

Turner was asked whether the Presidents knew about the experiments but said there was no evidence the White House was involved.

What these new documents do not reveal is the extent to which the CIA used these drugs operationally. The operational side of the programme was known as MK-Delta and a 1963 report does mention unspecified 'major accomplishments in operational employment.'



But the documents also refer to doubts in the clandestine services that carry out the agencies' 'dirty tricks'. There was doubt whether CIA men had the necessary scientific skill to administer drugs which were anyhow often unreliable in performance. There was also a fear that people might come to rely on drugs instead of, as one document has it, 'perfecting classic espionage techniques.'

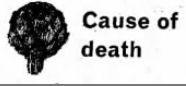
Other MK-Ultra projects continued through the 1960s. But by 1973 the whole thing had been recognised to be potentially so embarrassing that Richard Helms, then head of the CIA, ordered all the MK-Ultra files destroyed. Mr Marks's documents survived, according to Admiral Turner, because they had been filed by mistake with financial records.

The story of how the CIA got hooked on drugs, in other words, became known only because of a clerical slip in the CIA, the diligence (and perhaps conscience?) of a CIA document searcher, and

WE HAVE WAYS OF MAKING YOU FORGET

MARK FRANKLAND reports from Washington on the Operation they called Artichoke.

trial was an example. (In fact by zedrine, ethyl alcohol, scopolamine, Bureau of Narcotics (an entirely separate organisation from the Agency) to run two 'safe houses', methods not drugs that produced out information from enemy agents one in New York and the other



Cause of death