

LSD Test Subjects Tell Senate Unit of Suffering

9. 11. 75

By Bill Richards
Washington Post Staff Writer

Two years ago Dorothy Chaffin stopped her husband as he walked out of their Tucson, Ariz., ranch house with a shotgun under his arm on his way, he said, to kill himself.

William Chaffin sat impassively yesterday under the glare of the television lights as his wife told the story before a crowded joint Senate subcommittee session investigating human drug experimentation by the military and the CIA.

Chaffin said the Tucson incident—which he still cannot recall—was just one of a series of deep depressions he has experienced “where I had contemplated taking my own life” since he took the hallucinogen LSD during an Army drug experiment in 1958 at Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland.

Another person among those assembled for the hearing who either got drugs in military experiments or who had family members in drug experiments said the experience in 1953 “was the most frightening one I had ever had or ever hope to have.”

The witness, former Army Col. Vincent Ruwet, told the subcommittee members that he was the senior Army official at a gathering in 1953 where five Army scientists, included himself, were given LSD by CIA agents. One of the group, Dr. Frank Olson, committed suicide nine days later after suffering a mental breakdown following the incident.

Ruwet, in the first public description of what happened by

See TESTS, A25, Col. 1

TESTS, From A1

anyone connected with the incident, said the group was given LSD in an after dinner liqueur. “They notified us that the drink was laced with LSD while we were under the influence,” said Ruwet.

After Olson's death the CIA never told his family of its part in the incident or that Olson was given LSD. The experiment was revealed in a report released in June by the Rockefeller commission on the CIA.

Ruwet, a close friend of Olson and his family, said yesterday that he regretted not telling Mrs. Olson of the incident for 22 years. “While I never told her anything untrue, I do regret I allowed her to think things that were untrue,” he said. Mrs. Olson and two of her children also were on the panel.

Olson's family has stated it intends to sue the CIA for its part in the scientist's death and attorneys for the family have been negotiating with the intelligence agency for several weeks.

In other testimony the sub-

committee was told:

- An LSD study funded by the Air Force was run “like kids playing scientist” and Dr. Amedeo S. Marrazzi, who was in charge of the program, was rarely present when LSD was given to subjects — some of them psychiatric patients, according to Mary Ray, a former research assistant in the program. Mrs. Ray said she was also given LSD and panicked. She said she tried to jump from a third floor window and later considered killing herself. An 18-year-old woman in one of the LSD experiments went mute for four days after being forcibly given LSD against her will, Mrs. Ray said. Army officials said Marrazzi is under investigation by the Justice Department for another LSD experiment he conducted for the Air Force at the Missouri Institute of Psychiatry. Marrazzi is scheduled to begin work this month as chief of pharmacological research at the Detroit Psychiatric Institute.

- The daughter of New York tennis pro Harold Blauer said she was told by



By James E. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

Retired Army Col. William Jordan pauses during Senate testimony on LSD test. Behind him is Mrs. Frank Olson, whose husband committed suicide nine days after such an experiment, and the Olsons' son, Eric.

Aftermaths of LSD Told to Senate Unit

officials for an Army funded program that he died after an overdose of a drug being given for therapeutic purposes. In fact, said Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett, her father died in an Army funded drug experiment at the New York Psychiatric Institute in 1953. Congressional staff members said yesterday that documents they obtained showed the Army tried to cover up details of Blauer's death under a guise of security. In one document a Justice Department official wrote in 1954 during a suit by Mrs. Blauer against the institute, “Security is involved to some extent but more importantly our purpose is to avoid unfavorable or damaging publicity.” Mrs. Barrett said yesterday that her mother was threatened with unfavorable publicity by the

institute during the suit which was eventually settled for \$18,000. Mrs. Barrett announced this month they filed an \$8.5 million claim against the Army in connection with Blauer's death.

• Former Army Col. William Jordan said he and 33 other young Army officers were told during an LSD experiment at Ft. Benning in 1960 that the effect of the drug would last no more than 12 to 14 hours. Instead, Jordan said, he developed epilepsy less than a year later and experienced periodic flashbacks and amnesia as late as 1971. In one instance Jordan said after yesterday's hearing, he went on patrol for three days in a combat area of the Vietnam delta area in 1971 and later found he couldn't recall anything about the three days. Jordan said the Army refused to examine any members of the group until he went to Florida Sen. Lawton Chiles in 1972. Jordan, who is on medical disability retirement from the Army, said he has been told by the Justice Department that the Epilepsy Foundation of America that links have been discovered between epilepsy and LSD.

The hearing yesterday was called by the Senate Subcommittee on Health and the Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, both chaired by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) Staff members of the committee said they are negotiating with CIA officials for a possible second session next month. Kennedy said that yesterday's hearing had been called because of "startling revelations of research abuses in the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency."

At another congressional hearing on drug experimentation Monday the Army acknowledged that it apparently had violated military guidelines and medical ethics and safety procedures in its human drug experimentation program.

Dr. Alexandria M. Schmidt,

the commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, acknowledged that his agency, which is charged with regulating human experiments by government agencies, had exempted the Defense Department's classified drug research in 1964 and reaffirmed that exemption in 1974.

Schmidt said an agreement to informally exchange information on the military's classified drug research had only produced four meetings between FDA administrators and the Defense Department in 11 years.

"How useful those meetings were beyond an overview I don't know," Schmidt said. "I find it difficult that there was much relating to the subject of this hearing."

"I think it is very clear that in no way has the Food and Drug Administration monitored or controlled forms of classified research by the Department of Defense," said Schmidt.

An FDA official said yesterday that an internal review of the agency by the General Accounting Office recently questioned whether the FDA had the authority to supervise the Defense Department drug experiments and, if so, whether it could then exempt the military from review.

An FDA spokesman said yesterday after the hearing that the CIA had neither received an exemption from the agency for its drug testing nor had it been subjected to scrutiny in its drug tests. According to the Rockefeller commission report on the CIA in June the intelligence agency conducted human drug experiments with LSD and other drugs for at least 14 years up to 1967. Other Rockefeller Commission sources said recently the tests may have lasted even later.

The FDA spokesman said Schmidt is initiating inquiries with the CIA to determine the extent of its drug experimentation and whether the intelligence agency was responsible to the FDA under the 1962 Food Drug and Cosmetic Act.