

Army Experiments To Control Behavior



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EXPERIMENTS to control human behavior with science-fiction devices are being conducted secretly at the Army's high-fenced Harry Diamond Laboratories in Washington.

To perfect the electronic behavior machines, Army scientists are spending \$50,000 this year and asking \$200,000 over the next two years. Ultimately, human guinea pigs will be used to test the devices.

Although a classified memorandum in our hands specified the tests are for riot and civil disturbance control, the memo admits the general purpose is "short - time - span control of human behavior."

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THE CONTROL will be exercised through a devilish complex of flickering, steady and unseen light rays, audible sounds and other tones too high for the human ear to hear.

The main problem, the memo states, is that the "novel and unique devices/systems" must be constructed so they will "cause no permanent damage to target personnel" and to innocent bystanders.

With this humanitarian thought recorded, the memo goes on to summarize the "ultrasonics, audible aversive stimuli, unique communications techniques and methods of speech interruption" which make up the Army's "physiological/psychological studies."

Translated into plain English, the tech-

nical memorandum envisions such devices as these:

●—Flickering light of varying intensity which can throw off the normal electric rhythms of the brain. This leads to confusion and can even break down the brain's ability to control the body.

●—Sound outside the human hearing range which can cripple a person's ability to function. Audible sound, some of it so loud as to cause unendurable pain, can have the same general effect.

●—Electronic sound devices which can interrupt, distort or mask speeches by troublemakers at demonstrations.

While the Army memo complains that "the present state of development of sound and light devices is not adequate to achieve the desired objective," it notes hopefully that the potential workability of at least "two systems has been shown."

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BY FISCAL 1974, the art will be far enough advanced so that the "development and laboratory testing of hardware (the behavior equipment) will be emphasized."

When we contacted the Army to find out whether the tests were leading to a 1984 world of thought control, a spokesman pooh-poohed the possibility.

"This program is so limited," he insisted. "Why, it's just to see what the hell it takes to control a crowd as painlessly as possible. We think there may be a better way than billy clubs and pistols."

See also later column, 5 Aug 72, filed Prep.