

THE GUARDIAN Newspaper

Wednesday 29th August, 1984, page 11

THE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM THAT NOBODY HEEDS.

Article by Keith Hearne.

Hearne, K. M. T. (1984) The early warning system that nobody heeds.
The Guardian. Wed. 29th Aug. p. 11.

The early warning system that nobody heeds

SECOND OPINION

AS SOON AS I sat on the lumber ferry one evening a few years ago, I knew with absolute certainty that some outward event was going to happen on that trip. It was an amazing and totally unexpected feeling which I have experienced the same way since. Should the ship's master be informed? I felt a great curiosity as I sat there mentally noting anything that would float in case the worst happened. Some 200 yards off the other side of the river, the ferry was over-

luggage, cry of the overboard had fallen from the vessel. It was dark, and after 20 minutes of what seemed destined to be fruitless searching, a man was seen, dragged aboard, and resuscitated. His large coat had probably just kept him afloat. I had been with many times previously with

out any such feeling, so the "coincidence" or "premonition" was particularly marked.

Before that date, I had performed and published several parapsychological

experiments which used sophisticated electronic equipment for measuring brain activity but with mixed results. They had been conducted in the highly artificial environment of the psychological laboratory. Here though, in the real world, appeared to be a genuine psychic event. That single incident was the only successful stimulus to research into the field of premonitions.

Fear of ridicule

On investigation it became obvious that remarkable premonitions happen to a very large number of people — although the experiences are not often reported beyond the family or a few close friends — perhaps because of fear of ridicule. The result, unfortunately, is a general lack of interest in the phenomenon.

You don't have to look far to find cases. Lesley Brennan, the niece of Frieda Bremer, an incredible premonition of the 1974 Flixborough chemical-plant explosion, which resulted in 28 deaths and hundreds of injuries. She had been watching television at

mid-day when she saw a newscast giving details of the explosion. Two reliable witnesses were informed shortly afterwards. The actual explosion did not occur until some five hours later. It has now become clear that the "media announcement" type of waking premonition is a genuine phenomenon which may be in the form of a television or radio phenomenon, or a newspaper placard that is seen before the event.

Sometimes there is an intriguing consistency in the latency period between premonition and fulfilment. Three weeks before the assassination of President Sadat of Egypt, I dreamed that a Middle East country some soldiers ran up to a row of dignitaries and shot at them. She has had several other apparently premonitory dreams exactly three weeks before the real events, including the assassination attempt on Parkers in Saigon.

Perhaps in the past, the information I received telepathically in some manner, since it presumably exists at that time in the minds of the perpetrators. But the Flixborough case was a completely unexpected event and could

perhaps have involved genuine premonition. Consider also one of many writings by experimenter Miriam Bentin. In 1980, he linked to "premonition enhancing machines" might provide warning of nuclear attack much sooner than any radar system.

One recent study looked at female gender, with the predominant, with the biological determinant of receptivity, from an entirely to fore-warnings, especially in mothers rearing young, could confer a distinct survival advantage to a species — bearing in mind that most premonitions concern very unpleasant events. Another indicator of such a connection is the fact that women who had their first premonition before the age of 21 produced (looking at those past child-bearing age) more children than is usual. The association may be spurious, but taking the evolutionary notion of "fitness" into account, further human development, young female perceptives might have avoided catastrophes

identified. One half con-

Bentin recognised, the strange occurrence as a premonition and sent a written account of it to an MP friend in London, by express post. The letter arrived on the very day of the ill-fated American features of the premonition which appeared not to be correct at the time, were revealed to be part of the planned mission some time later.

Just a few experiences these, but hundreds of thousands of other equally interesting cases exist in Britain. No wonder that several intelligence services show an

interest in, and actively support, experimentation into aspects of parapsychology — including premonitions. Gifted perceptives, perhaps enhancing machines, might provide warning of nuclear attack much sooner than any radar system.

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cerned death, a third foresaw unpleasant events, and the rest had to do with pleasant or neutral happenings. The victims in the premonitions might be either known or unknown to the percipient.

Proper recognition

The link of premonitions, predominantly, with the female gender, points to some biological determinant of receptivity, from an entirely to fore-warnings, especially in mothers rearing young, could confer a distinct survival advantage to a species — bearing in mind that most premonitions concern very unpleasant events. Another indicator of such a connection is the fact that women who had their first premonition before the age of 21 produced (looking at those past child-bearing age) more children than is usual. The association may be spurious, but taking the evolutionary notion of "fitness" into account, further human development, young female perceptives might have avoided catastrophes

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such as famine, disease, and war, using premonitory abilities, then subsequently replicated the numbers of the group more rapidly than would otherwise have been the case. According to this expectation, though, one would expect that there are a very large-scale disaster among female perceptives, would exhibit odd behaviour — such as "going missing."

Of course, some apparent premonitions are explicable — along with many others — by chance. Say, intuitively guessing. But there exist so many outstanding cases that the area cries out for a proper systematic study. It seems that private and military sources of funding are now giving the proper recognition to premonitions that professional psychologists have unduly failed to provide.

Dr Keith Hearne is a psychologist who has researched into aspects of parapsychology as well as sleep and dreams. He would welcome full reports of premonitions to the editor, at PO Box 64, Hull HU1 2EL.

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