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H.E.W. Reported to Have Run LSD Tests on 2,500 People

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WASHINGTON, July 27 (AP)—The Department of Health, Education and Welfare administered the drug LSD to about 2,500 prisoners, mental patients and paid volunteers from 1954 to 1968 to determine whether it had any medical value, according to Government sources.

Millions of dollars in grants also were given by the department to more than 30 university researchers for additional LSD experiments with human subjects.

It was disclosed recently that the Central Intelligence Agency and the Army had given LSD to scientists and servicemen without their knowledge to study the drug's effects.

Sources at H.E.W.'s National Institute of Mental Health, which conducted the Government's "in-house" experiments, said that the potent mind-altering drug was not given to anyone without his or her knowledge and consent.

It was not explained how informed consent was obtained, however, from mental patients at Spring Grove State Hospital at Catonsville, Md. The experiments were conducted years before the department's informed-consent procedures were tightened to protect human research subjects.

Studies were performed on the biomedical research campus at the National Institutes of Health in suburban Bethesda, Md.

A spokesman for the institute said that in most cases volunteers, prisoners and mental patients were given LSD just once and then sent back home or to institutions after the effects wore off.

The purpose of the experiments was to determine whether LSD had any value in treating the mentally ill and

alcoholics, or in inducing classic symptoms of mental illness that could possibly serve as "model psychoses" for further study.

Sources disagreed on the findings of the studies. One said the studies "all bombed out," but another said the experiments suggested that LSD might have some limited value in curing certain alcoholics.

The institute's own experiments cost, at most, "a couple of million dollars" over the 14-year period, a spokesman said.

Another source said that 84 outside research projects involving LSD were funded through about \$7.5-million in grants between 1953 and 1974.

More than 30 of those university research experiments involved humans, and the rest were limited to animals, the institute said. Some of the studies funded by H.E.W. grants lasted as long as five years.

An official spokesman for the institute confirmed most of the basic details of the experiments but said that exact figures were not available immediately. The spokesman said much of the information spanning more than two decades had not been computerized and could be obtained only through a time-consuming manual search.

The spokesman said no follow-up was planned on the LSD research patients for possible signs of recurring effects of the drug. Although the names of the research subjects probably still are available, the spokesman said, most of the researchers who conducted the experiments are "long gone" from the institute.

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