

[National Security](#)

Documents Reveal Just How Crazy The CIA's MKULTRA Mind-Control Program Really Was



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[Eireann Van Natta](#)

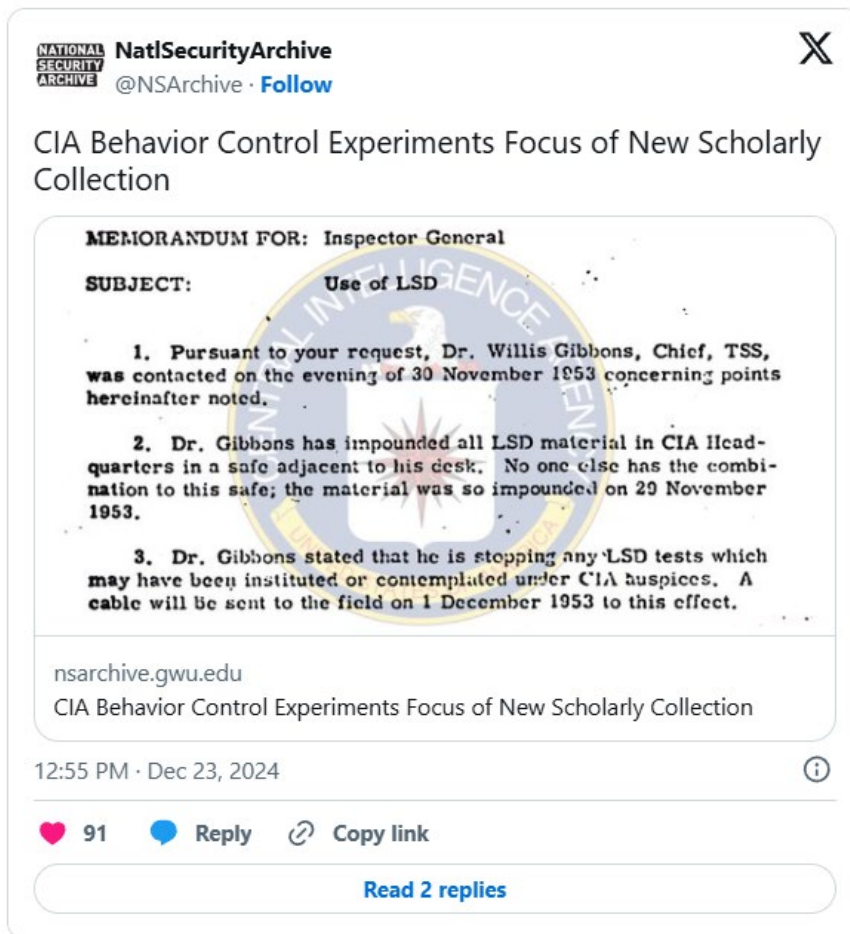
Intelligence State Reporter

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A new collection of over 1,200 documents detailing the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) infamous mind control program, MKULTRA, was published by the National Security Archive and ProQuest on Monday.

The collection was announced 50 years after Seymour Hersh's New York Times investigation illuminated the program's abuses, [according](#) to the Archive. It was also published 70 years after the U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturer, Eli Lilly & Company, became the CIA's primary source of the psychoactive drug LSD, the Archive added.

The MKULTRA project was conducted in the 1950s, and most of the original records were destroyed by CIA director Richard Helms and head of the Technical Services Staff (TSS) of the CIA's Chemical Division Sidney Gottlieb, according to the Archive. Gottlieb would eventually serve as director of the agency's Technical Services Division (TSD). [\(RELATED: Remember When The CIA Experimented On People With LSD? Well, The 'MK Ultra' Trailer Just Dropped\)](#)



The collection includes records that managed to survive the agency’s “purge” of secretive documents, according to the Archive.

The CIA conducted mind control research under Operations MKULTRA, BLUEBIRD and ARTICHOKE, the Archive noted. The collection — [CIA and the Behavioral Sciences: Mind Control, Drug Experiments and MKULTRA](#) — is mainly composed of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) documents previously compiled by former State Department official John Marks.

“The MKULTRA program was shut down more than 40 years ago, and declassified information about the program is publicly available on [CIA.gov](#),” a CIA spokesperson told the Daily Caller.

The Caller also reached out to the Archive but has not heard back as of publication.

