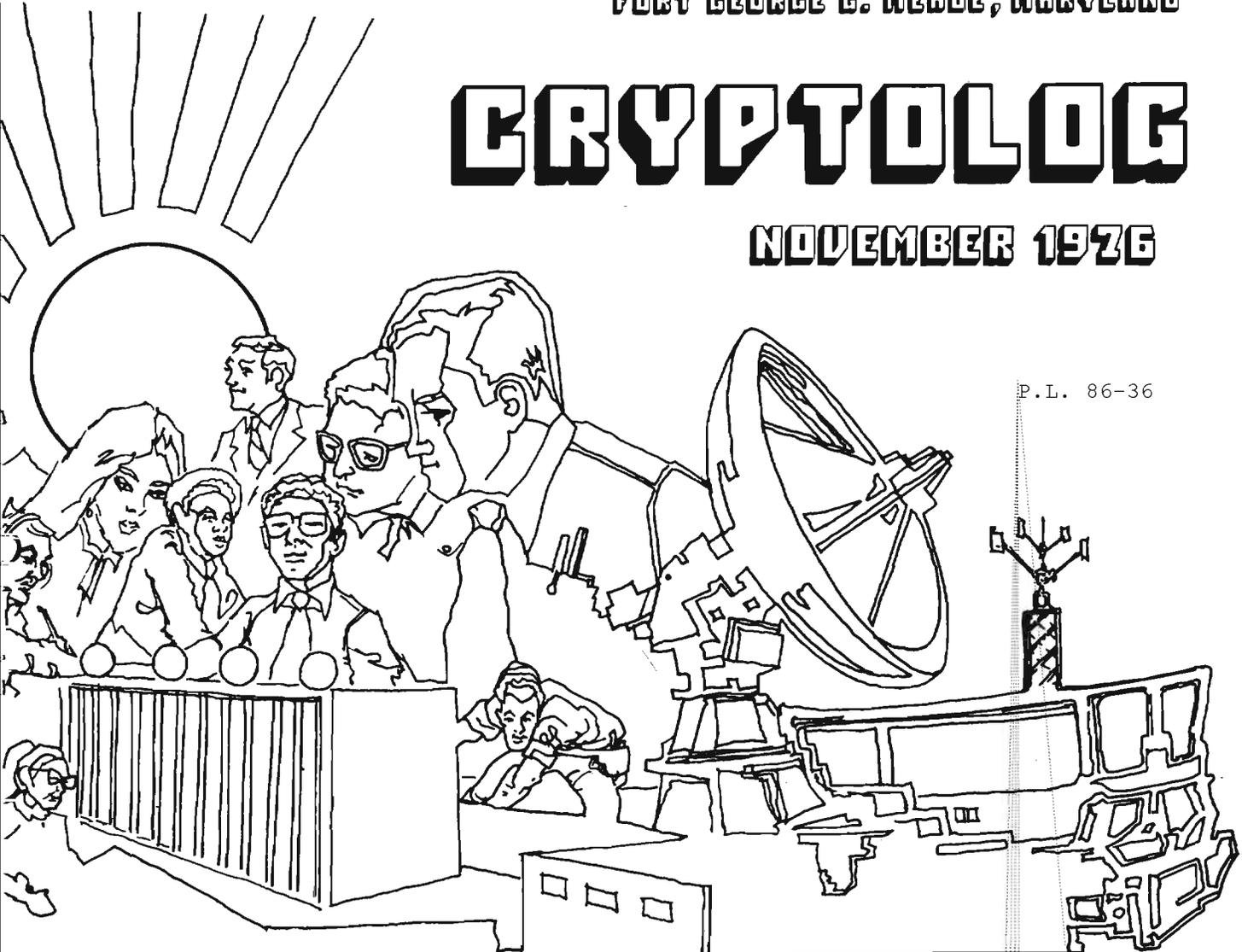


NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND

# CRYPTOLOG

NOVEMBER 1976



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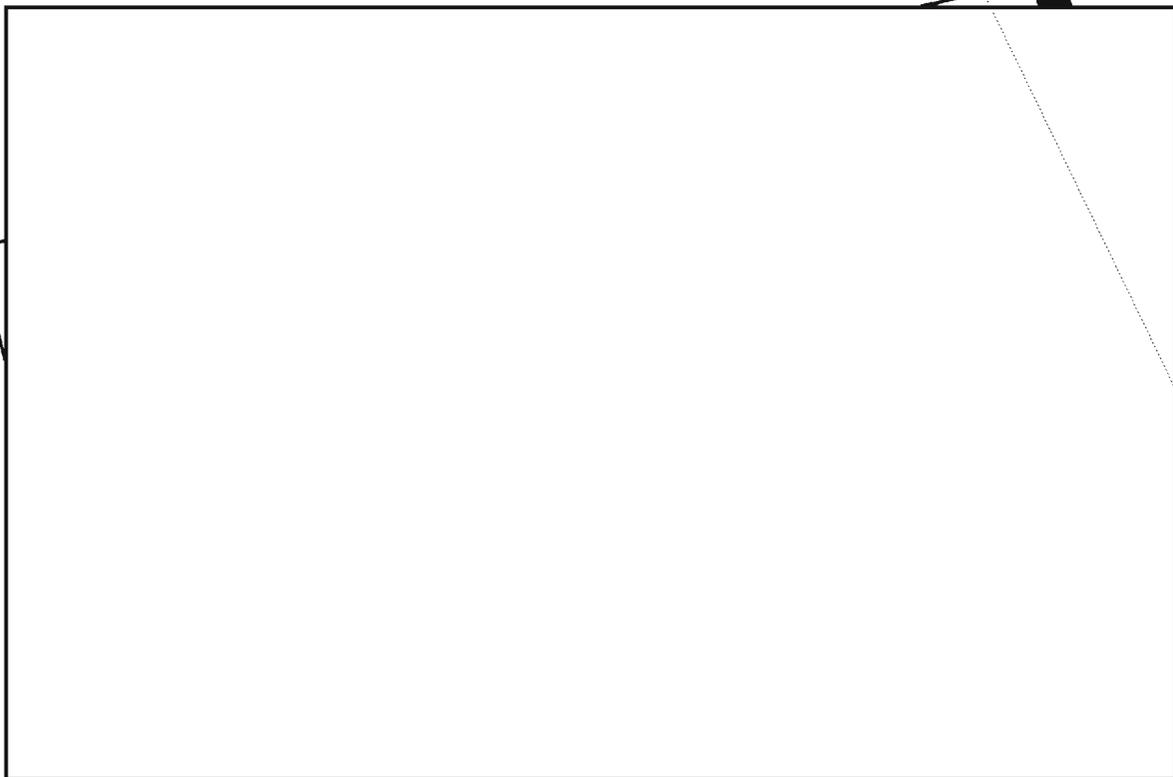
