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26 April 1952

TO: Assistant Director, Scientific Intelligence
FROM: Project Coordinator
SUBJECT: Project Artichoke

1. **PROBLEM.**—To reexamine the CIA program for developing special techniques for interrogations (Project Artichoke), and to determine the most effective means for carrying out this program.

2. **FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM.**—

a. Despite the fact that on several occasions the operational offices have encountered situations where additional interrogation procedures were needed, field tests utilizing special techniques for interrogation have not been conducted as planned in the Project Artichoke memorandum dated 13 March, 1951.

b. The principle reason for the delay is a lack of confidence on the part of those responsible for the Project in the techniques presently available, and our inability to come up with any new techniques offering significant advantages over these.

c. A major factor contributing to the lack of confidence in present techniques, as well as our inability to develop new ones, has been the difficulty in obtaining competent medical support, both for the operational teams and for the research effort.

d. The CIA Medical Staff, which was not included in the original program, has recently revised its planning in such a way that it is in a position to assist in an evaluation of presently known techniques.

e. Because this is primarily a medical problem, the CIA Medical Staff may be in a better position than any of the offices presently concerned in the Project to develop new and improved techniques.

3. **DISCUSSION.**—(See Tab A).

4. **CONCLUSIONS.**—

a. The support of the CIA Medical Staff is essential to Project Artichoke if field tests are to be conducted as originally planned.

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b. Because this is primarily a medical problem, the CIA Medical Staff might well assume primary responsibility for the Project.

5. ACTION RECOMMENDED.

a. That consideration be given to the facts and conclusions noted above, and if there are concurred in by the interested agency components, appropriate steps to be taken to correct the Project directive.

R. J. WILLIAMS
Project Coordinator

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Attached: Tab A

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TAB A

3. DISCUSSION.--

a. Project Artichoke is a special agency program established for the development and application of special techniques in CIA interrogations and in other CIA covert activities where control of an individual is desired. Activities along the line of Project Artichoke have been pursued by various components of CIA for at least four years, and previously sporadic efforts to develop and apply techniques of this nature were made by the Armed Services and OSS during WWII.

b. A directive establishing OSI as the coordinator of an integrated CIA and inter-agency program in this field was approved on 13 March 1951. Since that date OSI has endeavored to evaluate known techniques and to uncover new ones using consultants, Armed Service contacts and whatever information may be available within CIA or through other CIA channels. At the same time, OSI has endeavored to evaluate claims that the USSR and/or its satellites may have developed new and significant techniques for this purpose.

c. Results of the program to date are noted as follows:

(1) Presently known techniques which have been used in one form or another along the lines of interest to CIA:

(a) Drugs -- Sodium pentathol, sodium amytal, barbiturates in general. Evaluation: These techniques have been proven to be effective and they involve little risk to the subject if administered under competent medical direction. They will produce leads and some previously concealed information in a majority of cases. Requirements are: limited medical facilities; experienced medical personnel; interrogation personnel with background and training in their application; preparatory medical examination to insure proper physical condition of subject; psychological interview to determine strengths, weaknesses and the most productive pattern of interrogation to follow. Subject usually has no knowledge of actual interrogation. Physiological after-effects might be analyzed by a doctor as an indication that drugs of some kind had been used.

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(b) Hypnosis — Evaluation: Of some value in interrogations and in controlling individuals. Will not be 100% successful and requires cooperation from most subjects. Questions exist regarding extent of control that can be applied, particularly in acts against the normal will of the individual. Also several days pre-conditioning period necessary in most cases. Requires experienced hypnotist but no other supporting technical personnel. Subject usually has no memory of the event but at present there is no way of determining that control is actually achieved (or that subject is faking submission).

(c) Neurosurgery and electric shock — Evaluation: While psychiatric use of these techniques is widespread along the lines of interest, the severity of the treatment, possibility of injury and permanent damage to the subject, and the highly experienced personnel required, rule these techniques out for the present.

(2) Other items which are frequently used by police as well as intelligence officers on a routine basis are noted for the record as follows:

(a) Stimulants — benzedrine, caffeine, nicotine, etc. Evaluation: Usefulness, effectiveness and limitations are commonly known. Primarily of value because they assist the interrogator in gaining access to certain types of individuals. When combined with psychological or physical stress, they increase the tension and ultimately the exhaustion of the subject.

