

THIS WEEK

Strange case of the psychic 'spy'

SCIENTISTS from the Soviet Academy of Sciences are showing exceptional interest in psychic research being conducted by a controversial Californian whose work is treated with scepticism in the US. The Soviet Union's interest may have more to do with possible military applications than pure science, although this is denied by the researcher, Russell Targ, who has just returned from a second scientific trip to Moscow.

Targ, a laser physicist, left a psychic research centre in California in 1982 because its work was increasingly dominated by military considerations. He says he has begun a series of joint experiments with scientists in the USSR involving a concept called remote viewing.

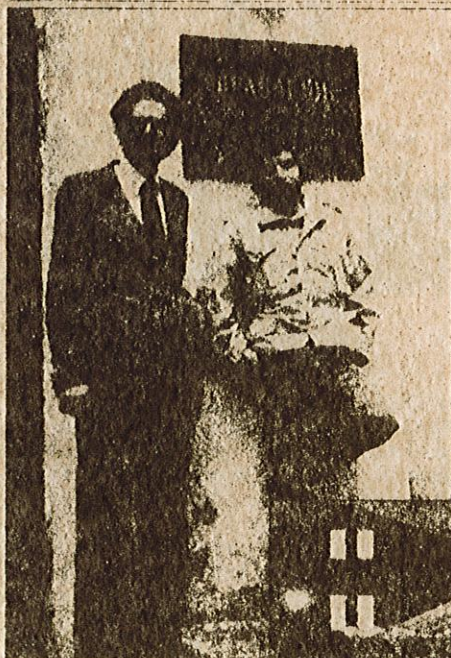
According to its supporters, remote viewing is the ability of a person to accurately describe locations, events, and objects from which he is separated by space and time. Experiments normally involve a "psychic" attempting to describe the physical location of another person, called a "beacon". Psychics can also supposedly "see" inside buildings and even penetrate filing cabinets and water.

Remote viewing is part of what has been dubbed the "psychic arms race". Sceptics claim this is little more than an elaborate plot to keep the other side engaged in what amounts to futile research.

In theory, remote viewers could view enemy installations and secret files. According to Targ, the technique might one day help verify nuclear-proliferation treaties.

Remote viewing was devised by Targ and Harold Puthoff at the privately run Stanford Research Institute (SRI). It has been replicated in laboratories throughout the world, Targ says. His critics claim that the research does not stand up to rigorous scrutiny in controlled laboratory experiments.

Ian Anderson, San Francisco



Targ and Harary in Moscow. Pier 39, San Francisco. Did they 'view' from there?

However, the Soviet Union is certainly intrigued by Targ.

This may be because of Targ's former association with SRI, which received \$500 000 a year for 12 years from the defence department to conduct psychic research. Targ left when the emphasis switched from pure research to military applications.

Targ has formed a company called Delphi Associates, with two partners, Anthony White, a businessman, and Keith Harary, a psychologist and another SRI renegade. "We wanted to get out of the institutional restrictions of SRI, so we could talk to scientific colleagues and to the public," says Harary, who claims to have psychic abilities.

A book by Targ and Harary, *The Mind Race*, has sold 30 000 copies and will be published in Britain next spring.

"The Russians are curious about what Targ knows," says Martin Ebon, a parapsychologist and watcher of Soviet affairs. "Their whole intelligence operation is a gigantic vacuum cleaner. Russell Targ is caught up in that vacuum cleaner."

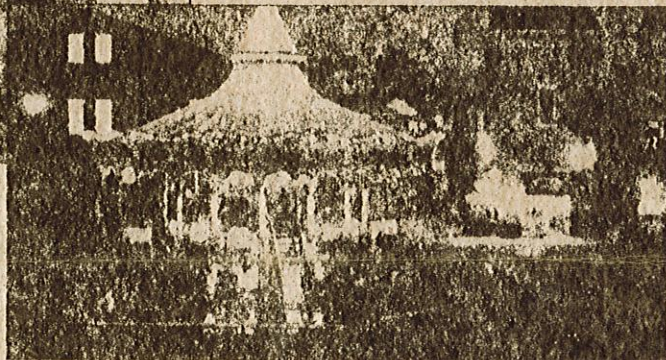
Ebon, who is author of another recent book called *Psychic Warfare: Threat or Illusion?*, suggests that remote viewing is part of a long-running Russian interest in mind control. "The Soviets consider the human brain an electromechanical instrument they can do something with," he said.

