

## Parapsychology In Intelligence: A Personal Review and Conclusions

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**Abstract** — The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was deeply involved with assessing both the scientific merits and potential intelligence utility of the potpourri of phenomena called parapsychology in the early 1970s. Although nothing that would meet the rigorous test of science was ever achieved, there were tantalizing events and experiences that suggest the possibility of acute perceptions, either elicitation or parapsychological, in some individuals. This article summarizes selected highlights of the experiences of the author and others. The intent is to reveal some likely interesting and hopefully useful data and opinions.

*Keywords:* remote viewing — ESP — psychic phenomena — CIA

### Original Report (1977)<sup>1</sup>

The Central Intelligence Agency has investigated the controversial phenomenon called parapsychology as it relates to intelligence collection. The author was involved with many aspects of the last such investigations. This paper summarizes selected highlights of the experiences of the author and others. The intent is not historical completeness. Files are available for those interested in details. Instead, the intent is to record some certainly interesting and possibly useful data and opinions. This record is likely to be of future benefit to those who will be required to evaluate intelligence-related aspects of parapsychology.

The Agency took the initiative by sponsoring serious parapsychological research, but circumstances, biases, and fear of ridicule prevented CIA from completing a scientific investigation of parapsychology and its relevance to national security. During this research period, CIA was buffeted with investigations concerning illegalities and improprieties of all sorts. This situation, perhaps properly so, raised the sensitivity of CIA's involvement in unusual activities. The "Proxmire Effect," where the fear that certain Government research contracts would be claimed to be ill-founded and held up for scorn, was another factor precluding CIA from sensitive areas of research. Also, there tend to be two types of reactions to parapsychology: positive or negative, with

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<sup>1</sup>This report originally appeared in the Winter 1977 issue of *Studies in Intelligence*, the CIA's classified internal publication. It was released to the public in 1996. The Abstract and the New Postscript were written by the author in January 1999 for publication in *JSE*.

little in between. Parapsychological data, almost by definition, are elusive and unexplained. Add a history replete with proven frauds and many people instantly reject the subject, saying, in effect, "I would not believe this stuff even if it were true." Others, who must have had personal "conversion" experiences, tend to be equally convinced that one unexplained success establishes a phenomenon. These prejudices make it difficult to evaluate parapsychology carefully and scientifically.

Tantalizing but incomplete data have been generated by CIA-sponsored research. These data show, among other things, that on occasion unexplained results of genuine intelligence significance occur. This is not to say that parapsychology is a proven intelligence tool; it is to say that the evaluation is not yet complete and more research is needed.

Attention is confined to psychokinetics and remote viewing. Psychokinetics is the purported ability of a person to interact with a machine or other object by unexplained means. Remote viewing is akin to clairvoyance in that a person claims to sense information about a site or person removed from a known sensory link.

Anecdotal reports of extrasensory perception (ESP) capabilities have reached U.S. national security agencies at least since World War II, when Hitler was said to rely on astrologers and seers. Suggestions for military applications of ESP continued to be received after World War II. For example, in 1952 the Department of Defense was lectured on the possible usefulness of extrasensory perception in psychological warfare [1]. Over the years, reports continued to accumulate. In 1961, the reports induced one of the earliest U.S. government parapsychology investigations when the chief of CIA's Office of Technical Service (then the Technical Services Division) became interested in the claims of ESP. Technical project officers soon contacted Stephen I. Abrams, the Director of the Parapsychological Laboratory, Oxford University, England. Under the auspices of Project ULTRA, Abrams prepared a review article which claimed ESP was demonstrated but not understood or controllable [2]. The report was read with interest but produced no further action for another decade.

Two laser physicists, Dr. Russell Targ and Dr. Harold E. Puthoff, re-awakened CIA research in parapsychology. Targ had been avocationally interested in parapsychology for most of his adult life. As an experimentalist, he was interested in scientific observations of parapsychology. Puthoff became interested in the field in the early 1970s. He was a theoretician who was exploring new fields of research after extensive work in quantum electronics.

In April of 1972, Targ met with CIA personnel from the Office of Strategic Intelligence (OSI) and discussed the subject of paranormal abilities. Targ revealed that he had contacts with people who purported to have seen and documented some Soviet investigations of psychokinesis. Films of Soviets moving inanimate objects by "mental powers" were made available to analysts from OSI. They, in turn, contacted personnel from the Office of Research and De-

velopment (ORD) and OTS. An ORD Project Officer then visited Targ who had recently joined the Stanford Research Institute (SRI). Targ proposed that some psychokinetic verification investigations could be done at SRI in conjunction with Puthoff.

