

Remote Viewing at Stanford Research Institute in the 1970s: A Memoir¹

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*If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite.
For man has closed himself up till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern.*

— William Blake

Abstract — Hundreds of remote viewing experiments were carried out at Stanford Research Institute (SRI) from 1972 to 1986. The purpose of some of these trials was to elucidate the physical and psychological properties of *psi* abilities, while others were conducted to provide information for our CIA sponsor about current events in far off places. We learned that the accuracy and reliability of remote viewing was not in any way affected by distance, size, or electromagnetic shielding, and we discovered that the more exciting or demanding the task, the more likely we were to be successful. Above all, we became utterly convinced of the reality of *psi* abilities. This article focuses on two outstanding examples: One is an exceptional, map-like drawing of a Palo Alto swimming pool complex, and the other is an architecturally accurate drawing of a gantry crane located at a Soviet weapons laboratory, and verified by satellite photography. The percipient for both of these experiments was Pat Price, a retired police commissioner who was one of the most outstanding remote viewers to walk through the doors of SRI.

Introduction

In 1974 Hal Puthoff and I had set aside our careers as laser physicists, and were conducting viewing experiments at SRI, supported largely by the CIA. One of the many assignments we received was to describe a Soviet research and development laboratory at a particular latitude and longitude in the USSR. The psychic description that we and our viewer provided to our sponsor was so outstanding that it alone assured our funding for the next several years. The results were, of course, classified at a very high level because our drawings and descriptions were verified by satellite photography. I remember my heart sinking when our sponsor stamped our report, "EXEMPT FROM AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION." What that meant, was that even after twenty years, this data would not be released to the public. As a scientist, my greatest wish was to tell the

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world that psychic abilities can sometimes produce data of almost architectural accuracy. In May of 1994, twenty-one years after this extraordinary experiment, I began to request our documents from the CIA under the Freedom of Information Act. After a year of no progress, I formally appealed their lack of action, since the only change in my situation had been to move from number 540 in line to number 474. I wanted to initiate a process that would allow me access in my lifetime to these remarkable documents, so I enlisted professional help. With the assistance of two Washington lawyers, two congressmen, and a senator, the data were released to me on August 11th, 1995, sixteen months after my initial request. Thus, I am finally able to thank the CIA for their generous support of this research without going to prison for referring to ESP and the CIA in the same sentence.

One dismaying outcome of all the recent national publicity resulting from the release of this data has been the fact that the CIA has repeatedly expressed the opinion that ESP isn't really good for anything. This is in spite of the fact that they admit that they supported our work for twenty years, and they agree that ESP appears to be a real phenomenon. It is as though the CIA discovered that there were indeed little men on Mars, but concluded that since they were pretty small and didn't have weapons, they weren't worth investigating any further.

In the following pages, I outline two remote viewing experiments that we conducted with one of our most talented psychics. These illustrations show why we believe that remote viewing is an example of the near-omniscient ability of consciousness to transcend our ordinary awareness of space and time.

Patrick H. Price: A Psychic Treasure

Pat Price was a gift to our research at SRI. One day in June of 1973, right in the middle of our adventures with Uri Geller, Pat called Hal Puthoff to say that he had been following our work, and felt that he had been doing that kind of psychic thing for years, catching crooks when he was the police commissioner in **Burbank**, California. He told us that he would sit with the dispatcher in the police station, and whenever he heard a crime reported, he would psychically scan the city and send a car to the spot where he saw a frightened man hiding.

Our impression after we began working with Price was that he lived his life as a completely integrated psychic person. We worked with other talented individuals, but, no one with the continuous psychic awareness of the world around him, which Price showed.

In the experimental protocol that we established at SRI, our laboratory director Bart Cox oversaw all our early experiments. His staff had put together a box of sixty file cards, each containing a target location with its address in the San Francisco Bay Area. Each was not more than one-half hour's drive from SRI. Cox used an electronic calculator with a random number feature to choose one of the target locations. Then he would go to the target location, usually with Hal Puthoff. Since I do not drive, I would almost always be the one to stay with the remote viewing subject in an electrically shielded room, and work with him or

her to create a description of the location that the travelers were visiting. I was a kind of psychic travel agent, whose job it was to get the viewer to tell me about his mental pictures regarding where the travelers had gone. After the viewer had described the target, and the travelers had returned, we would all go to the site, so that the viewer could learn which parts of his or her mental picture actually matched the target.