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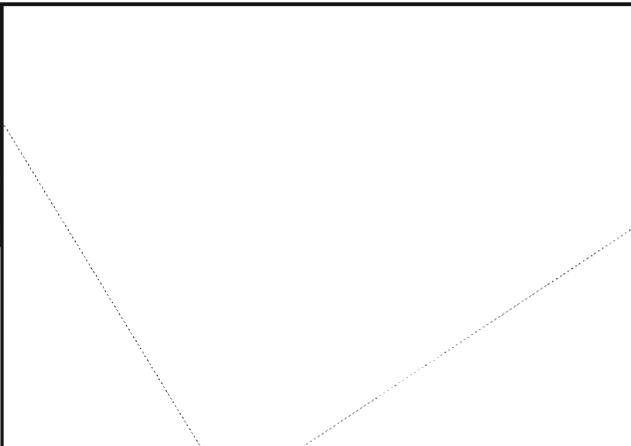
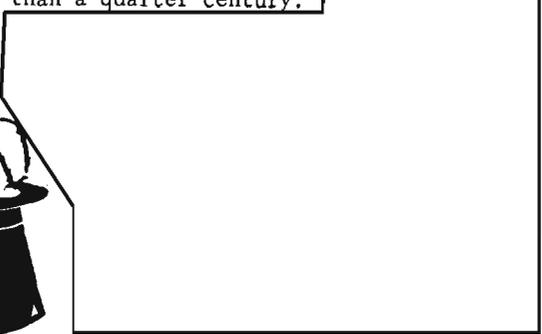
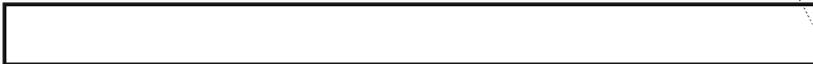