These proposals were quickly followed by a laboratory demonstration. A man was found by Targ and Puthoff who apparently had psychokinetic abilities. He was taken on a surprise visit to a super-conducting shielded magnetometer being used in quark (high energy particle) experiments by Dr. A. Hebard of Stanford University Physics Department. The quark experiment required that the magnetometer be as well shielded as technology would allow. Nevertheless, when the subject placed his attention on the interior of the magnetometer, the output signal was visibly disturbed, indicating a change in the internal magnetic field. Several other correlations of his mental efforts with signal variations were observed. These variations in the magnetometer were never seen before or after the visit. The event was summarized and transmitted to the Agency in the form of a letter to an OSI analyst [3] and as discussions with OTS and ORD officers.

The Office of Technical Services took the first action. With the approval of the same manager who supported the ESP studies a decade previously, an OTS project officer contracted for a demonstration with the previously mentioned man for a few days in August, 1972. During this demonstration, the subject was asked to describe objects hidden out of sight by the CIA personnel. The subject did well. The descriptions were so startlingly accurate that the OTD and ORD representatives suggested that the work be continued and expanded. The same Director of OTS reviewed the data, approved another \$2,500 work order, and encouraged the development of a more complete research plan.

By October, 1972, I was the Project Officer. I was chosen because of my physics background to work with the physicists from SRI. The Office of Technical Service funded a \$50,000 expanded effort in parapsychology [4]. The expanded investigation included tests of several abilities of both the original subject and a new one. Curious data began to appear; the paranormal abilities seemed individualistic. For example, one subject, by mental effort, apparently caused an increase in the temperature measured by a thermistor; the action could not be duplicated by the second subject. The second subject was able to reproduce, with impressive accuracy, information inside sealed envelopes. Under identical conditions, the first subject could reproduce nothing. Perhaps even more disturbing, repeating the same experiment with the same subject did not yield consistent results. I began to have serious feelings of being involved with a fraud.

Approximately halfway through this project, the SRI contractors were invited to review their results. After careful consideration of the security and sensitivity factors, the results were shared and discussed with selected Agency personnel during that and subsequent meetings. In February, 1973, the most

recent data were reviewed; thereafter, several ORD officers showed definite interest in contributing their own expertise and office funding.

The possibility of a joint OTS/ORD program continued to develop. The Office of Research and Development sent new Project Officers to SRI during February, 1973, and the reports which were brought back convinced ORD to become involved. Interest was translated into action when ORD requested an increase in the scope of the effort and transferred funds to OTS [5]. About this time, a third sensitive subject, Pat Price, became available at SRI, and the remote viewing experiments in which a subject describes his impressions of remote objects or locations began in earnest. The possibility that such useful abilities were real motivated all concerned to move ahead quickly.

The contract required additional management review before it could be continued or its scope increased. The initial review went from OTS and ORD to Mr. William Colby, then the DDO. On 24 April, Mr. Colby decided that the Executive Management Committee should pass judgment on this potentially sensitive project. By the middle of May, 1973, the approval request went through the Management Committee. An approval memorandum was written for the signature of the DCI, then Dr. James Schlesinger [6]. Mr. Colby took the memorandum to the DCI a few days later. I was soon told not to increase the scope of the project and not to anticipate any follow-on in this area. The project was too sensitive and potentially embarrassing. It should be tabled. It is interesting to note that OTS was then being investigated for involvement in the Watergate affair, and that in May, 1973, the DCI issued a memorandum to all CIA employees requesting the reporting of any activities that may have been illegal and improper. As Project Officer, clearly my sense of timing had not been guided by useful paranormal abilities!

During the summer of 1973, SRI continued working informally with an OSI officer on a remote viewing experiment which eventually stimulated more CIA-sponsored investigations of parapsychology. The target was a vacation property in the eastern United States. The experiment began with the passing of nothing more than the geographic coordinates of the vacation property to the SRI physicists who, in turn, passed them to the two subjects, one of whom was Pat Price. No maps were permitted, and the subjects were asked to give an immediate response of what they remotely viewed at these coordinates. The subject came back with descriptions which were apparent misses. They both talked about a military-like facility. Nevertheless, a striking correlation of the two independent descriptions was noted. The correlation caused the OSI officer to drive to the site and investigate in more detail.

