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CONTACTS:

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New York, N. Y., or Menlo Park, Calif. --Stanford Research Institute (SRI) has issued the following statement in connection with its research in the field of psychic or psychoenergetic effects:

"Our scientists have drawn no conclusions as to the nature, or indeed the existence of psychical powers. They are prepared to suggest only that further investigation of this subject is warranted and that it is a legitimate subject for scientific inquiry.

"Any published reports to the contrary are clearly a distortion of the facts.

"For the past several months a team of researchers has been seeking to determine whether so-called psychic phenomena--presently not explained by science--can be verified by experiments performed under rigorous laboratory conditions.

"Throughout mankind's history there has existed a folklore that certain gifted individuals have been capable of producing physical effects by means of some agency generally referred to as psychic or psychoenergetic. Substantiation of such claims by accepted scientific methodology has been slow in coming, but recent laboratory experiments, especially in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia,

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and more recently in our own laboratory, have indicated that sufficient evidence does exist to warrant serious scientific investigation.

"From the evidence it would appear that experiments could be conducted with sufficient scientific rigor to uncover not just a catalog of interesting events, but rather a pattern of cause-effect relationships of the type that lend themselves to analysis and hypothesis in the forms with which we are familiar in the physical sciences.

"As scientists we consider it important to examine various models describing the operation of these effects so that we can determine the relationship between extraordinary human functioning and the physical and psychological laws we presently understand. It is not the purpose of our work at SRI to add to the literature another demonstration of the statistical appearance of these phenomena in the laboratory, but rather we seek to achieve an understanding more compatible with contemporary science, and more useful to mankind.

"The work at SRI is only in its preliminary stages.

"We are well aware that this area of research is one of the most controversial topics in modern science, in part because of its history of charlatanism and fraud.

"However, we do not feel that controversy should deter us from what we believe is a legitimate subject for scientific inquiry.

"Our work is being performed within the framework of a research organization dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and its application rather than from a position of advocacy."

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"Our role in this area, as in all other areas of research we undertake, is to be neutral and objective.

"Questions raised about the background of subjects with whom we have worked have been taken into account.

"Our scientists are well aware that many persons who claim psychic abilities can seem to have extraordinary powers while actually employing only sophisticated deception.

"We do not discount or minimize the possibility of trickery. Indeed, we proceed on the assumption that any subject could seek to circumvent laboratory safeguards and try to fool our researchers.

"Whenever it was felt that any experiment could have been influenced by trickery or subterfuge--whether we had any proof of that or not--that experiment was summarily dismissed from consideration.

"On that basis, we feel our work should be judged on its merits. If there is an area here that can be explored to the benefit of mankind, it should be explored without prejudice."

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