

Soldiers in Mock Battle Given LSD

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten

During a mock battle in the late 1950s, the Army sent a couple dozen assault troops under the influence of LSD into the fray and filmed the chaotic results.

It was comic opera, with troops dressed in battle gear behaving like an army of Gomer Pyles.

The 15-minute film showed how the troops reacted under battle-simulated conditions. Reported Dr. John Buckman, a psychiatry professor at the University of Virginia medical school: "The soldiers showed lack of motivation, lack of ability to attend to detail."

In one sequence, the drugged soldiers were supposed to climb a cement wall. "They were totally disinterested in the task. Quite clumsy," Buckman recalled.

One soldier in the film lost a button to the fly of his pants. He stopped in the middle of the mock battle and scoured the ground for the button. "That soldier couldn't continue the war until he found his button," said the psychiatrist.

Another test had the soldiers firing a mortar. "Their aim was grossly inaccurate," he said. "They giggled at inappropriate times."

The soldiers in the film also were ordered to march in formation, alternating their feet at each count. "They walked," according to Buckman, "like Gomer Pyle."

Drawing a weird comparison, he concluded: "The results were similar to when a spider was fed LSD. His web was much more chaotic than normal."

Footnote: The Army's LSD experiments were an outgrowth of the Korean War, an attempt to learn more about the brainwashing used on POWs in Korea.

The accounts of the POWs were remarkably similar to the experiences of troops under LSD, according to doctors who conducted the experiments.

Governments on both sides of the Iron Curtain became interested in chemical means of altering human behavior. Several eminent psychiatrists have said LSD could be used as an effective weapon of war. The drug could be compressed in aerosol containers and dropped from planes. Some psychiatrists suggested it would produce insanity on a large scale.

If the drug could be slipped into the food or drink of top military planners, it could lead to chaotic decisions. But most of the psychiatrists we interviewed were appalled at the thought of using LSD as a weapon. For them, it is a clinical tool for treating alcoholism, heroin addiction and other problems. Its military use "would be like turning a scalpel into a sword," said one.

POOR MORALE—Almost half of the employees who were secretly polled at the Environmental Protection Agency believe their agency is "not doing a good job."

The survey is part of a classified study, which also charges that the EPA violated civil service rules in hiring and promoting employees.

The Civil Service Commission report was prepared last July

for official eyes only. "Agencies may not release evaluation reports . . . to the public," the document warns.

Nevertheless, we can reveal what the officials had hoped to hush up.

The most shocking finding was that an astonishing 46 per cent of those surveyed thought EPA wasn't doing its job properly. Here are some of their written comments:

- "Almost all final decisions appear to be politically motivated, and it is most difficult to get out a final decision that will protect the environment."
- "Scientific facts are replaced by emotional or political considerations."
- "Professionals are not consulted about decisions may be political appointees."
- "High level positions are often rigged in special ways for buddies."
- "The merit promotion system is a farce. Promotions are given because you are the friend of someone rather than for the job you do."

The low morale at EPA has resulted in a high turnover rate. Nearly one-third of the positions at headquarters must be replaced each year. This internal discontent and discord, says the report, has impaired the ability of EPA to carry out its mission of protecting the environment.

The civil service investigators also found "numerous instances of preferential treatment both in the hiring and promotion of agency employees."

Furthermore, the report charges, EPA "is not making ef-

ficient and economical use of its manpower." The agency's staffing system, for example, is hopelessly snarled.

Concludes the report sadly: "No one has an accurate picture or control over how the headquarters is organized."

Footnote: Rep. John Moss (D-Calif.) is an investigating the

abuses. An EPA spokesman denied that morale was low because of alleged favoritism. "I don't know of any jobs hired that way," the spokesman said. "We may have low morale, not because of political hiring, but commitment to the environment."

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