

short, individuals in the experiment are subjected to the tampering with their mind, or their body, or both.

As history shows us, behavior modification is no new phenomenon in the United States penal system. However, in earlier years prison officials used more of a "hands-on" approach in manipulating prisoners' behavior. During our investigation of the past experiences of many prisoners and ex-prisoners, we learned that in earlier years those persons who resisted the oppressive measures perpetrated by prison officials, or those persons who complained of oppressive conditions, or those persons who were labeled incorrigibles were arbitrarily confined to mental wards inside the prison, or transferred to mental institutions for the criminally insane where they experienced the severe effects of mind-altering drugs, electric shock treatment, or psychosurgery, which were the ultimate weapons used by prison officials in carrying out their behavior modification strategy.

However, these measures had proved to be virtually ineffective in the United States penal system by the end of the '60s or early '70s as prison demonstrations and uprisings occurred in rapid succession throughout the United States and coincided with the liberation movement happening outside prison walls. Accordingly, the government became concerned about group control inside the prisons, and to address this concern the government resorted to the use of psychological warfare. Consequently, prisoners of strong religious and cultural beliefs who had organized prisoners to resist and those prisoners who put up independent resistance were singled out and met with extreme oppression as the targets of experimental behavior modification.*

We submit that Black people were in fact the first experimental targets of group behavior modification. Furthermore, current data and statistics on the prison situation support our contention that Black people inside the state and federal prisons today remain the prime targets of the government's program.

Moreover, we discovered during our research that the psychological warfare being waged in the U.S. penal system was planned as far back as the early '60s



Source: Prison News Service

* We want to emphasize that prisoners who resist outside of an organization framework are expressing dissatisfaction with the social situation although their expressed reason for having done so does not include the use of terms commonly articulated by a conscious resister. As one writer stated while addressing this issue, "criminality itself is a form of unconscious protest, reflecting the distortions of an imperfect society, and in a revolutionary situation, the criminal, the psychopath, may become as good a revolutionary as the idealist." (See *War of the Flea*, p.113, by R. Tabor).

because the government foresaw that Black people would revolt against being oppressed, even in prison. Black people's conduct, like that of many people throughout history, validates the axiom that "oppression breeds resistance."

Significantly, in 1961 a social scientist named Dr. Edward Schein presented his ideas on brainwashing at a meeting held in Washington, DC, that was convened by James V. Bennett, then director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons Systems, and was attended by numerous social scientists and prison wardens. Dr. Schein suggested to the wardens that brainwashing techniques were natural for use in their institutions. In his address on the topic "Man Against Man," he explained that in order to produce marked changes of behavior and/or attitude it is necessary to weaken, undermine, or remove the supports of old patterns of behavior and old attitudes. "Because most of these supports are the face-to-face confirmation of present behavior and attitudes, which are provided by those with whom close emotional ties exist." This can be done by either "removing the individual physically and preventing any communication with those whom he cares about, or by proving to him that those whom he respects are not worthy of it, and indeed should be actively mistrusted." Dr. Schein then provided the group with a list of specific examples such as:

1. Physical removal of prisoners to areas sufficiently isolated to effectively break or seriously weaken close emotional ties.
2. Segregation of all natural leaders.
3. Use of cooperative prisoners as leaders.
4. Prohibition of group activities not in the line with brainwashing objectives. *(This includes prayer and Bible study.)*
5. Spying on the prisoners and reporting back private material.
6. Tricking men into written statements which are then shown to others.
7. Exploitation of opportunists and informers.
8. Convincing the prisoners that they can trust no one.
9. Treating those who are willing to collaborate in far more lenient ways than those who are not.
10. Punishing those who show uncooperative attitudes.
11. Systematic withholding of mail.
12. Preventing contact with anyone nonsympathetic to the method of treatment and regimen of the captive populace.
13. Building a group conviction among the prisoners that they have been abandoned by and totally isolated from the social order.
14. Disorganization of all group standards among the prisoners.
15. Undermining of all emotional supports.

* Information concerning that historic meeting was found in the *The Mind Manipulators* by Alan W. Schefflin (see Library of Congress cataloging-in-publication data); additional information was found in a pamphlet on "Breaking Men's Minds," behavior control in Marion, Illinois.

