

Pentagon Finds Lie Detector Is Not Convincing in Tests

By John G. Norris
Staff Reporter

An exhaustive investigation into lie detector tests, made for the Pentagon, casts new doubt on their validity.

The report of the broad inquiry, released yesterday on Capitol Hill after being kept secret for two years by the Defense Department, concludes that:

• "Up to the present time, it has proved impossible to uncover statistically accept-

able performance data to support the view held by polygraph examiners that lie detection is an effective procedure."

• "There is a lack of professional standards for the regulation of lie detection activities throughout the Department of Defense."

• "There is evidence that (advance) training (of subjects), possibly supported by drugs and hypnosis, can be used to introduce spurious results into test records. The ex-

tent to which such methods could succeed or an examiner could counteract them is unknown."

The report, made by Jesse Orlansky of the Pentagon's Institute for Defense Analysis, does not conclude that lie detectors are ineffective. Rather, his major finding was that "no objective data" have ever been gathered to demonstrate the degree of polygraph effectiveness and hence degree of effectiveness is not known.

Orlansky concluded that there is no doubt but that testing physiological reactions during an interview provides some basis for detecting deception. But he found there is insufficient scientific data to show whether the reactions stem from lying or other stress.

The Defense scientist reported that some 200,000 lie detector tests have been conducted by the Defense Department and other Government security agencies over the last ten years but that the Pentagon has never compiled any data to demonstrate the degree of their effectiveness.

He recommended that a broad research and development program into the technology of such detection be established. This would include "studies on the validity of lie detection," improvement of interview procedures, and development of improved test methods.

Orlansky stated that further extensive research into lie detecting methods—which now measure blood pressure, breathing and palm sweating under interrogation — could lead to perfection of the system. New developments in medical electronics, he said, promise to provide new and more reliable tests.

Orlansky also recommended that the Defense Department establish a program to develop professional standards for polygraph interrogation.

The report was released by

a House government operations subcommittee which has been investigating the use of lie detectors by the Government.

The subcommittee said it had been submitted July 31, 1962, by Orlansky and was immediately classified by the Defense Department. The report was declassified recently at the insistence of the subcommittee, with some security deletions.

The subcommittee reported that the Government owned 525 lie detectors last year and spent \$4.5 million in their operation.

Answering questions about the report yesterday, a Pentagon spokesman said that use of lie detector tests will continue "with appropriate safeguards." The latter were not explained. The spokesman also said that the recommendations in the report "are under consideration in the over-all study of the polygraph in the Department."

The Orlansky report suggested that lie detectors might be employed to help police an arms control agreement with the Soviet Union and suggested the possibility be explored as part of the broad research program recommended.

Subcommittee sources said there were indications that the report had not been seen by top policy-making officials until after the group had called for it and pressed for declassification.