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Of Spies and Psychics

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.... Project SCANATE ran from 1973 to 1975. Many of the gifted subjects who participated in the better-known Bay Area series of experiments were at the same time remote viewing for the CIA. Apparently hundreds of trials were done with targets as diverse as the location of Soviet submarines or meetings inside CIA headquarters. Ingo Swann's descriptions of Kergeulen Island (see page 117) and of an apparent missile site were part of this project.

How successful was SCANATE? The CIA was satisfied with the results. When they contracted an independent intelligence expert to evaluate the project, he concluded that SCANATE demonstrated ESP efficiently well to justify considering practical applications. He cautioned, however, that ESP was not sufficiently reliable to replace traditional methods of intelligence gathering, although it could supplement and guide them. More than this is difficult to say, since the official report on the project remains under a top-secret classification. As we noted in chapter 5, parapsychologists are continuing to do remote-viewing experiments, but these are mostly in the nature of pure science, devoid of any immediate utility. Yet, almost by definition, remote viewing implies practical applications just as soon as the method is sufficiently reliable. Perhaps the parties who are interested in practical applications of remote viewing are simply waiting for parapsychologists to refine the technique, or maybe they have already determined that it is useful but too important to leave in the hands of scientists outside of their agencies.

After SCANATE, remote viewing for both the Navy and the CIA continued for some years at SRI, until the researchers left for other positions. Parapsychology continues at SRI under the supervision of physicist Edwin May, and its scope has broadened beyond remote viewing to include "electronic perturbation techniques" (PK to the rest of us) and intuitive decision making (precognition). Its funding continues to come from unspecified government sources, at times as much as a couple of million dollars a year. Like many controversial topics, however, parapsychology is not always in favor in Washington.

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