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PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Aims and Organization

The Parapsychological Association was created in 1957 and has been an affiliate member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) since 1969. The Association is a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Its membership is widely scattered across the United States and around the world. Collectively its members exist in the milieu of a variety of academic and related institutions with long honored traditions of scholarship. Many of its members occupy positions of leadership in science, public affairs, industry and academia.

The Association's Charter defines its mission as:

- * Advance parapsychology as a science.
- * Disseminate information about the field.
- * Integrate the findings of Parapsychology with those of the other branches of science.

Within the framework of these goals, the Parapsychological Association seeks to increase knowledge and gain a better understanding of humankind's psychic potential for awareness, communication and action. A primary emphasis of the membership involves investigation of the ability for human beings to interact with their environment without the use of currently recognized channels of information transmission. Although an emerging area of science, the guiding mission of the field is improvement in the quality of human life through greater scientific understanding of the developmental processes associated with the use of particular paranormal abilities. The overall objective of Parapsychology is to identify the psychic ways that people interact with their environment, understand how they work, and find useful, beneficial, and practical applications in the service of human needs.

EUROPEAN PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Continued from page 1

of occultism but in 1973 the DSPR succumbed and formed an alliance with an occult magazine; DSPR membership rose to 1,000. The NSPR and SSPR still have a scientific outlook and a restricted membership around 100 members each. For a time the University of Lund was the only higher institution of learning in Sweden that sponsored work in parapsychology, but during the seventies

research papers have been presented at the psychology departments of other universities.

A SURVEY ON NEGATIVE USES, GOVERNMENT INTEREST AND FUNDING OF PSI

by Charles T. Tart

Considerable concern has been expressed by some parapsychologists lately about the possible military uses of psi ability. This concern is partially based on assessments that the U.S.S.R. is not only conducting secret research on the development of military applications of psi, but that this military research is funded at high support levels such that significant progress on understanding and using psi is more likely in the U.S.S.R. than in the U.S.A.

Adequate assessment of this situation is difficult for several reasons. First, any estimate of what is happening with secret military research in the U.S.S.R. must involve considerable inference and conjecture. Second, there has been no collection of expert opinion in the U.S.A. as to whether psi can potentially be used for military purposes. Third, there has been little if any factual data on the actual level of support of parapsychological research in the U.S.A.

This paper is a survey of 1) expert opinion on the potential military uses of psi; 2) the degree to which the U.S. government has officially made inquiries about the field among experts in parapsychology; and 3) the level of funding of parapsychological research over the past five years.

In March of 1978 questionnaires were sent to individuals at 14 identifiable parapsychological research laboratories in this country. Criteria was that each individual had to be a full member of the PA who had been actively working and publishing in the field for the last five years. Each had to have at least one part-time colleague to qualify as a laboratory or center.

Results: Question 1: "How strongly do you believe that psi abilities might potentially be used in the future in a practically useful way for espionage and military intelligence activities?" No respondent considered espionage use of psi impossible or unlikely. Four considered it possible, five likely, and the remaining four considered it certain. Question 2: "How strongly do you believe that psi abilities might potentially be used in the future in a practically useful way by the military to harm, sicken or kill individuals?" No respondent considered this impossible, two thought it unlikely, seven possible, three likely and one certain. Question 3: "How strongly do you believe that psi abilities might potentially be used in the future in

a practically useful way by the military to physically interfere with the operation of physical equipment, such as computers, observation instruments, etc." No respondent thought this impossible, one thought it unlikely, seven possible, four likely and one certain. There is general consensus of these experts, then, that several military applications of psi are possible or even likely if enough development research were carried out.

Question 4: "Have you or one of your laboratory staff been approached by agents or officials of the U.S. government acting in an official capacity in the last five years, in order to gather information on parapsychology for any government agency." Eight respondents had never been approached, one had been once, and four had been approached several times. None had been frequently approached.

Total funds available per year for the entire group of respondents was \$552,000. The distribution of these funds was quite uneven: Individual yearly laboratory budgets ranged from no funds to \$150,000. While the mean level of yearly funding was \$42,500, the median level was \$17,000. That is, half the active research laboratories in the USA had yearly research budgets of less than \$17,000.

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, it is difficult accurately to assess the extent of the U.S.S.R.'s research effort in developing military applications of parapsychology. As to possible discrepancy in the size of research efforts in the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A., the budget data revealed in this survey indicate it would take but a tiny fraction of national resources for the U.S.S.R. to overshadow the U.S. research activity.

This is a condensation of a paper presented at the 21st Annual PA Convention at Washington University, St. Louis, Mo. August 8-12, 1978.

ADVOCACY BREEDS COUNTER-ADVOCACY

by Robert L. Morris

In recent months, many parapsychology researchers have been disturbed by the emergence of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICP). This committee, in its publications and media articles, appears to be serving as a counter-advocacy organization, attacking the positions advocated by astrologers, ufologists, etc., and parapsychologists. We become irate, because (a) we are being lumped together with groups who seem to us far less scientific than we are, and (b) CSICP itself seems to be presenting a biased, single-minded and