“Despite the Agency’s efforts to erase this hidden history, the documents that survived this purge and that have been gathered together here present a compelling and unsettling narrative of the CIA’s decades-long effort to discover and test ways to erase and re-program the human mind,” the organization stated in its report.

One document from 1950 shows how an official requested the approval of the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) for Project BLUEBIRD, where interrogators would use “the polygraph, drugs, and hypnotism to attain the greatest results in interrogation techniques,” [according](#) to Document Two. ([RELATED: The CIA Keeps Popping Up In The Biden-Ukraine Saga](#))

The collection also includes a [memo](#) from the CIA Security Office to the DCI — Document Six — regarding interrogations of suspected Russian agents, or Project ARTICHOKE. It details the process for drugging and hypnotizing subjects, including by “[inducing] a complete hypnotic trance.”

The [records](#) also reveal how the CIA would use a philanthropic organization as a “cut-out” for the MULTRA experiments. The Georgetown University Hospital served this purpose, according to the description accompanying Document 11.



View of former CIA Head Richard Helms (1913 – 2002) (left) and former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger as they talk together during a book release party in the Georgetown neighborhood, Washington DC, October 1978. (Photo by Diana Walker/Getty Images)

Another document was seemingly written by the Technical Services Staff (TSS) Chemical Division after DCI Allen Dulles and other officials discussed whether using Georgetown University Hospital for certain experiments was worth the cost, according to the Archive. The officials requested that the TSS provide them with a list of advantages, the organization claimed.

The document [detailed](#) various “materials and methods” the group was working on, such as “substances which will promote illogical thinking and impulsiveness.” Additionally, it included substances that would result in “physical disablement.” The document also mentioned the development of materials that create symptoms of diseases “in a reversible way so that they may be used for malingering,” or the exploitation of a [pretend or exaggerated disease](#) for one’s personal benefit.

The records also indicate that TSS was attempting to develop “physical methods of producing shock and confusion” along with substances that “alter personality structure” as well as a “knockout pill” for undercover drugging.



According to the Archive, the documents show that MKULTRA creations were not very fruitful overall.

There were various impediments to the operation, including “moral objections” from some case officers regarding MKDELTA, [according](#) to Document 16. MKDELTA was designed to “operationalize materials and techniques” created by MKULTRA, the Archive noted. [\(RELATED: EXCLUSIVE: CIA Sent Dozens Of Conflict Of Interest Referrals To Biden Admin Ethics Office, Records Show\)](#)

“Real progress has been made in the use of drugs in support of interrogation,” CIA Inspector General John Earman said, according to the document.

One [memo](#) recorded a meeting, saying that Gottlieb and Helms argued in favor of continuing MKULTRA’s “unwitting testing” on American citizens. Other officials, including Earman, CIA executive director Lyman Kirkpatrick and CIA Deputy Director Gen. Marshall Carter, pushed back.

Carter expressed concern regarding the “unwitting aspect” of the tests, according to Document 17. Earman emphasized the poor conditions of U.S. testing facilities, adding that they “leave much to be desired.”



Washington, DC: Former CIA Director Richard Helms, right, talks with Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, chairman of the select committee on Intelligence Activities 6/13. Helms appeared before the panel which is looking into what Church claims is “hard evidence” he says he has on CIA assassination plots involving foreign leaders (Photo Credit Bettmann / Contributor via Getty Images).

Another [document](#) recorded Gottlieb’s answers over the phone in response to questions from a CIA letter. Gottlieb said there were “about 40” unwitting tests conducted by federal narcotics agent George White in CIA safehouses to “explore the full range of the operational use of LSD,” including for “interrogation” purposes and to “[provoke] erratic behavior,” according to the Archive.

Legal documents were also released, including Gottlieb’s [depositions](#) by attorneys for Velma Orlikow. She was a patient of the Allan Memorial Institute, a [Canadian facility](#) where Dr. Ewen Cameron experimented on psychiatric patients in the 1950s and 60s. Cameron’s experiments were funded in part by the CIA’s MKULTRA program, according to the CBC.

The Archives noted that while MKULTRA had approval from the “highest levels,” there was little to no oversight of the program. [\(RELATED: Declassified Documents Claim CIA Secretly Collected Americans’ Private Data\)](#)

It was not until 1975 when the Church Committee investigated the intelligence community that various intelligence operations, [including](#) MKULTRA, were brought to public light.

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