Larissa Vilenskaya, who worked at the bioinformation laboratory of the Popov Institute in the Soviet Union until it was

closed in 1975, writes in Targ's book that "official Soviet scientists are interested in using [psychic powers] primarily to develop extended means for mental influence at a distance".

Ebon says that Vilenskaya's laboratory was closed by the KGB, which then split Soviet psychic research into about 20 different institutes around the country. Ebon speculates that morose behaviour by President Carter in 1979 after he returned from a meeting in Vienna with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev may have been caused by mind control.

Targ denies that he is being used by the USSR. He claims that scientists in the USSR are genuinely interested in explaining and understanding remote viewing, rather than using it for the manipulation of behaviour. Targ is working with the theoretical problems department of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow.



"We're looking for the physical correlates that relate psychic functioning to the rest of physics," he told *New Scientist*.

Targ claims that the military uses of psychic ability are trivial when compared with its uses for increased human awareness. He says there is no suggestion of military application "in my dealings with the Soviets".

Targ went to the USSR in September 1983 with Harary and was told that the Armenian Academy of Sciences had duplicated his work on remote viewing.

He has just returned from a second trip and will go again in February. The latest trip was financed by an organisation based in Minneapolis called Project 37, which Targ describes as a private foundation interested in consciousness research.

Targ was accompanied by his daughter, Elisabeth, a medical student at Stanford University who is fluent in Russian—she acted as translator in what Targ claims was a "landmark" in remote-viewing experiments that spanned 16 000 kilometres.

This experiment involved a psychic healer, Djuna Davitashvili, who treated Brezhnev during the last two years of his life. From her living room she allegedly described in detail a merry-go-round on pier 39 in San Francisco, where Harary was "hiding". She is said to have started the description six hours before Harary got there. Targ says that a testimonial verifying the research procedures was obtained ▶

OBSERVER David Austin

OKAY GENTLEMEN, ONE
RAP FOR YES, TWO FOR NO



... a biophysicist from the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

"You cannot conclude anything on the basis of one experiment," said Paul Kurtz, chairman of The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP). "To know if this woman had precognitive powers would require many tests over time."

There is no love lost between Targ and CSICOP. He refused to attend its recent meeting on his doorstep at Stanford and called it a "cranky group of non-scientists" (last issue, p 9).

The meeting condemned recent reports that a psychic arms race is in progress. Some of the exotic weapons being researched by the Soviet Union, according to those reports, are a "hyperspace nuclear howitzer" in which a nuclear explosion triggered in the Soviet Union would be directed towards the US by mental force and a "photon barrier modulator" which would induce illness or even death by telepathy.

The Pentagon denies that it is funding any psychic research. But Ebon says that the Radio Physics Laboratory at SRI is still conducting remote-viewing experiments which may have a military purpose.

The syndicated journalist Jack Anderson, recently reported that SRI is involved in a CIA project code-named "Grill Flame". A psychic at SRI's headquarters in Menlo Park, California, was said to have been given the coordinates of a Soviet nuclear testing area at Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. His description included a gantry and crane that were revealed by later spy-satellite photographs.

In another case, a psychic was said to have given the CIA the location in Africa of a downed Soviet bomber. □

Soviet scientists attack 'chemical war' in Brazil

A SOVIET academician and ecologist, Igor Petrianov-Solokov, has accused the US of conducting "virtual chemical war" in Brazil, where defoliants have been sprayed to clear 2400 square kilometres of rainforest around the site of a new hydro-electric power station. Petrianov-Solokov alleged that 7000 people have died, two Indian tribes have been exterminated, and 25 000 animal and plant species put "on the verge of extinction" in the Amazon basin by defoliants supplied by the American firm Dow Chemicals.

This accusation is the latest move in what appears to be a concerted campaign by the Soviet Union to blame the US for the tragic results of Brazil's ill-conceived and badly managed defoliation programme.

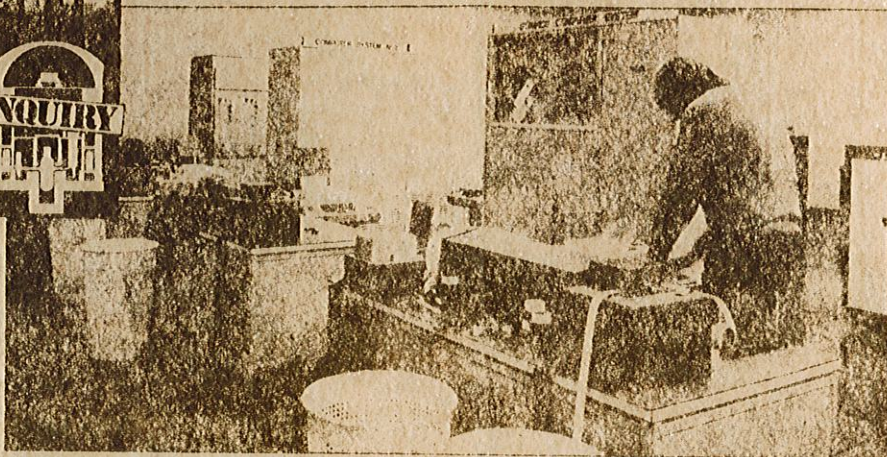
Soviet allegations of American involvement, however, seem to rest solely on Dow's role as a supplier and the fact that Dow previously provided the defoliants used in Vietnam.