To the surprise of the OSI officer, he soon discovered a sensitive government installation a few miles from the vacation property. This discovery led to a request to have Price provide information concerning the interior workings of this particular site. All the data produced by the two subjects were reviewed in CIA and the Agency concerned.

The evaluation was, as usual, mixed [7]. Pat Price, who had no military or

intelligence background, provided a list of project titles associated with current and past activities including one of extreme sensitivity. Also, the code-name of the site was provided. Other information concerning the physical layout of the site was accurate. Some information, such as the names of the people at the site, proved incorrect.

These experiments took several months to be analyzed and reviewed within the Agency. Now Mr. Colby was DCI, and the new directors of OTS and ORD were favorably impressed by the data. In the fall of 1973, a Statement of Work was outlined, and SRI was asked to propose another program. A jointly funded ORD and OTS program was begun in February, 1974 [8]. The author again was the Project Officer. The project proceeded on the premise that the phenomena existed; the objective was to develop and utilize them.

The ORD funds were devoted to basic studies such as the identification of measurable physiological or psychological characteristics of psychic individuals, and the establishment of experimental protocols for validating paranormal abilities. The OTS funds were to evaluate the operational utility of psychic subjects without regard to the detailed understanding of paranormal functioning. If the paranormal functioning was sufficiently reproducible, we were confident applications would be found.

Before many months had passed, difficulties developed in the project. Our tasking in the basic research area proved to be more extensive than time and funds would allow. The contractors wanted to compromise by doing all of the tasks with less completeness. The ORD scientists insisted that with such a controversial topic, fewer but more rigorous results would be of more value. The rigor of the research became a serious issue between the ORD project officers and SRI, with myself generally taking a position between the righteousness of the SRI contractor and indignation of the ORD researchers. Several meetings occurred over that issue.

As an example of the kinds of disputes which developed over the basic research, consider the evaluation of the significance of data from the "ESP teaching machine" experiments. This machine was a four-state electronic random number generator used to test for paranormal abilities. SRI claimed the machine randomly cycled through four states, and the subject indicates the current machine state by pressing a button. The state of the machine and the subject's choice were recorded for later analysis. A subject "guessing" should, on the average, be correct 25 percent of the time. SRI had a subject who averaged a statistically very significant 29 percent for more than 2,500 trials.

I requested a review of the experiment and analysis, and two ORD officers quickly and skeptically responded. They first argued that the ESP machine was possibly not random. They further argued the subjects probably learned the nonrandom machine patterns and thereby produced higher scores. [9] During this review, it was noted that whether the machine was random or not, the data taken during the experiment could be analyzed to determine actual machine statistics. The machine randomness was unimportant, because the subject's

performance could then be compared with actual machine performance [10]. The ORD Project Officers, however, did not believe it would be worth the effort to do the extra analysis of the actual data.

I disagreed. I had the Office of Joint Computer Services redo the data analysis. The conclusion was that during the experiment “no evidence of non-randomness was discovered” and there was “no solid reason *how* he was able to be so successful [11].” I further ordered the subject to be re-tested. He averaged more than 28 percent during another 2,500 trials. This information was given in written and oral form to the ORD Project Officers, who maintained there must be yet another flaw in the experiment or analysis, but it was not worth finding. Because of more pressing demands, the issue could not be pursued to a more definite conclusion.

Concurrent with this deteriorating state of affairs, new Directors of ORD and OTS were named again. Since neither Director had any background or experience in paranormal research, the new Director of ORD reviewed the parapsychology project and had reservations. I requested a meeting in which he said he could not accept this reality of paranormal functioning, but he understood his bias. He said that inasmuch as he could not make an objective decision in this field, he could simply follow the advice of his staff. The ORD Project Officers were feeling their own frustrations and uncertainties concerning the work and now had to face this unusual kind of skepticism of their new Director. The skepticism about the believability of the phenomenon and quality of the basic research adversely affected the opinions of many people in OTS. Support for the project was vanishing rapidly.