(b) Alcohol — Evaluation: Commonly considered the most peaceful presently known item for "loosening the tongue."

(c) Habit forming drugs — heroin, marijuana, etc. Evaluation: These items can be useful in reverse because of the stresses produced when they are withdrawn from those addicted to their use. Also, some claims exist as to their usefulness in interrogations, but this has not been verified by research.

(d) Ergot alkaloids — lysergic acid, etc. Evaluation: While definite results have been achieved in producing confusion among subjects treated with minute quantities, these items have not yet shown usefulness for interrogation purposes.

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(a) Aid to detection of deception — Evaluation:

The commonly used polygraph has a variety of usages but is basically of value when used on voluntary subjects endeavoring to prove that they have nothing to hide. When used on this basis by a skilled operator, it is effective in producing useful leads.

(3) New items uncovered.

No new techniques or materials have been uncovered which show significant promise along the lines of Project Artichoke. Primarily, such research as CIA and the other agencies concerned are sponsoring is directed toward providing a better evaluation or improved usage of the items noted above. Principle programs in this direction are:

(a) The Panel. As agreed in the memorandum of 13 March 1951, OSI established a panel of professional personnel to evaluate possibilities and give direction in the field of research and experimentation for the development of this program. Dr. Caryl Chessin was selected to head up the Panel and endeavored, in conjunction with OSI, to enlist the services of other qualified professional personnel. We were largely unsuccessful in this effort and after four months there still were no personnel on the Panel or cleared for consultation with it who had experience and background in the scientific fields concerned. Furthermore, there was no evidence at that time that such personnel would be available in the immediate future. Despite this handicap, the Panel made every effort to be of service, although for the most part their assistance consisted of suggestions and advice of a rather general nature. In addition, the individuals who were serving on the Panel became more and more concerned with other matters more along the lines of their background and experience. In a memorandum to Dr. Conrad dated 2 October 1951, Dr. Chessin indicated that the Panel had contributed about as much as it could for the present and until resources were built up in the agency to undertake the staff and field work necessary, the Panel would hold itself ready (as individual consultants) to be of any further advisory assistance. In conversations with Dr. Chessin, subsequent to the above, arrangements were made whereby the Panel would cease to operate as such, and use would be made of the members individually as needed and available. Little need or opportunity for further use of the members has occurred since that time.

(b) IBE Study. As an alternate measure to provide the best possible professional advice for the project,

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the Research and Development Board, at the request of the DCI, has undertaken a study of the technical feasibility of Artichoke-type techniques. Although the Study is designed ostensibly to provide CIA with a better basis for evaluating Soviet capabilities in this field, it can be useful in evaluating and guiding our own program. The committee members have been selected, and, subject to their availability and clearance, should be working on the subject in the near future.

(c) CIA Research Programs. CIA is sponsoring research to develop techniques for improving our capabilities for detecting deception and to evaluate certain types of drugs having a potential for use in Project Artichoke. Research on the adaptability of hypnosis to the various aspects of the Project is being conducted within the agency. Limited facilities for testing devices as they are developed have been approved and are being established.

(d) Related IAC Programs.

On 2 April, 1951 the Deputy Director briefed the IAC in Executive Session on the project. Each Service intelligence chief agreed to assist the agency in the matter and subsequently, liaison officers were nominated for the project. The liaison officers have been most cooperative but, except for the Navy Service, they have not been in a position to contribute to the project. It is hoped that the RMB Study noted above, which was planned in coordination with the IAC designs, will result in a better picture of Department of Defense research going on. In the meantime, information from the Department of Defense concerning new techniques or materials which might be adaptable to CIA operational use has been largely negative.

d. Evaluation of Soviet capabilities:

(1) A complete evaluation of Soviet capabilities cannot be made until the RMB Study has established a solid matrix of fact regarding the technical feasibility of various Artichoke-type techniques. A preliminary evaluation of the rather fragmentary information available does not confirm the assertions in some quarters that the Soviets have a "wonder drug" or revolutionary technique for making individuals talk. Most of the cases examined have shown the age-old pattern of torture, exhaustion and ultimate mental and physical collapse of the subject. Such use of drugs as may have been indicated, appeared to be along the lines of increasing the tension and thereby hastening the collapse of the subject.

