

Drug Test Errors Admitted

By Bill Richards
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Army acknowledged yesterday that it apparently violated military guidelines and professional medical ethics and safety procedures in a number of its drug experiments on thousands of human volunteers between 1953 and 1969.

In testimony before the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee, both the Army's surgeon general and its general counsel said Army researchers failed to follow guidelines issued in 1953 for human experimentation by any branch of the military.

The 1953 instructions, issued by then Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson and classified top secret until last month, ordered the appropriate military branch secretary to authorize in writing his ap-

proval of experimental research on human volunteers.

"We don't have any record of any subsequent approval until 1958 or 1959," Army Surgeon General Richard R. Taylor said. Despite tests involving dozens of substances from alcohol to powerful hallucinogens on human volunteers throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, Taylor said there is no evidence of any requests for approval after 1958-1959 until 1969.

In addition, Army General Counsel Charles D. Ablard told the subcommittee: "Although the medical profession has ethical codes and procedural safeguards on the use of human beings in drug experimentation for over a century, I must in all candor admit that they appear not al-

See TESTS, A8, Col. 1

TESTS, From A1

ways to have been followed in these tests.

The surgeon general said yesterday that the Army's search for 585 persons involved in LSD tests by the Army has already turned up one case of suicide and two more involving persons who developed convulsive seizures after taking part in the experiments.

The suicide previously reported in news stories, was identified as Col. George E. Danald who shot and killed himself in the officers' club at Edgewood Arsenal, Md., four years after taking LSD from Army researchers at Ft. McClellan, Ala., in 1960. The surgeon general identified one of the convulsion cases as that of retired Col. William Jordan, of Pensacola, Fla., who took LSD in an Army experiment at Ft. Benning, Ga. in 1960. The third person was identified only as a former enlisted man.

The surgeon general said that the Army has still not determined whether there is any connection between the incidents and the drug tests.

The Army previously has said it had 6,983 persons in its volunteer drug testing program, although not all received drugs. About 1,500 persons were given LSD and last month the Army said it is trying to locate all of its LSD test subjects for medical and psychological testing.

Ablard said yesterday that there may be others who took the drug who are not known to the Army because of what he called "substantial gaps in our knowledge" and records that have either been destroyed or mislaid.

Ablard said that in addition to its own tests of chemicals and drugs on thousands of military and civilian volunteers at Edgewood Arsenal at least 13 other contracts were funded by the Army with private research facilities for tests of drugs that induce hallucinations or delirium.

The Army general counsel said that other outside contracts were also funded for human testing of drugs known as anticholinergics, which sometimes produce even more violent hallucinations than LSD.

Ablard said the Army's records on tests by outside agencies such as hospitals and universities are incomplete but that what information is available does not show that research subjects were always told details about the substances they were being given.

In the case of psychiatric patients who were used as subjects of drug experiments by some of the outside researchers, the surgeon general said it is difficult to believe that any type of informed consent could have been obtained from the patients.

In one of the outside test programs, Harold Blauer, a New York tennis professional who was a psychiatric patient at the New York State Psychiatric Institute at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, died after he was injected with a hallucinatory drug in 1953.

Rep. Thomas J. Downey (D-N.Y.) charged yesterday during the hearing that the Army had made "a systematic attempt" to conceal Blauer's part in the drug testing program. Downey said that although Blauer's death records were reviewed twice—in 1959 and 1967—the Army denied any fatal results from its tests until August of this year.

Downey, who has been conducting his own investigation of military drug experimentation, said Blauer's death records were kept in an envelope marked "Not to be opened without the authority of Dr. Van Sim." Sim, the former civilian director of the Edgewood testing program for the Army, did not attend yesterday's hearing and could not be reached for comment.

Blauer's daughter announced last week that she had filed an \$8.5 million claim against the Army in addition to Blauer's death.

Downey said his staff had

been told by Sim during the investigation that most of the research reports sent in by outside contractors with the Army were "useless" and "not worth reading." The 17 Army contracts he said he had reviewed cost the Army \$2 million, Downey said.

In his testimony yesterday Army general counsel Ablard said the military's involvement with drug testing began in the 1950s after a letter was sent by a civilian doctor to the surgeon general advising of drug testing by foreign agents. Ablard declined yesterday to identify either the doctor or the nationalities of the alleged drug-testing foreign agents.

The doctor's information indicated that U.S. deterrent forces could be rendered helpless by odorless, colorless and tasteless drugs and that sensitive security matters might also be disclosed by use of the drugs, Ablard said.

Ablard said intelligence reports also indicated large purchases by other governments of "possible hallucinogenic agents that could be used as chemical warfare material." He also said U.S. or U.S. allies had captured foreign agents carrying what he said were "syringes of fluid to facilitate control of captives."

Of even greater significance, he said, was the possibility of using drugs such as LSD in place of nuclear weapons by dropping it on a country to incapacitate, rather than kill, the population. The entire plan was abandoned, surgeon general Taylor said in his testimony, when it became clear in 1967 that the drugs were too unpredictable.

Ablard declined to say in open committee session whether the military had used drugs in Vietnam, but said he would testify on that subject in a closed session. Both the Army and Air Force have denied using drugs in combat, although the Army has acknowledged it has stored the powerful incapacitating drug BZ in bomb configurations since 1964.