As these pressures mounted, the first intelligence collection operation using parapsychology was attempted. The target was the Semipalatinsk Unidentified Research and Development Facility-2 (URDF-3, formerly known as PNUTS). The experimental collection would use our best subject, Pat Price. From experience it was obvious that Price produced bad data as well as good. Borrowing from classical communications theory concepts, this “noisy channel” of information could nevertheless be useful if it were characterized. An elaborate protocol was designed which would accomplish two characterization measurements. First, we needed assurance the channel was collecting useful data. I reviewed the photos of URDF-3 and chose two features which, if Price described them, would show the channel at least partially working. Referring to Figure 1, these features were the tall crane and the four structures resembling oil well derricks. It was agreed that if Price described these structures, I would be prepared to have him sign a secrecy agreement, making him witting, and collect more relevant intelligence details. Second, after a working channel was thus established, a signal-to-noise or quality characterization was required. This would be done by periodic tests of the channel — that is, periodically Price would be asked to describe features of URDF-3 which were known. The accuracy of these descriptions would be used to estimate the quality of the data we had no obvious way of verifying.

The experiment began with my branch chief and me briefing Targ and Puthoff in a motel. Later, at SRI, Price was briefed by Targ and Puthoff. Since Targ and Puthoff presumably knew nothing about URDF-3, this protocol guarded against cueing and/or telepathy. Initially Price was given only the geographic coordinates, a world atlas map marked with the approximate location of URDF-3, and told it was a Soviet RD&E test site. Overnight, he produced the drawing (Figure 2a). Price further mentioned that this was a “damned big crane” because he saw a person walk by and he only came up to the axles on the wheels (note sketch, Figure 2b). This performance caught my attention; but with two more days of work, we never heard about the derricks. Eventually, a decision was needed. Because the crane was so impressive, my branch chief and I decided the derricks description requirement should be relaxed and we should continue.

When the decision was made to make Price witting, I decided to test him. My branch chief and I sat in a conference room while Targ and Puthoff brought a smiling Pat Price into the room. I was introduced as the sponsor, and I immediately asked Price if he knew me.

Yes.

Name?

Ken Kress.

Occupation?

Works for CIA.

Since I was then a covert employee, the response was meaningful. After having Price sign a secrecy agreement, and some discussions, I confronted him again. I rolled out a large version of Figure 1 and asked if he had viewed this site.

Yes, of course!

Why didn't you see the four derricks?

Wait, I'll check.

Price closed his eyes, put on his glasses (he “sees” better that way) and in a few seconds answered “I didn't see them because they are not there any more.” Since my data were three or four months old, there was no rejoinder to the implied accusation that my data were not good. We proceeded and completed a voluminous data package.

In a few weeks, the latest URDF-3 reconnaissance was checked. Two derricks were partially disassembled, but basically all four were visible. In general, most of Price's data were wrong or could not be evaluated. He did, nevertheless, produce some amazing descriptions, like buildings then under

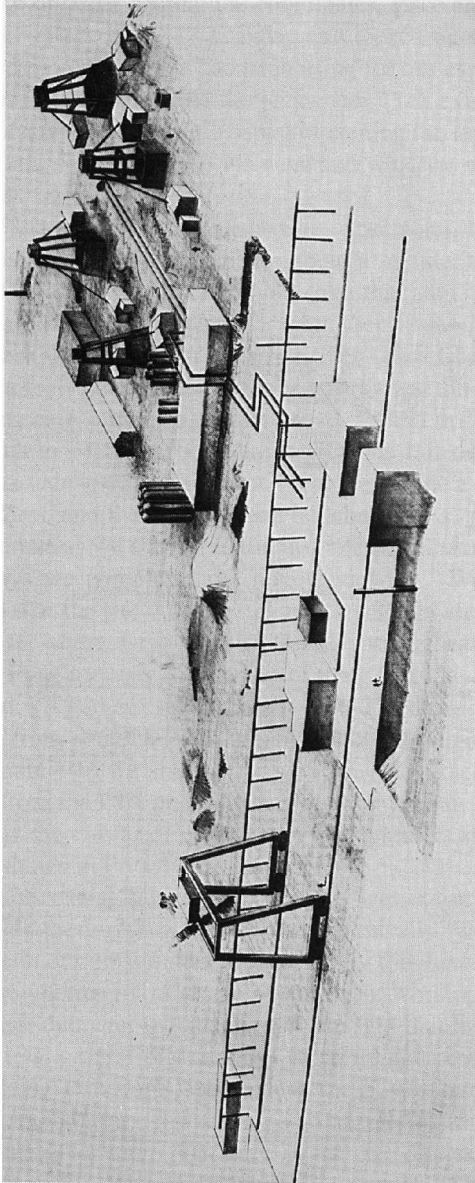


Fig. 1. Artist tracings of a satellite photograph of the Semipalatinsk target site. Such tracings were made by the CIA to conceal the accuracy of detail of satellite photography at the time.



