

MEMORANDUM

October 18, 1995

To: Jeremy Gunn  
cc: Mary McAuliffe

From: Manuel Legaspi and Robert J. Skwirot

Subject: MKULTRA

INTRODUCTION

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HISTORY

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INVESTIGATIONS

A number of Congressional investigations in the 1970s investigated project MKULTRA as part of their work. Joint hearings on Biomedical and Behavioral Research<sup>1</sup>, 1975, chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy (Mass.), probed human experimentation programs of the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency. The Church Commission 1975-76, as part of its wide ranging investigation of foreign and military intelligence, examined the testing and use of chemical and biological agents by the intelligence community. Additionally, a joint hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence<sup>2</sup> with Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (Hawaii) as chair focused on project MKULTRA. These inquiries exposed the abuses of the project and can now serve as a reliable resource for information and documentation.

The Kennedy commission report includes many of the surviving documents of the MKULTRA program, including those which probed the Frank Olson suicide and the Inspector General's 26 July 1963 report to the DCI. From this wealth of information it is worth noting that the

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<sup>1</sup> United States Congress. 94th Congress, First Session. *Biomedical and Behavioral Research*. Joint Hearings before the Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare and the Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure of the Committee on the Judiciary. September 10, 12; and November 7, 1975.

<sup>2</sup> United States Congress. 95th Congress, First Session. *Project MKULTRA The CIA's Program of Research in Behavioral Modification*. Joint hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence and the Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Committee on Human Resources . August 3, 1977.

Department of Defense was in liaison with CIA in drug experimentation. The Army, Navy, and Air Force used human volunteer subjects in such studies. The Navy, in particular, cooperated with CIA in drug experimentation through the Office of Naval Research. CIA also worked with the Bureau of Narcotics from 1953-1963 giving drugs such as LSD to unwitting subjects from all social levels. CIA departments involved in the MKULTRA program included the Office of Technical Services, the Office of Research and Development, the Office of Scientific Intelligence, and the Office of Security.

The Church Committee's investigation produced a well documented history of MKULTRA which cited many of the documents included in the Kennedy Committee's report. It harshly criticized the program and "the command and control procedures within the Central Intelligence Agency and military intelligence" and questioned "the relationships among the intelligence agencies, other governmental agencies, and private institutions and individuals."<sup>3</sup> The report notes, for example, that "even DCI McCone was not briefed on all the details of the program involving the surreptitious administration of LSD until 1963."<sup>4</sup> MKULTRA charged forward without administrative checks. Helms' 1953 proposal for the project called for 6% of the research and development of TSD to be expended "without the establishment of formal contractual relations."<sup>5</sup> As the 1963 Inspector General's report noted, "present practice is to maintain no records of the planning and approval on test programs."<sup>6</sup> Thus, before the organized effort to destroy documents, MKULTRA files were far from comprehensive.

Nevertheless, more documents existed than those which were available to the Kennedy and Church investigations. CIA's response to a F.O.I.A. request by John Marx uncovered these documents and prompted another Senate investigation. Testifying before the Inouye committee, DCI Admiral Stansfield Turner stated that the newly found records were mostly financial folders which revealed names of some 115 researchers and 80 institutions, as well as possible improper contributions by CIA to private institutions. These records were found by "examining both the active and retired records of all of the branches of CIA considered likely to have had an association with MKULTRA documents."<sup>7</sup> The names of individuals and institutions were provided to the committee on a classified basis.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Church Committee Report*, p. 386.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.* p. 394.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.* p. 404.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.* p. 406.

<sup>7</sup> *Project MKULTRA*, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.* pp. 5-8, 12.

## RELEVANCE TO JFK ASSASSINATION

The relevance of the MKULTRA project can be judged within wide or narrow parameters of the assassination story. The link is more certain in the wider view than in a narrow perspective which might focus on Lee Harvey Oswald. MKULTRA and its director Sidney Gottlieb engineered some of the plots against Castro such as the scheme to make his beard fall out; Technical Services Division even considered slipping LSD to Castro.<sup>9</sup> Sheffield Edwards . . .

MKULTRA might also be linked to the protracted interrogation of Yuri Nosenko. Though John Marx believes that the CIA abandoned MKULTRA mind control techniques in this interrogation another less reliable source alleges that LSD was used.<sup>10</sup> Connections to Oswald are even less certain. Allegations that suggest Oswald may have been a subject of MKULTRA research remain unsubstantiated. New Orleans assistant district attorney Edward Gillin claimed that in the summer of 1963 Oswald contacted him to inquire about a mind altering drug.<sup>11</sup> It has also been claimed that LSD was tested at Atsugi Naval Air Station in Japan where Oswald worked in the radar bubble.<sup>12</sup> Another tenuous connection might be stretched from Tulane University to Oswald in New Orleans.<sup>13</sup> Finally, Adele Edison, who testified before the Review Board in November of 1994 recounted a fantastic story of a New Orleans connection between Oswald and Dr. (Col.) Jose Rivera of the Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness at Tulane.<sup>14</sup>

A disclaimer should be affixed to this laundry list of possible connections to the assassination story. Inclusion here of a link suggested by some writer is not meant to imply indorsement. For most, further research in open sources is required to test their worth before any classified search should be undertaken.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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<sup>9</sup> Marx, John. *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control*. New York: Times Books, 1979. pp. 17, 98.

<sup>10</sup> Marx. pp. 145- 146. Thomas, Gordon. *Journey into Madness: The True Story of Secret CIA Mind Control and Medical Abuse*. New York: Bantam Books, 1989. pp. 260-264.

<sup>11</sup> Hurt, Henry. *Reasonable Doubt: An Investigation into the Assassination of John F. Kennedy*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1985. pp. 302-304. Hurt cites a Rolling Stone article for this allegation.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* p.303. Again Hurt cites the Rolling Stone article.

<sup>13</sup> In a poorly written and sloppily cited article which appeared in *The Forth Decade*, Gary Hill cites, for this information, a U.S. News and World Reports article from January 24, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> Ms. Adele Elvira Uskali Edisen. Testimony before the Assassination Records Review Board. 11/18/94.

1. Due to the destruction of records in 1973 and the fragmentary record keeping which characterized the sensitive areas of the project, a review of CIA's MKULTRA records would probably not be useful for furthering our understanding of the issues surrounding the Kenney Assassination. If MKULTRA is John Newman's "smoking file" it would need to be reconstructed from the charred ashes left after its immolation.

2. It is likely that CIA currently has in its possession only those documents which it released - albeit in redacted form- in the 1970s to the Senate investigations and to Marx's F.O.I.A. request. It would seem that most of this can only offer general information about the program. Records of sensitive programs have likely been destroyed. Certainly, if there had been an Oswald connection, records of it do not or maybe never did exist.

3. Only if we can establish more certain connections to the story should we request records relating to MKULTRA from the CIA. Possibly these connections can be made in open sources or through agencies outside of the CIA.

4. Military Intelligence might hold some MKULTRA related records. Also the confidential lists of researchers and institutions which CIA supplied to the Senate hearings could provide new leads. Lastly, private institutions which participated in the program may still have records of their research.

5. Other recommendations...

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