Nevertheless, Brazilian officials and environment groups are concerned about the effects of the defoliants that cleared land for the 4000-MW Tucurui hydro-electric power station and dam, the fourth biggest in the world (*New Scientist*, 11 October, p 10).

Originally, the contract to remove trees

Mistakes that mirrored Three Mile Island

Roger Milne, Snape



AN INCIDENT at Heysham 1 nuclear power station has forced the Central Electricity Generating Board to make an urgent review of procedures in its control rooms at other nuclear stations. Operators at Heysham failed to respond when data and alarm displays registered higher than average temperatures in reactor-fuel channels.

The incident happened in June, during the commissioning of the advanced gas-cooled reactor but before fuel had been loaded. A report from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, requested by the Sizewell B public inquiry, concludes that the event "revealed weaknesses in procedure, ergonomics and human performance" in the control room.

This revelation comes at an awkward time for the generating board, which has been assuring the Sizewell hearing that it

Computer controls at Heysham: warnings went in the bin

has learnt the lessons of the Three Mile Island accident in the United States.

The postmortem on that accident, the worst ever at a nuclear power station, laid most of the blame for the ensuing chaos on bad layout in the control room, confusing alarm systems and poorly trained operators. Embarrassingly for the board, most of these elements were present in the Heysham incident.

Two special units which simulate the flow of gas in fuel channels proved faulty. Blanking plates fell to the bottom of the fuel channels and their absence was not noticed or checked when the units were withdrawn.

When fuel was later loaded, the channels registered "anomalous readings", but no action was taken. When the reactor went critical, alarms showed that the two channels were registering higher than average temperatures at the gas outlets. Again, these warnings were missed by the operators. Half-an-hour later, when a computer-assisted scan highlighted the abnormal temperatures, checks were finally made and the reactor shut down manually.

The original alarms appeared both on a screen on the reactor engineer's desk and as part of a Major Cause Alarm display.

The generating board has set up a working party to review "urgently" the implications of the accident. Control room procedure has already been reassessed. And the board will now exercise stricter control of the equipment and components used for commissioning.

The inspector's report points out that although an incident occurred which combined "procedural and human errors", the problem was detected and corrected safely "in a way that the commissioning procedures anticipate". At the very worst, possible fuel damage would have been contained inside the reactor's pressure circuit.

The Sizewell B hearing has yet to learn in detail about the hardware and software proposals for the control room for Sizewell. There has also been considerable concern that, up to now, the board has not included human error as part of its overall risk analysis for the reactor. □

from the area to be flooded and along transmission routes was awarded to the military pension fund Capemi, which had no experience of such work. The fund eventually went bankrupt, abandoning men and equipment in the forest. The Brazilian congress is now investigating the way in which the contract was awarded.

In February Joao Bastos, Secretary of Agriculture in Para state, where the power station is sited, began investigating reports of deaths and miscarriages along the cleared transmission routes. He accused Electronorte, the utility responsible for the power plant, of ignoring the dangers which could arise from empty chemical drums abandoned in the forest. Local people had been storing food and water in them.

Bastos had also asked that plans to flood areas of forest to create the lake behind Tucurui Dam should be postponed until full chemical drums had been retrieved from the area. But the flooding went ahead nevertheless in September.

While Brazilian scientists are concerned that this might spread the contamination to other areas, *Soviet Weekly*, pursuing its anti-American campaign, reported on 3 November that the flooding was carried out "presumably in the hope of washing away the evidence".