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(2) We cannot accept this lack of evidence as proof that the Soviets have not developed new and effective techniques. One of the common characteristics of most psychiatric techniques we have considered has been a certain amount of amnesia with respect to the event. It should be expected that perfection of these techniques would include perfecting the amnesia characteristic to such an extent that the individual is totally unaware that he has given anything at all.

(3) Contributing to the Soviet capability in this field, whatever it may be, is their rather progressive and forward looking psychological and psychiatric research program. They are well versed in all of the techniques of which we have knowledge. While there have been inferences connecting this program with their interrogation personnel, no direct evidence of such connection has been found. A detailed study of their psychological and psychiatric research programs is now in process in the Medical Division, OSI, and it is hoped that this will produce some leads indicating whether or not they are applying special techniques in interrogations.

(4) Of interest in connection with Soviet capabilities are two items which were found on two Soviet agents intercepted in Germany in the summer of 1951. These consisted of identical plastic cylinders containing hypodermic needles attached to collapsible metal tubes similar to, but about half as long as, shaving cream containers. One of the items was analyzed incompletely in the field and retained there. The other was shipped to Washington but, upon receipt by the Project Coordinator in late August, the contents of the tube had been lost and the needle broken. Exhaustive chemical and spectroscopic analysis of the cylinder, the tube, the needle and scrapings from these items revealed little information of significance.

(5) The agents are quoted as stating that the needles, when applied to any part of a victim would cause him to become amenable to the will of his captor. While this could mean any of a variety of things, conclusive evidence as to just what the devices can or cannot accomplish is lacking. Repeated efforts to obtain further information, either from the agents or on the material analyzed in Germany have been unsuccessful.

e. CIA Operational Possibilities.

(1) Despite the fact that we have been unable to develop new techniques, there is sufficient potential in those available originally to justify consideration of their use in the field. Principle handicap to such use has been our inability to provide the medical competence for a final evaluation and for such field testing as the evaluation indicates. Repeated efforts

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to recruit medical personnel have failed and until recently the CIA Medical Staff has not been in a position to assist.

(2) As the medical support situation became increasingly acute, alternate methods of obtaining assistance were considered. Recently plans were developed whereby certain cleared contacts would undertake to train medical personnel for CIA for the field testing program. The plan, in brief, contemplated establishing contracts through Dr. E. H. Cushing, at that time Assistant Medical Director of the Veterans Administration, for research and education, and through Dr. Hastings of the University of Minnesota. Under these contracts, personnel would be trained in the use of drugs, electric shock and other potential fields, ostensibly for the purpose of doing research in psychiatry. The contractor, who would be fully cleared and briefed, would evaluate those techniques he considered worthy of field testing and would screen the personnel in training for the physical and mental aptitude for field work. The Names and Personal History Statements of promising candidates would be submitted to CIA for security screening. At the appropriate time the individuals meeting all requirements would take leave of absence from their research laboratory and be brought to CIA for indoctrination, after which they would proceed with the field testing program. After suitable application of their techniques under field conditions, they would return to the U.S. where the results would be evaluated in conjunction with the contractor and further laboratory research work conducted.

(3) This procedure was held in abeyance when it was learned that the CIA Medical Staff might now be in a position to provide the requisite evaluation and support. In fact, because of certain parallel programs which the CIA Medical Staff has recently undertaken, the entire organization and responsibility for the project might well be reviewed in the light of their new responsibilities and capabilities. Certainly this is basically a medical program requiring competent medical advice and direction. Even if it were necessary to use the alternate plan for providing medical support through the contract program noted above, this might be administered more effectively by the CIA Medical Staff than by OSI. Also it would probably be useful to the CIA Medical Staff in other programs they have established.

(4) If the potential of special techniques for interrogations is to be exploited to the fullest extent by CIA, it is essential that a more direct line of command responsibility be established for the project. This was pointed out in a draft memorandum from AD/SI to DDCI dated 4 February, 1952. After discussions by DD(I) and Col. Taylor acting for DD(P) with AD/SI and the Project

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Coordinator, it was decided not to send this memorandum forward. The principles expressed in this memorandum are still valid and the administrative problems occasioned by lack of acceptance of the principles are just as complex and pressing as they were at that time. Should it develop that the CIA Medical Staff is the agency component which can be given the responsibility and authority for pursuing aggressively all aspects of this matter, the full potential of the program may yet be realized.

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