16. Preventing prisoners from writing home or to friends in the community regarding the conditions of their confinement.
17. Making available and permitting access to only those publications and books that contain materials which are neutral to or supportive of the desired new attitudes.
18. Placing individuals into new and ambiguous situations for which the standards are kept deliberately unclear and then putting pressure on them to conform to what is desired in order to win favor and a reprieve from the pressure.
19. Placing individuals whose willpower has been severely weakened or eroded into a living situation with several others who are more advanced in their thought reform and whose job it is to further the undermining of the individuals' emotional supports which were begun by isolating them from family and friends.
20. Using techniques of character invalidation, e.g., humiliations, revilement, shouting to induce feelings of guilt, fear and suggestibility, coupled with sleeplessness, an exacting prison regimen and periodic interrogational interviews.
21. Meeting all insincere attempts to comply with cellmates' pressures with renewed hostility.
22. Repeated pointing out to prisoner by cellmates of where he was in the past, or is in the present, not even living up to his own standards or values.
23. Rewarding of submission and subservience to the attitudes encompassing the brainwashing objective with a lifting of pressure and acceptance as a human being.
24. Providing social emotional supports which reinforce the new attitudes.

Following Dr. Schein's address, James Bennett commented, "We can perhaps undertake some of the techniques Dr. Schein discussed and do things on your own. Undertake a little experiment with what you can do with the Muslims. There is a lot of research to do. Do it as groups and let us know the results."

Approximately 11 years after that historical meeting, it was confirmed that Dr. Schein's ideas and objectives were in fact being implemented inside the prisons. In July 1972, the Federal Prisoners' Coalition, in a petition to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, asserted that the Asklepieion program conducted at the Marion, Illinois, federal penitentiary was directly modeled on Chinese methods of thought reform. The petition contains a point-by-point comparison between Dr. Schein's address and the written description of the goals and structure of the Asklepieion program. (See *The Mind Manipulators* by Alan W. Schefflin.)

Although the tactics introduced by Dr. Schein when viewed individually may not necessarily shock the conscience of society, the tactics, when exe-

cuted singularly or in total, are nevertheless very deleterious to those persons subjected to them. We charge that the execution of the tactics are a violation of the prisoner-victim's human rights, violations which are prohibited under international law.

Many writers today who have done articles on prison behavior modification usually leave their readers with the inaccurate impression that the experiments are only implemented in isolated units of a prison. The writers usually mention the infamous control unit at the U.S. Penitentiary located at Marion, Illinois, as a prime example. However, we want to make it very clear that the experiments are conducted nationwide and that there is close collaboration between the state and federal prison systems. Moreover, the results obtained from having conducted these experiments are used by government agents to formulate a broader plan that will be implemented against people in society at large. One of the objectives of the broader plan is altering the behavior of young people by creating conditions and situations that incline them in the direction of deviant and self-destructive behavior and that derail them from a course which would incline them to resist being oppressed.*

Subsequent to having examined B. F. Skinner's analysis of behavior, one would readily conclude that United States penologists heavily borrowed information from Skinner's works in formulating their behavior modification program and in devising its specific techniques. In his book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Skinner explains that "a culture is very much like the experimental space used in the analysis of behavior. Both are sets of contingencies reinforcement. A child is born into a culture as an organism is placed in an experimental space. Designing a culture is like designing an experiment; contingencies are arranged and effects noted. In an experiment we are interested in what happens, in designing a culture with whether it will work. This is the difference between science and technology."

In unequivocal terms, Skinner's theory relates to a prison environment and society at large. If we imagine a prisoner replacing the child in the situations spoken of above and imagine a prison as the experimental space, then one can clearly see that the experiments carried out inside prisons are done with the experimenters having in mind the ultimate objective of altering the culture of an entire people. The placing of a person in a designed situation for the purpose of tearing him or her down then rebuilding him or her according to the specification of an alien group is a clear act of genocide.

As Black psychologist Bobby E. Wright perfectly stated in his view of Skinner's theory, "any Black with a cursory knowledge of B. F. Skinner's experimental analysis of behavior should recognize its potential danger to our community, where every institution is under the control of the White race." (See *Black Suicide*, by Bobby E. Wright, Ph.D., 1980).

* Many behavior scientists will attest to the fact that situations can be contrived in such a manner that they will influence people to engage in self-destructive behavior. Therefore, the U.S. Government must be held accountable for contributing to the behavior of the oppressed.