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Canadian Suit Ties CIA to LSD, Brainwashing Studies

By KENNETH FREED, Times Staff Writer

TORONTO—Between 1953 and 1963, nine people entered a Montreal psychiatric clinic seeking treatment for a variety of illnesses ranging from depression to alcoholism to arthritis. However, instead of being helped, the six men and three women charge, they became test subjects for American intelligence agents exploring ways to control the human mind.

Their claim is that without their knowledge or consent, they were fed doses of drugs, including mind-altering LSD, and subjected to radical brainwashing experiments, involving long periods of forced sleep and other unorthodox procedures, proposed and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

In a long-running lawsuit, the nine Canadians allege that their stay at the Allan Memorial Clinic and their treatment by its director, the late Dr. Ewen Cameron, left them with permanent mental damage and has affected their ability to lead normal lives.

Each is asking for \$175,000 (in U.S. dollars) in damages and an apology from the U.S. government. Although the suit was filed in a federal district court in Washington, D.C., five years ago, the case still has not come to trial and lawyers for the nine people say they are frustrated by the government's tactics.

Joseph Rauh, a well-known civil liberties attorney who represents the nine, said in a telephone interview from his Washington office that the government has prevented key witnesses, particularly former CIA agents, from giving depositions and has forced him to file time-consuming pretrial motions sometimes taking two years to resolve.

"The CIA strategy," he said, "is to stonewall until I'm not able to continue with the case. At my ripe old age of almost 75 there is only a limited time I can practice, and they are stalling for all it's worth."

The CIA says it does not discuss cases in litigation and the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa add only that Secretary of State George P. Shultz's legal adviser is studying the matter.

Rauh and some Canadian government officials who do not want to be identified are nearly as critical of the Canadian government's attitude as they are of the CIA, charging that External Affairs Minister Joe Clark has not acted firmly in the matter for fear of upsetting Shultz and other Reagan Administration officials.

Canadian Asks Shultz

A spokesman for Clark said the minister has brought up the case with Shultz on two occasions since mid-May but has received no reply other than that the matter is being reviewed by the State Department's attorney.

Calling this an overly cautious approach, Rauh said, "The Canadian government is weaker than a watered-for-four-shifts relative. I am flabbergasted at the lack of response. . . . Clark can't even get a 'no' from Shultz."

Rauh and some Canadians want Clark to threaten to take the case to the World Court at The Hague. They say that the CIA and the U.S. government breached Canadian sovereignty.

"This could be settled in five minutes if Clark said he was going to The Hague," the American lawyer went on, but "Shultz treats him like a gnat on his forehead; he just brushes him away."

A Canadian external affairs official added, "It is clear that Clark doesn't want to upset the Americans right now and it is government policy to downplay any differences that crop up" between the two countries.

Although the American government has refused to settle or apologize and is fighting the case in the court, the CIA—both in 1977 and in court papers filed in 1980—acknowledged its involvement with Cameron's work after charges were made public.

American author John Marks first disclosed the CIA role after noting in a 1975 report of the Rockefeller Commission a brief mention of the agency's interest in exploring mind control through the use of drugs and other techniques.

He asked for all pertinent documents under the Freedom of Information Act, received 16,000 pages of material and found references to Cameron's work at the Allan clinic and the fact that he had received funds from a CIA front organization.

Marks presented his findings in a 1977 book called "In Search of the Manchurian Candidate." In it, he referred to several articles that Cameron had written for various American and Canadian medical journals.

In a deposition, former CIA Director Stanfield Turner told Rauh that the experiments had taken place and that "the (CIA) unit conducting the experiment simply had such autonomy that not many outsiders could look in and ask what was going on."

Also, sources close to the case have said that two former CIA operations officers based in Canada in the late 1970s acknowledged the agency's involvement and even secretly apologized to the Canadian government.

The same sources said the two men, Stacy Hulse and John Kenneth Kneus, agreed to give a deposition to Rauh confirming the

CIA role and their apology but that they were prevented from doing so by the CIA's invoking of regulations limiting public testimony by even retired employees.

