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18 August 1977

Headquarters  
U.S. Army Missile Research  
and Development Command  
Attn: DRDMI-YE, R. Clinton  
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama 35809

Dear Mr. Clinton:

To supplement our conversation today, let me take this opportunity to describe to you some of the history and our thoughts related to the research being conducted by Hal Puthoff and Russ Targ. Russ and Hal transferred from another division in SRI to ours and have been members of the Radio Physics Laboratory for approximately 10 months. At the time I agreed to undertake responsibility for their research I convened a group of six senior members of the staff of 150 that constitute this laboratory to review and discuss their work and its findings. Each of the six is cleared to levels where all of the material could be discussed. The meeting was held in an appropriate facility so that we could be assured that our discussions with Russ and Hal would not be fettered in any way. Although the meeting was planned for approximately one and one-half hours, it actually took over six. Throughout, the conversations were unrestricted, wide ranging, direct, and to the point. At the end of the discussions each of us had arrived at the conclusion that the data we had considered indicated that the phenomena being described are probably real, that they are completely outside the understanding afforded by conventional physics, and that research in this area should be continued. We all felt that the research should be conducted in a laboratory accustomed to operating in the realm of hard science; furthermore, we all felt that this laboratory, and I wish to stress that it is an operating laboratory, is an appropriate environment for the conduct of this research. Nothing that has occurred since that meeting has swayed us from these convictions.

As I am sure you are well aware, this area of research is, to say the least, unusual. We recognize that much of the previous work done elsewhere has been slipshod and that it has received sensational and irresponsible press. We believe that our research must be conducted with protocols that are as tight as possible and that are open to critical review by other qualified researchers before they are put into effect.

Most of the work that has been conducted by Hal and Russ in the past has been oriented toward satisfying client operational needs. Both Russ and Hal agree with those of us who are in supervisory and line-management roles that a strong and fundamental requirement exists--namely, the requirement to understand what is happening. Consistent with good scientific method, it is our view that the phenomenon or set of phenomena responsible for the observed data must be described in the terms of physics through the inductive process.

INCLOSURE 1

UNCLASSIFIED

R. Clinton

2

18 August 1977

It will then be appropriate to validate theory through subsequent deductive predictions that can be tested by further observation and experiment. It is only in this way that we can hope to achieve an understanding of what is happening. Furthermore, it is only in this way that we will be able to establish whether or not this field will yield results of value to you. If you are able to support a portion of this work being conducted in the manner that I have described, it is my belief that you will have contributed in an important area of research--an area that must be of concern to all of us.

I hope that these thoughts are of help to you. We will welcome your monitoring and helping to guide this research.

Very truly yours,



David A. Johnson  
Director  
Radio Physics Laboratory

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