Judith Perera

21 NOV 84

yellow - c

triangular shape

outside

inside c

red - c

blue c

around - c

round +
sliver + white

object - c

^c #04) like a dish

black -
black field - c

tiny CFB

beautiful - c

^c aol pms

green - c

(made correct
hand gesture)

texture - c

angular + lumpy - c

^c aol corroded.

elegant c

regular textures - c

glossy - c

yellow Background - c

round object c & B.

crosses textures

^c
abl rock

man made c

sculpted - c

old - c

antique c

has a figure - c

handle sticks up.

metallic c

design - c

Italian or
Rococo

green - c

it is green -

sculpture - c

golden sculpture - c

strange - CFB

^c
AOL ASIETC

figure made of gold
sculpted - c

27C
DATA

5C
AOL

12 IN-C

some thing suspended c
heat

^c
AOL chandelier

people c
agony

^c
AOL (museum) with
airplanes

more than one

there is only one c

^c
AOL (photograph
of person)

man

woman-c

suspended - c
something

this is work

green.

curving up on both sides - c

symmetrical c

white .c

^c
AOL regions

sort of a down thing in it

(^c Technical) AOL?

people looking - pc.

inside c

equipment

3D quality
goes in

^c
AOL RR Tracks

modern c

sleek designed

ed c
black c
round c

outer space - AOL STARS

brown - c
+ red - c

earthen

^cAOL - underground.
place

yellow - c
(^cpattern) with colors

people c
people doing something ^c

black figures

blue

motion implicit - c

moving if real - c

^cAOL entertainment

^cAOL roller coaster.

curvilinear - c

going in curve c

its outside - AOL

Example of progress in GENERAL ANALYTICS development.

Goal: to be able to identify a picture or a photograph in a short space of time. ALL AOLS must be identified by the viewer. The proportion of erroneous perceptions must be very minimal compared to the correct perceptions.

In a short space of time, the process should result in a near-exact match.

This particular sample is the 10th trial where IS is the developer viewer, and JT is the session monitor.

24 NOV 84

5:15
pm.

(1)

yellow c

lots of yellow c

black shape - c

simple picture - c

purple or dark

shape more vertical c
than wide

roundness in it. c

seems to be a single thing

blue - c

roundness to this

going out
radiating c

something rippling

central focus c

angles - c

not beautiful sunset

not black mammie

not of a face

not of woman with
hair standing up.

not of water

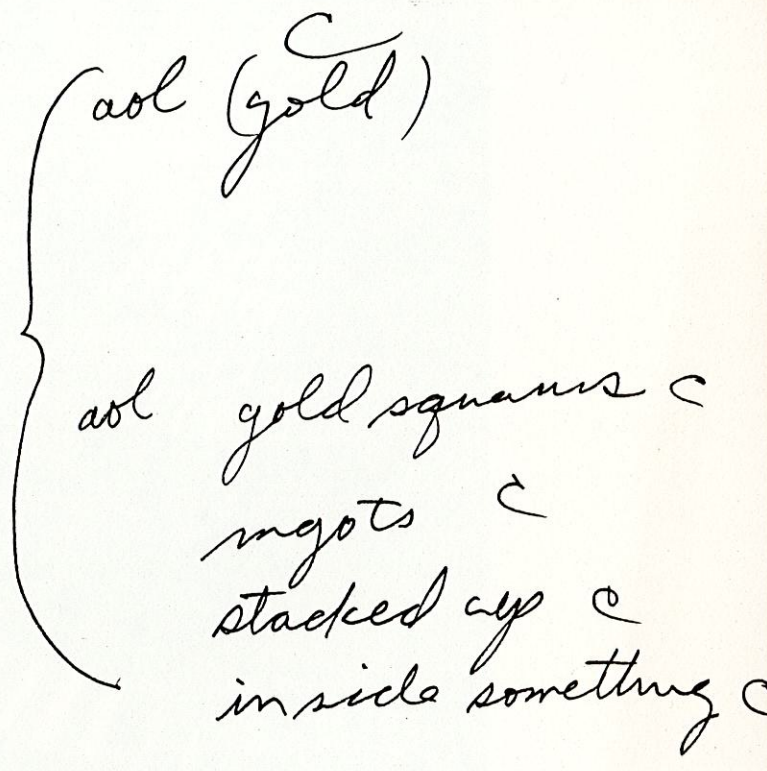
italic - c

+ type of machine (that's a guess)

yellow - c

different kinds of gold.

Match





24 NOV 84

5:15
pm.

(1)

yellow c

lots of yellow c

black shape - c

simple picture - c

purple or dark

shape more vertical c
than wide

roundness in it. c

seems to be a single thing

blue - c

roundness to this

going out
radiating c

something rippling

central focus c

angles - c

not beautiful sunset

not black mammie

not of a face

not of woman with
hair standing up.

not of water

metallic - c

+ type of machine (that's a guess)

yellow - c

different kinds of gold.

Match

