University of Pittsburgh

A Memorandum to My Colleagues in Biological Science Concerning

Progress Toward a Juncture Between Psychology and Physics.

R. A. McConnell. November 1983.

As most of you know, for the last 36 years I have been engaged with others in an attempt to bring into working contact the fields of psychology and physics--not at the level of instrumentation but in terms of energy, information, and consciousness. It has been my belief that only by the modification of fundamental philosophic conceptions can the phenomena of extrasensory perception and psychokinesis be made a part of the Western world view of reality.

For most of this time I have been quietly experimenting and thinking. About a decade ago I began to assemble the understanding I had gained into a written form that I hoped would be acceptable even to those scientists who, up to now, have rejected the possibility of so-called "parapsychological" phenomena.

This integration and refinement of ideas received an impetus in 1972 when, in response to a student petition, I was invited by the dean of the College to teach an undergraduate-level course in parapsychology. This, in turn, required the study of historical and exotic aspects of the field for which previously, as a physicist trained in electronic engineering, I had found little time.

Five years ago I began the preparation of three books for the purpose of presenting my understanding of parapsychology and with the hope of bringing order to this chaotic field. These books, titled Encounters with Parapsychology, Parapsychology and Self-Deception in Science, and An Introduction to Parapsychology in the Context of Science, have now been published and can be purchased at the University of Pittsburgh Book Store.

On the back cover of the third book I have said that it is written "for students of science and for teachers of the humanities." "Why not for scientists?", you may ask. What I have found is that competent scientists today have no time for the consideration of facts of science outside their own areas unless those facts have been certified as genuine by consensual authority. In other words, scientists today cannot afford to explore the unknown except in their own specialties. I accept this, not with disapproval, but as a consequence of the complexity of knowledge.

Within the last five years, with the assistance of Thelma Clark, I have made what we suspect may be seminal advances toward a theoretical understanding of parapsychological phenomena. These discoveries are described in Chapters 14 and 15 of An Introduction to Parapsychology in the Context of Science. Because this work has just been published, it is too soon to ask about peer response. Some time may elapse before these chapters are fully accepted, even by other parapsychologists. Hence, I cannot reasonably expect you to spend much of your time on their consideration.

There is another part of my third book, however, that I think all of you might enjoy and approve, namely, Chapters 17, "Scientific Theory," and 18, "Progress in Science." These chapters were written to fill what I see as a gap in our undergraduate curricula.

Although my books are available in the bookstore, it will be my pleasure to lend copies to you if you find them missing from our library.

With this onerous publication task behind me, I hope to devote my remaining years to the experimental elucidation of the conceptions I have helped create.