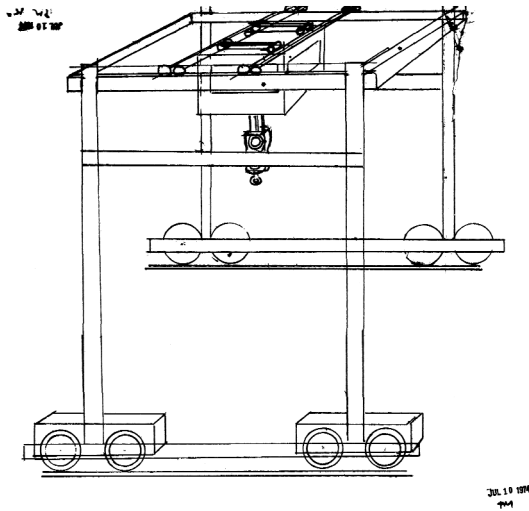


Fig. 2a. Pat Price's ESP-based drawing of a gantry crane at the secret Soviet R&D Site at Semipalatinsk showing remarkable agreement between Figure 1 and 2a.

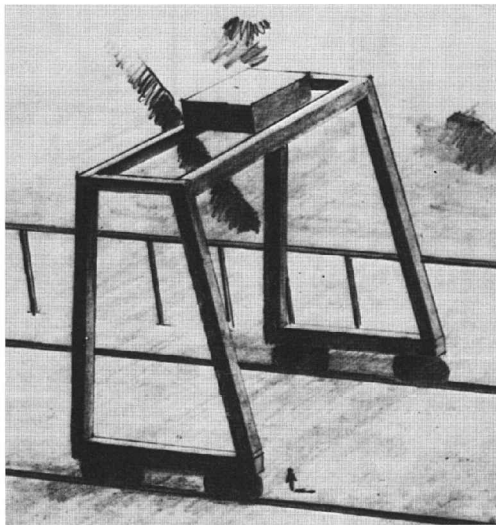


Fig. 2b. CIA drawing based on satellite photography (Figure 1). Note for example, that both cranes have eight wheels.

construction, spherical tank sections, and the crane in Figures 1 and 2. Two analysts, a photo interpreter at IAS [12] and a nuclear analyst at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories agreed that Price's description of the crane was accurate; the nuclear analyst wrote that "one: he, the subject, actually saw it through remote viewing, or two: he was informed what to draw by someone knowledgeable of URDF-3 [13]." But, again, since there was so much bad information mixed in with the good, the overall result was not considered useful. As proof of remote viewing, the data are at best inconclusive. The ORD officers concluded that since there were no control experiments to compare with, the data were nothing but lucky guessing.

I began to doubt my own objectivity in evaluating the significance of paranormal abilities to intelligence collection. It was clear that the SRI contractors were claiming success while ORD advisors were saying the experiments were not meaningful because of poor experimental design. As a check on myself, I asked for a critique of the investigation from a disinterested consultant, a theoretical physicist with broad intellectual background. His first task was to evaluate the field of parapsychology without knowledge of the CIA data. After he had completed this critique, I asked him to acquaint himself with the CIA data and then to reassess the field. The first investigation produced genuine interest in paranormal functioning as a valid research area. After being acquainted with CIA data, his conclusion was, "a large body of reliable experimental evidence points to the inescapable conclusion that extrasensory perception does exist as a real phenomenon, albeit characterized by rarity and lack of reliability [14]." This judgment by a competent scientist gave impetus to continue serious inquiry into parapsychology.

Because of the general skepticism and mixed results of the various operational experiments, a final challenge was issued by OTS management: OTS is not in the research business; do something of genuine operational significance. Price was chosen, and suggestions were solicited from operational personnel in both OTS and the DDO. An intriguing idea was selected from audio collection systems. A test to determine if remote viewing could help was suggested. The interiors of two foreign embassies were known to the audio teams who had made entries several years previously. Price was to visit these embassies by his remote viewing capability, locate the coderooms, and come up with information that might allow a member of the audio team to determine whether Price was likely to be of operational use in subsequent operations. Price was given operationally acceptable data such as the exterior photographs and the geographical coordinates of the embassies.

