

Dr. Dytrych feels that securing permission for MDMA research will be possible in the current political climate in Czechoslovakia, and is primarily interested in conducting research. To begin the process of MDMA research in Czechoslovakia, Dr. David Nichols and MAPS are seeking permission from the Drug Enforcement Administration to export for scientific purposes 100 grams of MDMA to Dr. Dytrych's research institute.

Dr. Nichols originally synthesized the MDMA several years ago for use in legal research. The MDMA which will hopefully be sent to Prague is from the same batch as that used in the *animal* toxicity studies which form the basis of the MAPS Drug Master File. Czech research using MDMA identical with that used in the previous US studies will simplify the process of securing FDA permission to enter data from Czech studies into the MAPS Drug Master File.

DEA approval for the export permit depends upon Dr. Dytrych obtaining an importation permit from the appropriate Czechoslovakian governmental authorities and Dr. Nichols obtaining DEA licensing as an exporter. The entire process is currently in motion, and just might happen. *Stranger things have happened.*

THE MAPS RESEARCH METHODOLOGY CONFERENCE

MAPS is organizing a working conference in Switzerland in early December to discuss the difficult methodological issues in psychedelic psychotherapy research. The meeting will be held in Bern, where the psychedelic psychotherapy in-patient treatment center was established by Swiss psychiatrist Dr. Jorg Roth. Invitations are being extended to the Swiss psychiatrists who worked with psychedelics, to Dr. Dytrych and associates from Czechoslovakia, to Dr. Lester Grinspoon from Harvard Medical School, to Dr. George and Una Ricaurte from Johns Hopkins, and Dr. Charlie Grob from U. of C. Irvine. Psychiatrists from the USSR and from Germany will also be invited.

The purpose of the conference is twofold. The Swiss will share the results of their therapeutic use of psychedelics over the last several years with psychiatrists from several countries. Building on the Swiss reports, the entire group will try to design one or several research protocols which would generate valuable scientific data about both risks and benefits, while interfering as little as possible with the therapeutic treatment of the subjects.

The opportunities for MDMA research in Czechoslovakia, the strong possibility that the Swiss research will eventually be resumed, and the continual clarification of the risk of neurotoxicity, all suggest that legal permission for MDMA research will eventually be granted in one or several countries. The lack of a satisfactory research protocol which adequately addresses and resolves the scientific challenges inherent in conducting research into the psychotherapeutic potential of psychedelically-assisted psychotherapy remains a major factor inhibiting research.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES STUDY THE MARKET FOR PSYCHEDELICS

A consortium of the largest European pharmaceutical companies has hired a consultant to prepare a research report on the potential medical market for consciousness-expanding drugs. The remarkable study, to conclude spring 1991, will focus on therapeutic applications and political considerations.