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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR INTELLIGENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

DAMI-ISH

10 October 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR GRILL FLAME SCIENCE EVALUATION GROUP

SUBJECT: INSCOM Project (U)

1. (U) History.

* a. (S) Tasking: In the fall 1978, the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), Fort Meade, MD, was tasked to establish a program to examine potential use of psychoenergetics for intelligence purposes. Initially, specific interest has focused on that element now called Remote Viewing (RV). The INSCOM project (IGFP) has been and will be evolutionary in nature:

(1) Establish a training familiarization program utilizing specially selected INSCOM subjects (RVers).

(2) Establish RV intelligence collection techniques.

(3) Establish a system mechanism for responding to intelligence collection requirements (tasking by intelligence producers like DIA) so that RV-produced data is quickly and efficiently used.

b. (S) Selection of RVers:

(1) To accomplish the mission it was necessary to locate people who might possess requisite psychic talent. The approach here was to match a large body of candidates against a number of subjective traits observed by SRI over the years (an RVer profile).

(2) 251 INSCOM personnel in the Baltimore/Washington area were considered. 117 were interviewed in a "survey" which purported to determine attitudes about possible use of psychic phenomenon in intelligence collection.

CLASSIFIED BY ACSI DA
REVIEW ON 9 Oct 1999
REASON: 2-301c DOD 5200.1-R
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(3) IGFP managers/interviewers were alert for individuals who were: well thought of by peers and supervisors, above average intelligence, self-confident, articulate, adventurous, open-minded, career successful, mature, and "emotionally stable." Additionally, artistic ability was desirable. Those who displayed unreasonable enthusiasm for or against psychoenergetics were eliminated from consideration. Also culled were those who, for personal or professional reasons, were uncomfortable with the concept of collecting foreign positive intelligence by psychoenergetics.

c. (S) Lessons Learned During Selection Process:

(1) Of the 117 interviewed, 30-40 met the basic criteria outlined in paragraph 1b(3) above. However, it was impossible to reduce this number further based only on the RVer Profile. Another round of factoring down was done by application of a criterion based on assignment availability (relative permanence in the area). The number of candidates dropped to 12. The lesson here is that should an expansion of the IGFP be required, it will not be difficult to locate people who will do well in RV.

(2) More than 90% of all those interviewed considered psychic phenomena to be real, and of practical value.

2. (U) Training.

a. (S) At the time the IGFP began, SRI was the only major serious organization exploring psychoenergetics. INSCOM was directed to conclude with SRI, a contract which called for a certain number of RV specialists to undergo SRI familiarization training.

b. (S) In February 1979, SRI researchers intimately familiar with the subject matter selected six of the final twelve candidates to train. This phase began in April and is expected to end in December 1979. In-house familiarization and training at Fort Meade started in February 1979 and is expected to continue indefinitely.

c. (S) INSCOM has generally followed the RV protocol first established by SRI, with an orientation toward collection of foreign positive intelligence. (Note: The Army Surgeon General's Human Use Review Panel for GRILL FLAME found this protocol to be "technology transfer" rather than R&D.) As of 1 Oct 79, more than 150 RV tests have been conducted at Fort Meade. Project personnel assess the results as moderately successful. Some of the RV cadre now routinely provide useful intelligence data with the RV technique. These individuals have progressed far beyond so-called "beacon" and basic geographic coordinates work, and are now engaged against real world intelligence targets--a kind of OJT.

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d. (S) Lessons Learned During Training:

(1) There are a number of factors which appear to help successful RVerS. First, they must sense a "seriousness of purpose" for the on-hand task. Frivolous, coffee table tests seem to produce less usable data. The RVer must know and be motivated by the knowledge that his information is important, and that the reason for conducting a test goes beyond merely proving ("one more time") his ability to perform RV.

(2) The physical and social environment has a significant impact. The individual must feel that it is "OK" for him to perform this unique task; that he is not somehow considered an aberration or "kook." Physical surroundings must be comfortable, pleasing to the senses, and offer privacy, security, and quiet.

(3) If the RVer knows or believes that the viewing task is the most important event of his day, he is much more likely to develop good intelligence information. Outside influences (e.g., family problems, illness, job related conflicts) have detrimental effects on his ability to do well. The bottom line is that the RVer must be totally committed to achieving positive results and allowed to achieve absolute mental concentration.

