

Olson probe results to be released Monday

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After almost six months of forensic sleuthing, the investigators studying the remains of a Fort Detrick germ warfare researcher whose death has been shrouded in mystery for more than four decades will release their findings on Monday - the 41st anniversary of the scientist's death.

A research team headed by Dr. James Starrs of The George Washington University National Law Center exhumed the remains of Dr. Frank Olson from his grave at Linden Hills Cemetery in Frederick on June 2.

Dr. Starrs and other forensic scientists from across the country have been examining the body since, searching for evidence that the one-

time Army biochemist's death may have been a homicide, not an accident or suicide as is now believed by federal officials.

Dr. Olson fell 13 stories to his death from a New York hotel room on Nov. 28, 1953, just nine days after he had been the unwitting subject of a Central Intelligence Agency experiment with the hallucinogen LSD. Dr. Olson and other top government scientists were slipped the drug surreptitiously while attending a secret conference at a private retreat at Deep Creek Lake in Garrett County.

In the days following the experiment, Dr. Olson, then 43, became agitated and told his superiors in the top-secret biological warfare

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development program at Fort Detrick that he intended to quit his job.

Alarmed by his sudden change of demeanor, CIA officials, who were involved in overseeing his work at the Army base, whisked him away to New York for evaluation by an allergist on retainer with the CIA who was considered one of the day's few authorities on LSD.

He never returned to Frederick.

Early on the morning he was scheduled to return home, Dr. Olson plunged from his hotel room to the sidewalk below. His death was ruled a suicide.

His family found that explanation unfathomable, and their suspicions

were confirmed, at least in part, 22 years later when a congressional investigation into the CIA's domestic activities revealed for the first time that Dr. Olson had been the subject of a secret government experiment. The cause of death was changed to accidental.

The current investigation was undertaken at the suggestion of Dr. Olson's two surviving children, Eric, 49, a psychologist, and Nils, 46, a dentist, both of Frederick. Both believe their father may have been the victim of a sinister plot by intelligence operatives to silence a suddenly agitated man who retained a library of highly sensitive military secrets in his head.

After the exhumation, tissue samples from Dr. Olson's body were

examined at labs around the nation, and hair samples were sent as far as Japan for toxicological study. Computer animation specialists were employed in an effort to recreate the circumstances of his fall.

The investigation has drawn worldwide press attention and in September was featured in a segment of "Unsolved Mysteries."

A congressman from Ohio this summer called for a congressional investigation into the matter, and in September Eric Olson told a congressional panel that he has been contacted by a former CIA official who believes his father was murdered.

Throughout, the scientists have hinted that their investigation's preliminary results were not consistent with the original coroner's report, but they have declined to elaborate, saying that they will try to resolve all questions on Monday.

The Olson probe is just the latest in a string of high-profile forensic investigations pursued by Dr. Starrs. His past investigations include the exhumations of axemurderer Lizzie Borden's parents, assassinated Sen. Huey Long of Louisiana, 19th century explorer Meriweather Lewis and the victims of 19th century cannibal Alfred Packer.