In one of the formal studies, which Hal and I published in our IEEE paper (Puthoff & Targ, 1976), the target turned out to be a swimming pool complex at Rinconada Park in Palo Alto, about five miles from SRI. As I sat with Price in an electrically shielded Faraday cage on the second floor of the SRI Radio Physics Building, Hal and Bart were in Bart's office on the ground floor, choosing a target card from a target pool of which I had no knowledge. After the allotted thirty minutes time had elapsed, I told Price the travelers had probably reached their destination. He polished his gold wire-rimmed glasses on a white linen handkerchief, leaned back in his chair, and closed his eyes. On this particular day, Price said that he saw a circular pool of water, about a hundred feet in diameter (it was actually hundred and ten feet in diameter). He also saw a rectangular pool about 60 by 80 feet on a side (this pool happens to be 75 by 100 feet). He went on to describe a concrete block house, which is also at the site. We show his drawing in Figure 1. That remarkable accuracy was one of the hallmarks of Price's work. However, this illustration also shows one of the problems that must be dealt with in remote viewing. Having described the target site with great accuracy, as yet unknown to us, Price told me that he thought the target seemed to be a water purification plant. He then went on to create some non-existent water storage tanks in the picture, and put rotating machinery in the pools. That was the story as I understood it as of March 15, 1995. However, on March 16th, I received the *Annual Report of the City of Palo Alto*, celebrating its centennial year. On page 22 of the report it is stated that, "In 1913 a new municipal waterworks was built on the site of the present Rinconada Park." We show Price's remarkable drawing, together with the city map and a photograph of the water tanks as they were in 1913, in Figure 1. The illustration shows those two water tanks, just where Price had drawn them! This amazing phenomenon demonstrates an important feature of remote viewing targeting; namely, that one must specify not only the target location to be observed, but the time as well. All these years we have been criticizing Price for making up an erroneous water purification plant, whereas in reality he was looking fifty years back along the time line and telling us what was there at that time!

Pat Price died at age 57, in 1975. Two years later Admiral Stanfield Turner, then Director of the CIA, told reporters about his encounter with a man who sounds suspiciously like Price:

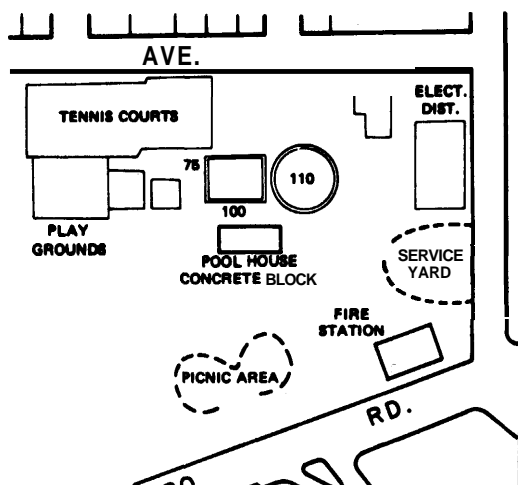


Fig. 1a City map of target location.

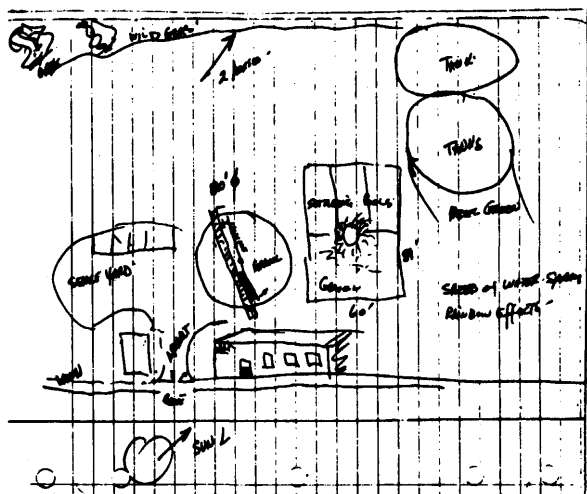


Fig. 1b Drawing by subject S1.

Fig. 1 Remote viewing experiment with Pat Price, in a Faraday cage shielded room, at Stanford Research Institute, Menlo Park, California, 1973. The target is a swimming pool complex at Rinconada Park in Palo Alto. Figure 1a is the Palo Alto city map of the area, and Figure 1b is a drawing of Price's psychic impression from five miles away. His dimensions for the round pool and the rectangular pool are within 10% of the correct value. The water tanks (Figure 1c) were described by Price, but had been removed fifty years earlier.

