

FDA Gave Army Shellfish Toxin

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The Food and Drug Administration said today it turned over a quantity of lethal shellfish toxin to the Army after overproducing the poison while searching for an antidote to it.

The FDA statement shed more light on the possible source of the poison that was kept secretly by the CIA in violation of presidential orders to destroy it. The CIA had been work-

ing with the Army in experiments on shellfish toxin at Ft. Detrick, Md. After the presidential order to destroy it, 11 grams were transferred from Ft. Detrick to a CIA laboratory.

THE FDA said it turned over 11 to 12 grams of the poison after overproducing it in a search for an antidote for paralytic shellfish poisoning. The FDA search resulted from a 1952 outbreak on the West Coast.

Experts say one gram of shellfish toxin could kill as many as 5,000 persons.

The explanation of the possible source of the 11 grams was requested by the government's top health official, Dr. Theodore Cooper, assistant secretary of health, education and welfare. Cooper acted after disclosures to the Senate Intelligence Committee that some of the CIA stockpile was labeled "U.S. Public Health Service."

The Public Health Service, an HEW agency under Cooper's organizational control, is the parent agency for the FDA.

AN FDA spokesman said his agency could trace the toxin only so far. "Once we turned it over to the Army, it became classified and we don't know what happened to it. We don't know where our 11 grams are now," the spokesman said.