Rauh has filed a motion to compel the CIA to permit their testimony, but the judge has delayed a ruling.

In addition, there are more than 2,000 pages of documentation in the public archives in Ottawa concern-

ing Cameron's experiments, including several documents that deal with letters between high Canadian health officials and Cabinet members concerning the work at the Allan Memorial Clinic, which is associated with Montreal's prestigious McGill University.

These papers point to radical uses of drugs, including LSD, and the injection of large doses of insulin to induce comas, sometimes for 16 hours. Cameron, whose work was highly regarded by his professional peers, according to contemporary news accounts, also used

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cumulative electrotherapy, the application of massive electric shocks over long periods of time.

Although the origin and exact date of Cameron's association with the CIA remains in dispute, Marks and Rauh both contend that the agency approached the doctor, who had a long and public history of interest and experimentation in radical mind-control programs.

"I have no doubt that Cameron would have done the same thing, even if the CIA had not been involved," Marks said in a telephone interview.

Died on Mountain

Cameron, who was in his 60s when he died in a mountain-climbing accident in 1967, also pioneered something called "psychic driving" with the nine plaintiffs were his patients, and he used the technique on some of them. It consisted of repeating often abusive tape-recorded messages for varying periods of time, but often for hours on end.

According to Cameron's writings, the idea was a form of aversive therapy, to lower the patients' resistance, weaken their memories and thus make them more amenable to suggestions by the psychiatrist. However, one of the women involved in the suit, Jeannine Huard of Montreal, told the Toronto Star that the technique was "torture, plain and simple."

She said Cameron's staff gave her electroshock therapy several times and repetitiously played a tape accusing her of being a bad mother. This would go on for seven hours a day, she said.

Huard was admitted to the clinic in 1958 for treatment of postpartum depression (a depressive state following childbirth). She contends that she suffers from confusion, depression and anxiety, all as a result of the Cameron treatments.

Slept for 23 Days

Another plaintiff, Robert Logie, was referred to the clinic by his doctor as an 18-year-old in 1956 for treatment of an arthritic leg, according to the suit. He says that he was given LSD without being told what it was and that his hospital file shows that he was induced to sleep for 23 straight days.

Another victim of LSD and "psychic driving" was Velma Orlikow, who was sent to Cameron in the fall of 1956 for treatment of postpartum depression. She charges that LSD was given to her 14 different times and that she was forced to listen to abusive tapes for six hours at a time.

Orlikow's husband, David, a member of the Canadian Parliament, said she has been plagued

with a sporadic but deadening depression since she left the clinic in 1963. "There are times," he said in a telephone interview, "when she can't leave the house for days."

Another patient, Louis Weinstein of Montreal, asserts in the suit that he was chemically induced to sleep for 65 consecutive days, that he has permanent memory loss and has had to be hospitalized. Rauh says Weinstein is now totally incapacitated and near death.

Interest in Brainwashing

According to the suit, the nine Canadians say the CIA funded and supported Cameron's projects because of its interest in brainwashing and mind control, subjects of intense scrutiny in the post-Korean War era with its reports of successful brainwashing of American soldiers held in POW camps.

Cameron kept up his work, which was financed as well by the U.S. Army and the Canadian government, according to the doctor's papers and footnotes in his scholarly articles, even though his patients were not notified of the real purpose behind his treatments, until at least 1964.

Even if the Reagan Administration has refused to settle the case, Rauh has some supporters in Washington. Sen. Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-Ohio) brought up the issue in a Senate speech earlier this month.

"I am aghast at the refusal of the United States government to resolve this matter with the Canadian victims of the CIA actions," he said. "The suit of those nine victims has been pending for over five years and, instead of seeking a settlement on some reasonable basis, our government and the CIA have placed every conceivable roadblock in the path of the victims."

If the CIA and the government really intend to outlast the aging Rauh, he says, they are underestimating him. "I'm not going to quit until I get something for these people," he said.