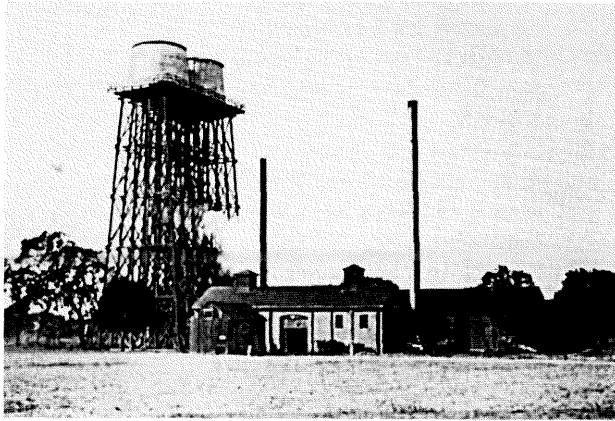


Fig. 1c Old Palo Alto water tower showing two water tanks described by Price.

WASHINGTON — The CIA financed a program in 1975 to develop a new kind of agent who could truly be called a "spook," Director Stanfield Turner has disclosed.

The CIA chief said that the agency had found a man who could "see" what was going on anywhere in the world through his psychic powers.

Turner said that CIA scientists would show the man a picture of a place and he would then describe any activity going on there at that time.

The tight-lipped CIA chief wouldn't reveal how accurate the spook was, but said that the agency dropped the project in 1975.

"He died," Turner said, "and we haven't heard from him since."

Chicago Tribune

Saturday, August 13, 1977

Unequivocal Evidence of Psi

Admiral Turner knew what he was talking about regarding the CIA's psychic spooks. In 1974 Hal Puthoff and I briefed the CIA at the highest levels about our work. The consensus among the operationally-oriented people then was that we were "wasting our time" viewing US targets when we could be looking at Soviet sites.

On July 10 of 1974, one of our contract monitors came to SRI with a new task for us to do. Pat Price and Ingo Swann had already demonstrated that they could describe distant locations where someone was hiding, and we had just started carrying out experiments to describe distant sites, given only their geographical latitude and longitude. Our contract monitor, a physicist from The CIA, had brought us coordinates from what he described as a "Soviet site of great interest to the analysts." They wanted any information we could give them, and they were

eager to find out if we could describe a target ten-thousand miles away, with only coordinates to work from.

Armed with a slip of paper bearing the coordinates, Price and I climbed to the second floor of SRI's Radio Physics building and locked ourselves into a small electrically shielded room which we had been using for our experiments. I joked with Price, that this trial was just like the Rinconada Park experiment, only further away. As always, I began our little ritual of starting the tape recorder, giving the time and date, and describing who we were and what we were doing. I then read the coordinates.

Again, as was Pat's custom, he polished his spectacles, leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes. He was silent for about a minute, and then started to laugh. He said "This reminds me of the old joke that starts with a guy in his penthouse looking up at the 3rd Avenue El." Pat then began his description: "I am lying on my back on the roof of a two or three story brick building. It's a sunny day. The sun feels good. There's the most amazing thing. There's a giant gantry crane moving back and forth over my head. ...As I drift up in the air and look down, it seems to be riding on a track with one rail on each side of the building. I've never seen anything like that." Pat then made a little sketch of the layout of the buildings, and the crane, which he labeled as a "gantry." Later on, he again drew the crane as we show it in the just released illustration, Figure 2.

After several days we completed the remote viewing. We were astonished when we were told that the site was the super-secret Soviet atomic bomb laboratory at Semipalatinsk, where they were also testing particle beam weapons.

The accuracy of Price's drawing is the sort of thing that I, as a physicist, would never have believed, if I had not seen it for myself. The drawing in Figure 3 was made by the CIA from satellite photography of the Semipalatinsk facility. In Figure 4(a) and Figure 4(b) we show Price's drawing, together with an enlargement of the crane from the CIA photo. Price went on to draw many other items at the site, including the cluster of compressed gas cylinders shown in the satellite photo, and are shown in Price's drawing in Figure 5.

