

Synopsis for 'Ministry of the Mind' **by Mark Allen and Ben Steiner**

Logline:

Eccentric former US Army General Lewis Brunswick has been employed to train a group of British army recruits in his unorthodox psychic operations techniques. The aim, is to harness the power of the soldiers' minds to stay one step ahead of the war on terror. Are his controversial policies of "Mindkrieg" the work of a genius or is he simply a nutter?

Series Outline:

In Brogden Moor military base, the Ministry of Defence are housing a top-secret experimental warfare facility. In a new initiative to combat terror, a group of three British army recruits are being trained in "Mindkrieg" – a mysterious brand of psychic operations pioneered by former US Army General Lewis Brunswick. He claims that instead of using bombs to destroy the enemy, he can train the recruits to use the power of their minds to do it instead.

By the end of the training, it is envisaged that the recruits will be able to walk through walls, speak to animals in order to harness their spying capabilities, confuse the enemy by forcing them to think in Spanish, spy on enemies from the comfort of their own toilet and cause people's hearts to explode, just by staring at them.

Unfortunately, not everyone involved is as optimistic as the enigmatic Brunswick. Are his theories of "MindKrieg" the work of an eccentric genius, or is he a complete loon? Major Penge of the British Army clearly thinks the latter, though he is constantly reminded that he is duty bound to support the project and grudgingly has to lend his assistance to even the most ridiculous of plans.

The recruits; Campbell, Leeming and Spraggott, were volunteered for the "Mindkrieg" programme by their superiors, who clearly just wanted to offload them onto someone else. They are initially open-minded about the project, but confidence wanes after a series of bizarre training exercises in which they unsuccessfully attempt to walk through walls and try to gain valuable information from animals in the local zoo. It is only when an exercise in 'remote peeping' proves to be surprisingly successful that each of the recruits start to believe that there could be some truth to the theories of "Mindkrieg" after all.

Major Penge receives an unexpected call from his superiors who demand a demonstration of Brunswick's revolutionary techniques to justify the continued funding of Brogden Moor. If the Campbell, Leeming and Spraggott fail to impress with their new psychic operation skills, the MoD will finally close it down for good.

Despite his crushing cynicism toward the whole project, Major Penge is forced to work with Brunswick and the recruits in order to try and save his job at Brogden Moor – even if it means cheating to do it. In the end, the demonstration proves to be amazingly successful. Is it all a hoax or do Brunswick's techniques really work?

The Characters

Lewis Brunswick is in his early fifties and speaks with a soft-spoken Californian lilt. Formerly a General in a secret branch of the US Army's special operations division, he was dismissed in unspecified circumstances and now works as a freelance consultant, teaching some of the techniques he pioneered there. He is an eccentric Frisbee-playing hippy idealist who, although he never overtly proves that he can harness the power of his mind, whole-heartedly believes in his ability to train others to do so. Brunswick has now been contracted to train a group of British army recruits.

Major Penge is in his early sixties and speaks with a clipped upper class tone. He has been based at Brogden Moor for the last forty years co-ordinating research into experimental warfare. He strongly believes that the future of warfare lies in the paws and hooves of hybrid animals trained to kill, and continually strives to perfect this research. The Mindkrieg project comes as an unwelcome distraction from his true passion and he believes that Lewis Brunswick is a fraud. Although he is duty bound to fully support Brunswick in the ridiculous training exercises, he takes every available opportunity to undermine him.

Eric Gough is in his early seventies and speaks with a light Cornish drawl. He has been the cleaner at the Brogden Moor for over forty years and in that time he has witnessed a wide range of obscure experiments conducted by Major Penge, so nothing surprises him any more. He continues to perform his duties with a quiet diligence partly due to a love of his job and partly through his perceived special relationship with Major Penge.

Ian Spraggott is a nineteen year old working class Londoner who has only just joined the army as a private. He is cocky and constantly crosses the line of over-familiarity with his superiors, but is essentially charming with it. Ian sees the project as a much better alternative to being shouted at on the parade ground, so is willing to play along with the experiments.

Leonard Leeming is in his early thirties and speaks with a nasal whine that often irritates his colleagues. Leonard is highly intelligent and has already done a lot of research into Mindkrieg, which he often quotes back to the others and attempts to prove by asking pertinent questions. Leeming is keenly supportive of the project (sometimes too keenly) and is excited by the prospect of taking the techniques further than even Lewis Brunswick has previously considered.

Helen Campbell is in her early forties and speaks aggressively with a broad Scottish accent. She has seen a lot of military action and, although she doesn't discuss it, it is intimated that she has killed a lot of people - mainly with her thumbs. Campbell is the most sceptical of the recruits when it comes to Mindkrieg, but is always willing to consider new ways to expand her impressive arsenal of killing methods.

Gary is a hybrid goat-man-albatross created by Major Penge. He speaks like a permanently confused old Etonian.