In both cases, Price correctly located the coderooms. He produced copious data, such as the location of interior doors and colors of marble stairs and fireplaces that were accurate and specific. As usual, much was also vague and incorrect. Regardless, the operations officer involved concluded, "It is my considered opinion that this technique — whatever it is — offers definite operational possibilities [15]."

This result was reviewed within OTS and the DDO, and various suggestions for potential follow-on activities were formulated [16]. This package of requirements, plus the final results of the current contract, were reviewed at several meetings within OTS and ORD. The results of those meetings are as follows:

1. According to the ORD Project Officers, the research was not productive or even competent; therefore, research support to SRI was dropped. The Director of OTS felt the OTS charter would not support research; therefore, all Agency funding in paranormal research stopped.
2. Because of the mixed results, the operational utility of the capability was considered questionable but deserved further testing.
3. To achieve better security, all the operations-oriented testing with the contractor was stopped, and a personal services contract with Price was started.
4. Since I was judged to be a positively biased advocate of paranormal functioning, the testing and evaluation of Price would be transferred to a more pragmatic OTS operations psychologist.

The OTS psychologist picked up his new responsibilities and chose to complete an unfinished DDO requirement. The origin of the requirement went back to the Fall of 1974 when several OTS engineers became aware of the parapsychology project in OTS and had volunteered to attempt remote viewing. They passed initial remote viewing tests at SRI with some apparent successes. To test these OTS insiders further, I chose a suggested requirement to obtain information about a Libyan site described only by its geographic coordinates. The OTS engineers described new construction which could be an SA-5 missile training site [17]. The Libyan Desk officer was immediately impressed. He then revealed to me that an agent had reported essentially the same story. More coordinates were quickly furnished.

The second set of Libyan geographic coordinates was passed by the OTS psychologist to Price. A report describing a guerrilla training site was quickly returned. It contained a map-like drawing of the complex. Price described a related underwater sabotage training facility site several hundred kilometers away on the sea coast. This information was passed to the Libyan Desk. Some data were evaluated immediately, some were evaluated only after ordering special reconnaissance. The underwater sabotage training facility description was similar to a collateral agent's report. The Libyan Desk officer quickly escalated the requirement to what was going on inside those buildings, the plans and intentions, *etc.* [18]. The second requirements list was passed to Pat Price. Price died of a heart attack a few days later, and the program stopped. There have been no further CIA-sponsored intelligence collection tests.

Since July, 1975, there has been only modest CIA and Intelligence Community Staff interest in parapsychology. The Office of Scientific Intelligence completed a study about Soviet military and KGB applied

parapsychology [19]. During November of 1976, Director George Bush became aware that official Soviets were visiting and questioning Puthoff and Targ at SRI about their work in parapsychology. Mr. Bush requested and received a briefing on CIA's investigations into parapsychology. Before there was any official reaction, he left the Agency. Various intelligence community groups, such as the Human Resources Subcommittee on R&D, have exhaustively reviewed parapsychology in CIA, DOD, and the open research, but have failed to conclude whether parapsychology is or is not a worthwhile area for further investigation. Several proposals from SRI and other contractors were received by CIA but none were accepted. There are no current plans for CIA to fund parapsychology investigations.

### **Postscript**

At this point, I have traced the action and reaction of various elements of CIA to what is certainly an unconventional and highly controversial subject. Also of interest are the concurrent reactions of other agencies to parapsychology. In August, 1973, parapsychology was discussed with several members of DIA. The DIA people were basically interested in the Soviet activities in this area, and expressed considerable interest in our own fledgling results. Numerous meetings have occurred during the past several years. DIA remains interested on a low priority basis.