One of the most interesting things that Price saw was not in the CIA drawing, because it was inside the building that he was psychically lying on top of, and unknown to anyone in our government at the time. In this June, 1974 experiment he described a large interior room where people were working on the assembly of a giant, "sixty-foot diameter metal sphere." He said that it was being assembled from "thick metal gores," like sections of an orange peel. But, they were having trouble welding it all together, because the pieces were warping. Price said that they were looking for a lower-temperature welding material. We didn't get any feedback on this for more than three years. We discovered how accurate Price's viewings were when this sphere-fabricating activity at Semipalatinsk was eventually described in *Aviation Week* magazine, May 2, 1977:

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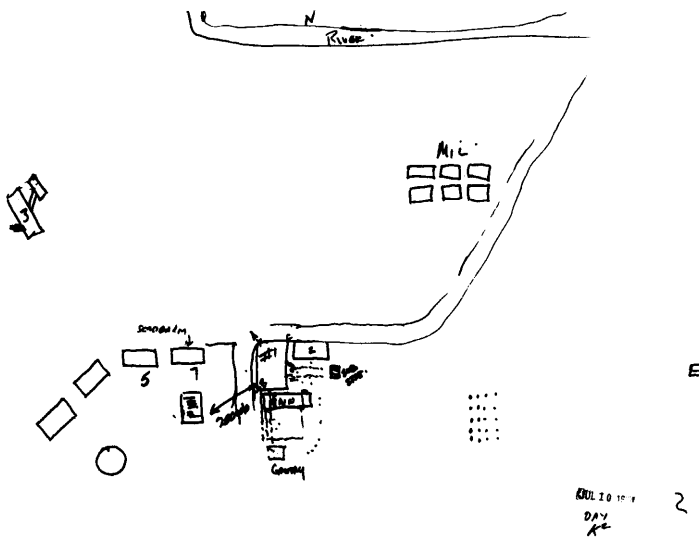


Fig. 2a Subject effort at building layout.

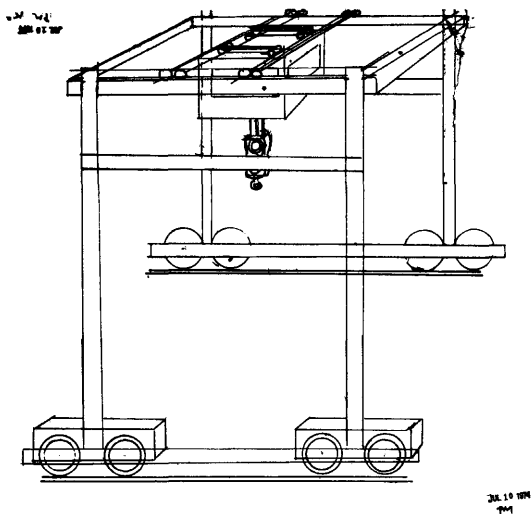


Fig. 2b Subject effort at crane construction.

Fig. 2 Pat Price's sketch of buildings (Figure 2a) and a crane (Figure 2b), from his remote viewing of a Soviet weapons factory 10,000 miles away, in 1974 investigation of applied psi at SRI.

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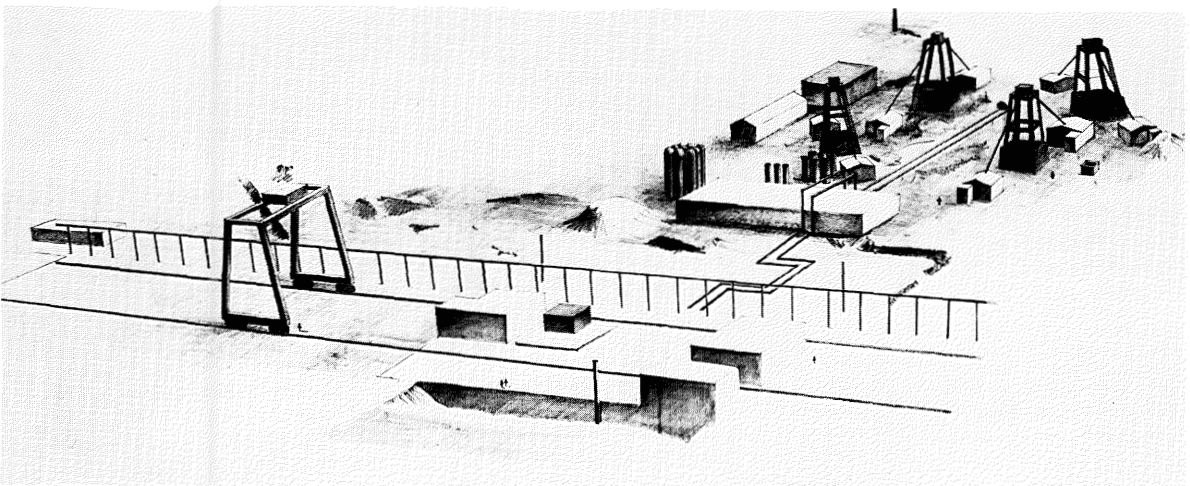
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Fig. 3 Artist tracings of a satellite photograph of the Semipalatinsk target site. Such tracings were made by the CIA to conceal the accuracy of detail of satellite photography at the time.