(4) It cannot, at this point, be said that familiarization training improves one's ability in RV. The collective data shows no training improvements, possibly because the whole organization is in a learning curve. Individually, however, there is noticeable improvement in specific RV abilities following such training.

(5) All persons involved in doing RV say they feel that they have learned much about the "process"; and are beginning to be able to distinguish between relevant (presumably psychoenergetic) target impressions and noise (fantasy, "analytical overlay" or whatever).

(6) Experience shows that a major problem is lack of suitable physical space. The project's present location is such that high levels of noise influence or abort RV sessions. Also, due to lack of appropriate office space, operational flexibility has been somewhat constrained.

* (7) A serious problem surfaced during this phase: the availability of "Sunday hire" RVerS to engage in sessions. The IGFP essentially operates on an ad hoc basis, with little or no promise of even minimal permanence. Existence or demise of the IGFP in fact rests on which way the winds that

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control scarce resources (time, funds, and people) blow. All RVer have other, normal duties in their parent organizations. As might be expected, this leads to considerable scheduling conflicts. Because IGFP enjoys what amounts to second priority, sessions are often cancelled or are impossible to schedule. It is fair to say that this issue has hindered progress and has been dysfunctional to the RV process itself. The latter point is that the RVer finds it difficult to muster requisite positive attitude and "seriousness of purpose," knowing that RV tasks rank below those of his primary duties.

3. (S) Operations. Introduction of the RV process into actual operations has been accomplished several times. This is not to say that the IGFP is ready for full operational employment. A great deal of further work is necessary to establish intelligence collection techniques. Also, no mechanical system for responding to tasking exists. Optimistically, some operational utility can be expected in 1981. First utilization of this special technique will most likely be along the lines of tip-off (or cueing) to other collection systems. These could then be brought to bear on the target of interest. RFO?

4. (U) Comments.

a. (S) By common sense and disciplined procedures, the IGFP has come as close to producing scientifically credible results (without trying to) as any previous work by so-called scientists/researchers. We should not lose sight of the fact that INSCOM is not engaged in a venture into science, but rather one of a utility nature. Personnel involved are professional intelligence officers representing the three major disciplines: human, photo, and signal intelligence.

b. (S) Notably, the IGFP gauges how good individual sessions are based on strict operational judgments (how much usable intelligence is produced). This is in stark contrast to projects in other places which rely on exotic, often flawed, statistical methodologies to evaluate the results.

c. (S) The body of wisdom being accumulated is not grounded on stagnant repetitions of the basic SRI RV drill first developed in the early 1970s. It is impressive that the project is moving into type tests in which several iterations (they call it "building an intelligence pyramid") on the same target seem to provide a more accurate, detailed picture of the site.

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d. (S) Data on each session is impeccably maintained. In addition, the managers have developed several visual tools that lay out clearly the numbers of failures, successes and in-betweens. One is not forced to guess, or have to pry out, what has gone on at INSCOM.

5. (U) Recommendations:


* a. (S) The current level of personnel assets should be immediately stabilized for at least two years. Intelligence analysts should be a direct part of the effort. Because of disruptions caused by TDY trips, other job commitments, etc., personnel involved in GRILL FLAME should be fixed into some organization configuration controlled by the project officer. (Note: It is only fair to recognize that one cannot spend his whole day doing RV. Common sense should prevail and whenever possible project personnel should be released to work wherever needed.)

b. (U) An adequate work and administrative area is needed. It should meet the general criteria established in paragraphs 2d(2)(6) above.

* c. (S) Because of the uniqueness and sensitivity of the project, extraordinary measures should be established, followed, and inspected, to ensure that those individuals involved in the project do not lose career standing in relation to peers. For example, a general officer review of all OERs and EERs appears to be warranted. There is no small danger that an individual's career, particularly under the present ad hoc personnel situation, might be irreparably damaged by rating officials who feel robbed of control of people under their supervision.

d. (S) Regardless of the apparent near-term potential offered by RV, the INSCOM's project status should remain one of familiarization and training. The work should not be prematurely thrust into the operational arena. For the next two years INSCOM should be permitted the "luxury" of tightening up procedures and attempting product improvement. The project should have, should it be needed, support of any resources within DOD. An example might be USAF support in development and analyzing intelligence targets.

e. (U) INSCOM is to be commended for its logical, level headed and professional approach to a most curious problem.


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