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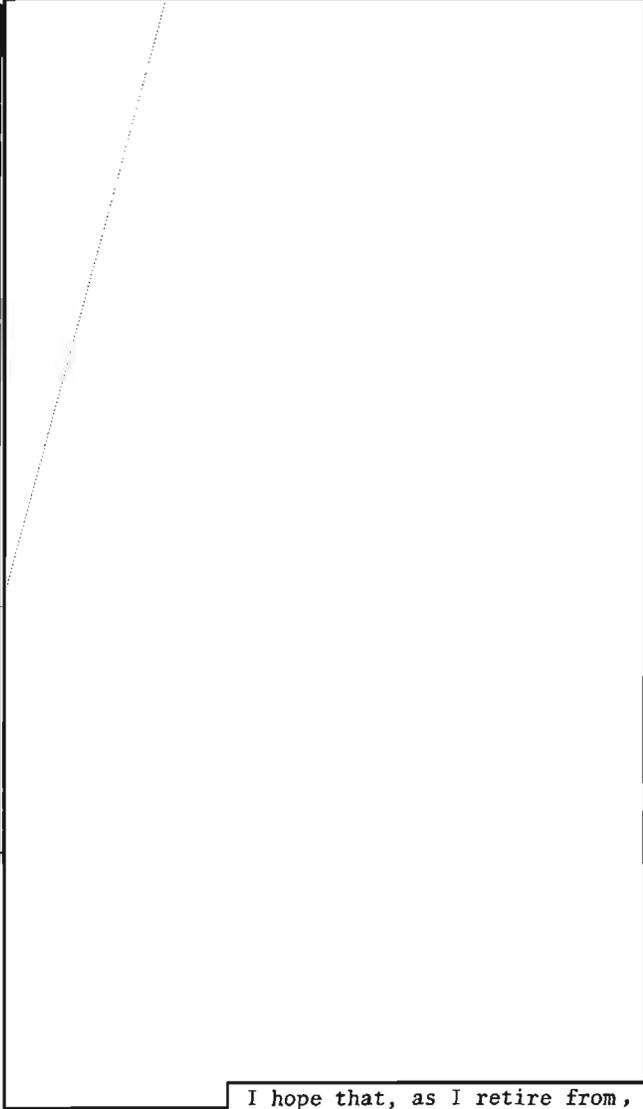
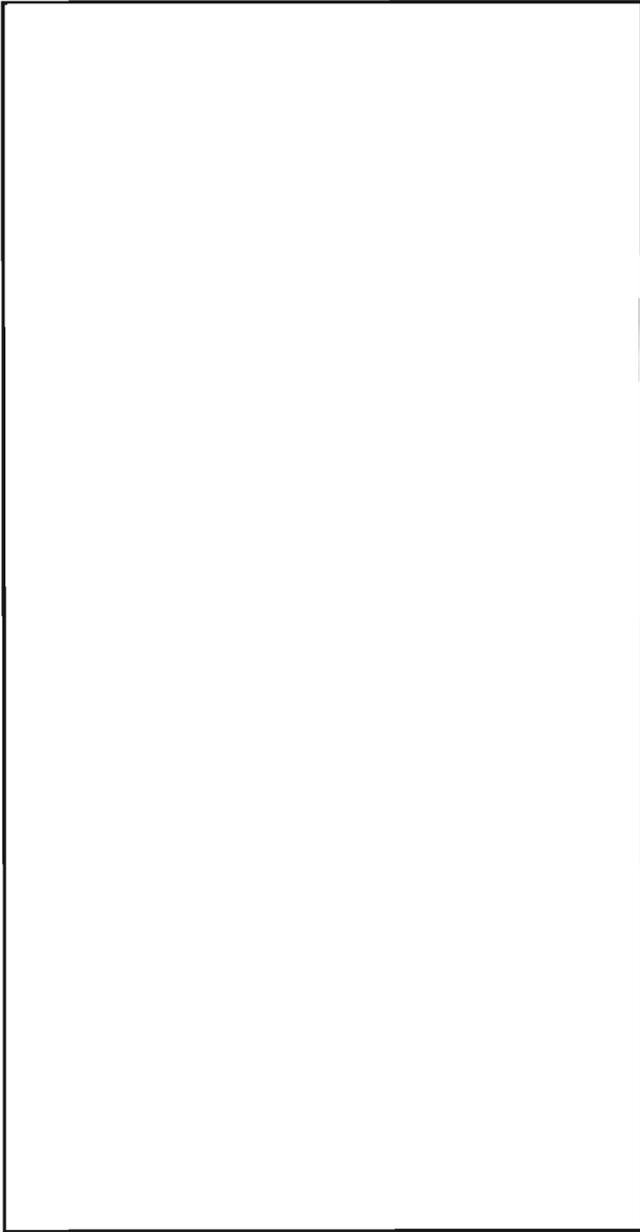
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# HOW TO MAKE A RAILROAD DISAPPEAR