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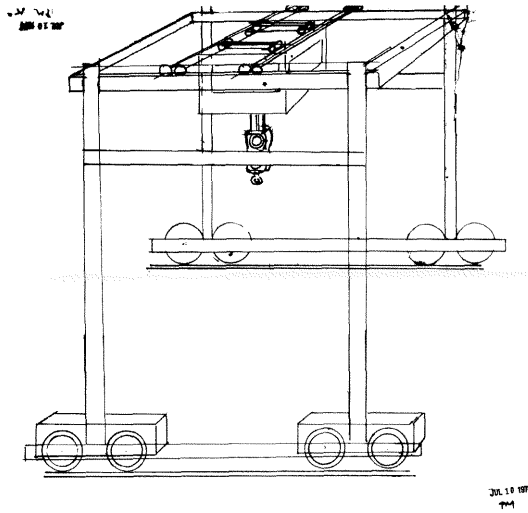


Fig. 4a Pat Price's ESP-based drawing of a gantry crane at the secret Soviet R&D site at Semipalatinsk showing remarkable agreement with Figure 3.

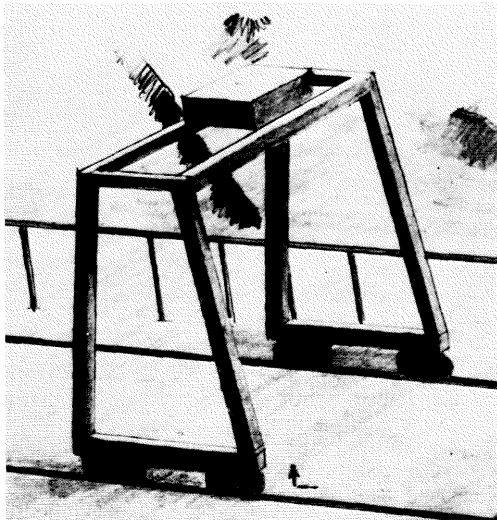


Fig. 4b CIA drawing based on satellite photography (Figure 3). Note for example, that both cranes have eight wheels.

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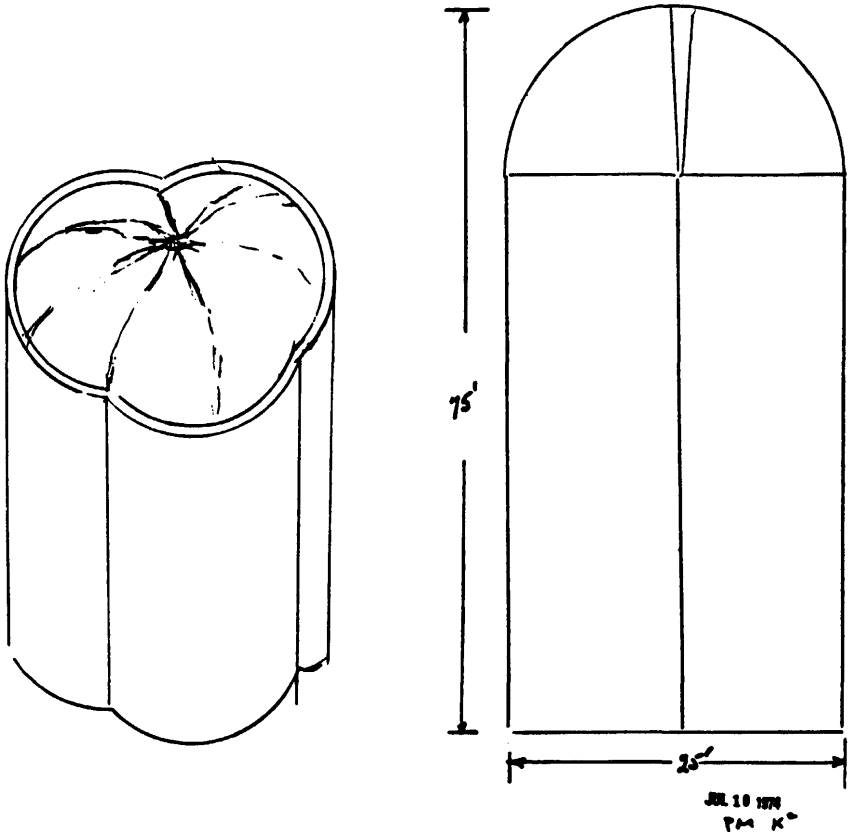