The Army Materiel Command learned of CIA interest in the paranormal. We discovered the Army interest was generated by data which emerged from Vietnam. Apparently certain individuals called point men, who led patrols into hostile territory, had far fewer casualties from booby traps and ambushes than the average. These point men, needless to say, had a loyal following of men and, in general, greatly helped the morale of their troops under a brutal, stressful situation. The Army gave extensive physical and psychological tests to a group of unusually successful point men and came to no conclusion other than perhaps that paranormal capabilities may be the explanation! The Army was most interested in CIA results and wanted to stay closely informed. After a few more follow-up meetings, the Army Materiel Command was never heard from again.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) reported that they had not only a showing of interest but a hostile response as well to the subject area. At one time, we felt we had the strong interest of some people at DARPA to discuss our data. The SRI contractors and I went to a briefing where we had a several-hour confrontation with an assemblage of hostile DARPA people who had been convened especially to debunk our results. After a long, inconclusive, emotional discussion, we left. Contacts with DARPA stopped for several years.

The Navy reviewed part of the work and became interested. Some groups developed strong interest, and minor funding was provided to SRI by Navy to replicate one of SRI's earlier experiments under more controlled conditions.

The experiment was replicated. Then the Navy asked SRI to repeat the same experiment under different conditions. An effect was observed, but it was not the same as the previous observations. About this same time, the Navy became very concerned about this research being “mind warfare”-related. Funding was stopped.

The active funding for parapsychology now has shifted to the Air Force’s Foreign Technology Division with the addition of modest testing being completed by another group at DARPA. These investigations are not yet completed, but a second phase is funded by the Air Force. The Air Force project is attempting to evaluate whether signals and communications can be sent and received by paranormal functioning. Also aircraft and missile intelligence which can be verified is being gathered and evaluated. To date, the results are more consistent than those seen during the CIA research, but still they are mixed. Some simple experiments seemed very impressive and conclusive. The more complex experiments are difficult to assess.

In the non-government world an explosion of interest in unclassified parapsychology research occurred after the first publication of CIA-sponsored projects. Books have been written, prestigious professional societies have had sessions on parapsychology, and several national news reports have been broadcast and printed [20]. Director Turner revealed publicly that CIA has had operational interest in parapsychology [21]. The open publication of these investigations is generally healthy and helpful. It shows a reduction of associated emotionalism and bias. These publications will also stimulate other scientific investigations into parapsychology.

There is a less positive aspect to open interest and publications. Before adequate assessment was made by CIA and others, we may have allowed some important national security information out into the public domain. It is my opinion that, as it relates to intelligence, sufficient understanding and assessment of parapsychology has not been achieved. There are observations, such as the original magnetic experiments at Stanford University, the OSI remote viewing, the OTS-coderoom experiments, and others done for the Department of Defense, that defy explanation. Coincidence is not likely, and fraud has not been discovered. The implication of these data cannot be determined until the assessment is done.

If the above is true, how is it that the phenomenon remains controversial and receives so little official government support? Why is it that the proper assessment was never made? This state of affairs occurs because of the elementary understanding of parapsychology and because of the peculiarities of the intelligence and military organizations which have attempted the assessments. There is no fundamental understanding of the mechanisms of paranormal functioning, and the reproducibility remains poor. The research and experiments have successfully demonstrated abilities but have not explained them nor made them reproducible. Past and current support of parapsychology comes from applications-oriented intelligence and military agencies. The

people managing such agencies demand quick and relevant results. The intelligence and military agencies, therefore, press for results before there is sufficient experimental reproducibility or understanding of the physical mechanisms. Unless there is a major breakthrough in understanding, the situation is not likely to change as long as applications-oriented agencies are funding parapsychology. Agencies must commit long-term basic research funds and learn to confine attention to testing only abilities which at least appear reproducible enough to be used to augment other hard collection techniques (example: use parapsychology to help target hard intelligence collection techniques and determine if the take is thereby increased). Parapsychology, like other technical issues, can then rise or fall on its merits and not stumble over bureaucratic charters and conjectures proposed by people who are irrevocably on one side or the other of the controversial area.

### **New Postscript (1999)**

Since the passage of time allows the release of more historical information about the CIA's involvement in parapsychological research, I offer a few additional remarks and details not included in the original article. Two new assertions are offered from my experiences. First, intelligence often deals with initially unevaluated information sources that eventually may be proven highly important. This *modus operandi* makes intelligence services intrinsically susceptible to the seductive claims of psychics. Second, complicating an already difficult evaluation of alleged psychic abilities, some of the most interesting practitioners had personal objectives quite different than scientific discovery or national security.

