

# Brain Surgery on Prisoners Protested

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Following an outcry from the public that included an official ACLU-NC protest, the California Department of Corrections has decided to delay an experimental brain surgery plan for violent prison inmates.

An indication that the idea is not being dropped completely, however, came from prison spokesman Walter Barkdull, Director of Planning and Development, who stated it, "hasn't been abandoned."

## "Undeveloped"

A request for federal money for the surgery program has been turned down by the state's Council for Criminal Justice, who described it as, "a rather undeveloped concept." In a reply to an ACLU-NC protest letter, prison spokesman Philip Guthrie, Information Chief, also admits, "the idea was never fully developed and reviewed."

## Voluntary?

The ACLU-NC took particular exception to the apparent involuntary nature of the plan: "The ACLU opposes and will challenge any attempt to subject human beings to nonconsensual 'rehabilitative' operations. Whether the object of the experiment voluntarily agrees to be 'rehabilitated' in a short-cut fashion is something we expect prominently to be discussed. After all, when one is thought to be functioning so poorly that brain surgery is in order, his very ability to consent to an experimental operation should be thoroughly examined."

## Medical Objection

At a public discussion on the subject, late in December, charges were leveled by members of San Francisco's medical community at another Department of Correction medical project, the Maximum Psychological Diagnostic Unit, set to open next month at Vacaville. Dr. Philip Shapiro of the Medical Committee for Human Rights warned that programs are contemplated at the diagnostic center involving sex-altering hormones and "negative programming drugs" such as anectine, which produces a sensation of drowning and suffocation.