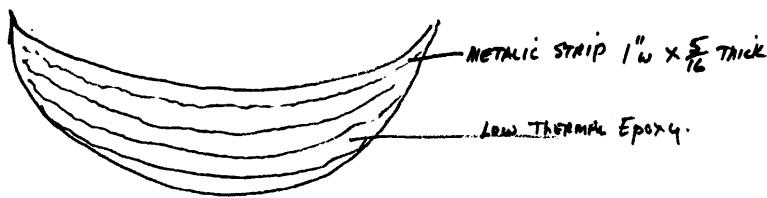
Fig. 5 Cylinder cluster. Details seen by Price include a cluster of gas cylinders shown in the satellite photo.

SOVIETS PUSH FOR BEAM WEAPON — The U.S. used high resolution photographic reconnaissance satellites to watch soviet technicians dig through solid granite formations. In a nearby building, huge extremely thick steel gores were manufactured. These steel segments were parts of a large sphere estimated to be about 18 meters (57.8 feet) in diameter. US officials believe that the spheres are needed to capture and store energy from nuclear driven explosives or pulse power generators. Initially, some US physicists believed that there was no method the Soviets could use to weld together the steel gores of the spheres to provide a vessel strong enough to withstand pressures likely to occur in a nuclear explosive fission process, especially when the steel to be welded was extremely thick.

Although we were happy to receive this confirmation, unfortunately, Pat Price had already died two years earlier. So, from the point of view of the experiment, he made his perception of the sixty-foot spheres and "gores" without any feedback at all. Price's drawing of the sections of a sphere he psychically saw are shown in Figure 6. This shows that Price's remarkable perception was a *direct experience of the site*. He was not reading the mind of the sponsor, because no one in the United States knew of the spheres. Nor could Pat have been precognitively looking at his feedback from the future, because he received none.

The way we described this miracle to our sponsors back in Washington was as follows:

SEGMENT OF METALLIC STRIP
EMBEDDED IN LOW THERMAL EPOXY.
IN ELECTRICAL? BLDG.



Rowd N. Lep
JUL 18 1974
DRAWN 6-15-74
FROM PRICE
(P)

Fig. 6 Sphere fabrication. The 60-foot steel gores for the sphere construction are shown. Their existence was amazingly not discovered until three years later. Price had the size correct to within 18 inches.

The exceptionally accurate description of the multi-story crane was taken as indicative of probable target acquisition, and therefore the subject (Price) was introduced to sponsor personnel who collected further data for evaluation. The latter contained both additional physical data which were independently verified by other sponsor resources, thus providing additional calibration, and also initially unverifiable data of current operational interest. Several hours of tape transcript, and a notebook full of drawings were generated over a two week period. A description of the data and an evaluation is contained in a separate report. The results contained noise along with signal, but were nonetheless clearly differentiated from chance results generated by control subjects in comparison experiments carried out by the COTR (Contracting Office Technical Representative). (SRI Final Report to the CIA, *Perceptual Augmentation Techniques* by Harold E. Puthoff & Russell Targ, covering the period from January, 1974 to February, 1975)

Conclusion

Price should be considered among the ranks of the psychic superstars. These transcendent experiments carried out in the middle of the cold war are something that I have been longing to talk about for more than twenty years. However, the data were so tightly held and so highly compartmentalized, that there was no one outside of our very small group of SRI researchers and CIA sponsors with whom it could be discussed. Hal and I considered it a privilege to have been involved in such remarkable undertakings as those we shared with Price and all the other remote viewers who made our work possible, especially Ingo Swann, Hella Hammid, Gary Langford, and Joe MacMoneagle. I am also grateful for the opportunity to have collaborated so fruitfully in the first decade of this research with my colleague Hal Puthoff. I feel fortunate to be able to describe these extraordinary events at this time, and to pay homage to Pat Price's generous contribution to our studies.

In spite of the fact that the government has not chosen to continue to support this research, it is my belief that the remote viewing data has made a significant contribution to our knowledge of our relationship to a non-local universe in which we are interconnected and increasingly interdependent. It is my hope that our awareness of this interconnectedness derived from research into our psychic abilities will also promote greater compassion among all people.

References

- H.E. Puthoff and R. Targ (1976). A Perceptual channel for information transfer over kilometer distances: Historical perspective and recent research. Proc. *ZEEE*, Vol. 64, 3,329, March.