Consider first the appeal of psychics to intelligence collection. All human intelligence assets, spies, begin by providing information and data which must be evaluated or vetted. In some cases, this information is easily vetted because it corroborates with other independent sources. Somewhat less satisfactory, sources are qualified because the information they provide is consistent with conclusions and analysis already developed. Eventually, an important asset is validated by a continuing flow of useful and, at least partially, independently verifiable information.

A psychic, such as Pat Price, appears and asserts, as he did to me, that he tracks all the Soviet submarines capable of launching ballistic missiles and daily updates their position on a world map. This information, if true, is clearly of great importance. I consider the possibilities. Is the information bogus from a well meaning but feckless individual? Is it a dangle, that is, real information supplied by others so that a psychic double agent ingratiates themselves and achieves a penetration which eventually returns even more important information to his handlers? Is it a new, overlooked capability? Turning the question completely around, is it a technique that can be used to penetrate other intelligence organizations?

Given the range and mix of possibilities, what is a responsible response?

Most such extraordinary claims are immediately rejected because they include incredible ancillary claims such as extraterrestrial contacts, forced brain implants and other delusional characteristics. When particularly important information is offered and there are no obviously delusional characteristics and the resources required for evaluation are modest, perfunctory dismissal is not so easily done. Because of the continuing desire to solve intractable problems, the Intelligence Community is always vulnerable to offers of help on the most difficult issues. There was an additional impetus in the 1970s when it was known that the Soviet government was supporting the evaluation and development of paranormal phenomena. These forces conspired to cause me to be assigned to evaluate these and similar claims. The promise was too high and the cost too low not to look.

I attempted both a rigorous, science-based and pragmatic utility-oriented investigation of parapsychology for the CIA, spurred by the need to solve hard problems and some latent concern that the U. S. was overlooking something important. While on this quest, I did observe one effect I wish to highlight now. It was a demonstrable fact that psychics could convince professional intelligence operators of the genuineness of their powers.

One example was a remote viewing by Pat Price of an official foreign facility which we were sure had only been seen by a select group of our people. Pat provided overwhelming detail about the interior layout and design to an experienced operations officer, "Frank."

While watching the session between Pat and Frank, it was clear that it was fraught with the potential for elicitation. Frank and Pat chatted like two old men discussing remembrances of their long ago, boyhood school days. Pat would say he liked the subdued red and green decor surrounding the stairs and Frank would respond that he also was impressed with the lavish use of Italian marble. After several hours of such exchanges, Frank provided me with a very positive instant verbal assessment and soon followed up with a written, positive evaluation. Frank was sure that Pat was either there or could remotely, mentally access the facility. My conclusion was that the data did little to elucidate psychic powers but it was clear we could use Pat to convince some experienced operators that his powers were real. This seemed like a vulnerability result worth knowing.

Consider the second assertion that the motives of psychics clashed with mine and taught me, too late, to be very wary of psychics. In the late 1970s, several years after the project was terminated, I got a secure line call from a person who identified himself as an FBI agent. He suggested that I should be prepared for a spate of publicity about the remote viewings of Pat Price. Pat had died a few years before and I was surprised that somebody had leaked information about these defunct activities.

The FBI agent proceeded to explain that Pat Price was a member of an organization that was recently raided for documents indicative of illegal activity. The organization was vigorously resisting the government investigation but

the raid produced hundreds of files and papers that supported the government's allegations. These documents were now in the public domain as part of the discovery process in the legal proceedings.

One such file included debriefings of Pat Price about his CIA remote viewing projects. The debriefings were a detailed record of the intelligence objectives I had given Pat and results that Pat provided to me. The files revealed the meeting places as well as all the names of those present. My esteem instantly rose for my colleagues who had used first names only with all meetings with Pat! As the file made clear, Pat, who had signed an official secrecy agreement, would immediately go to his superior in the organization after sessions with me and divulge everything. As far as I know, the documents were never read by anybody who publicized them and the organization never used them.

With all the vicissitudes of investigating paranormal phenomena, I can look back on this period as a unique part of my career with guarded satisfaction. The project was fascinating and frustrating, in equal proportions. The times demanded a measured investigation that I helped to organize and manage. Others followed the CIA program with results that I will leave to history to judge. Me, I remain a skeptical agnostic. More skeptical as time advances, but careful to note that even if paranormal phenomena are entirely bogus, some individuals are surely able to instill the belief in unexplained capabilities. How they do this and what are the vulnerabilities to such enticements is worth knowing.

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