SECRET

17 October 73

MEMO FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT Proposal for Paranormal Research at SRI

1. On 16 October 73 [redacted] of OTS briefed [redacted] and me on a proposal which (as a consequence of a specific OTS request) SRI had just submitted for a new, one year program of paranormal research. The proposal (attached) calls, essentially, for a continuation of their 'coordinates' work with SWANN and PRICE, their 'sealed envelopes' work with GELLER and their EEG studies with 'normal' subjects to determine whether there are subliminal correlations with remote stimuli; most of the attached proposal consists of a rehash of their earlier work--with the substance of the new proposal being contained in pages 40-44 of the larger document. The price tag is 149K.

2. On 17 October [redacted] called me to state that, largely in response to D/OTS' desire to ensure that someone is doing something in the paranormal field and to use the SRI proposal as a test case to spark a management decision, they are going to start paperwork in support of the SRI proposal. He also said that his boss, C/OTS/Development & Engineering [redacted] is going to forward the proposal to D/OTS with the recommendation that OTS and ORD be jointly in charge of the program and split the costs. I told [redacted] that I had both practical and philosophic reservations on that score (see para 3) but that I would undertake to acquaint ORD management with these developments so that they could be prepared to respond when the proposal is officially surfaced.

3. With reference to my 26 September 73 memo on this topic, my primary objections to this proposal are: it would be a continuation of the same undisciplined approach which has given us so much trouble in the past, with no well-defined research goals, no internal focal-point of authority and control, little control over the contractor's efforts and almost certainly equivocal results; an objective management decision should come first and, if positive, the effort should be a serious one--selecting the best (not merely an opportune) vehicle for the postulated goals and handled in a highly secure, need-to-know fashion. I do not question the SRI investigators' motivation at all and I do feel that their work has been interesting and very possibly of some real value--but there is some doubt as to the soundness of some of their methodologies and, in any case, the controversy surrounding them and their subjects still has a 'flap' potential which would unnecessarily preoccupy and distract us even if the DCI gave his approval (which is doubtful at best). SRI's efforts could be supported on a sub-contract basis by whatever vehicle we might chose for the overall effort--leaving us securely out of the picture.

4. Comments:

a. [redacted] agree entirely with your ¶3. in spite of the fact that we do need to address the paranormal problem. Also, very expensive for [redacted]

b. [redacted]