Lately, while cleaning out my files and desk, getting ready for my retirement in January, I came across something I've been keeping as an object lesson for more than a quarter century.



~~TOP SECRET UMBRA~~



I hope that, as I retire from, the Agency, I can hand over this favorite object lesson of mine to a new generation of analysts who can get 25 more years' use out of it.

~~(TOP SECRET UMBRA)~~

**Letter to the Editor**



To the Editor, CRYPTOLOG:

I must be doing something wrong. In the September issue, you offered your readers a copy of the 1974-1976 Cumulative Index. You said,

"If you do not want to cut up this issue of CRYPTOLOG, just write 'Index' and your name and organization on a plain piece of paper." Well, I wrote all that on a plain piece of paper, and nothing has happened!

Charles W. Bostick,  
G4

*Editor's reply:*

Maybe that's why we haven't received too many requests for the Index. We should have added, "... and send it to P1, CRYPTOLOG." So, if any of you readers want the "plain-piece-of-paper trick" to work, you're going to have to send it to us! (The Index should appear sometime in January.)

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~~TOP SECRET UMBRA~~

# TEACHER LEARNS A LESSON

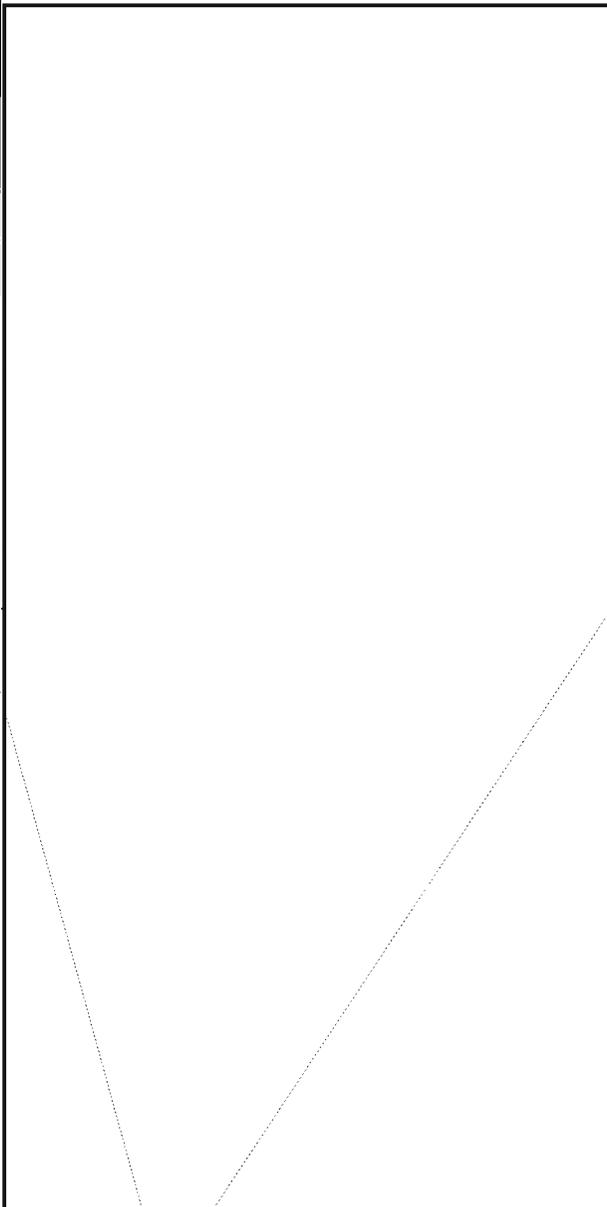
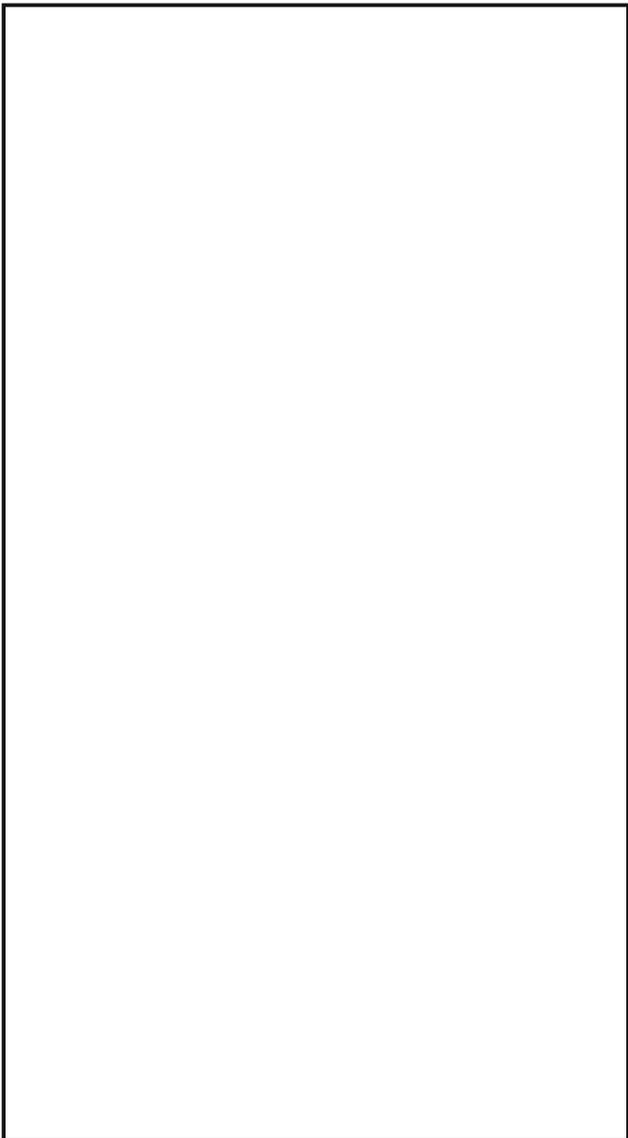


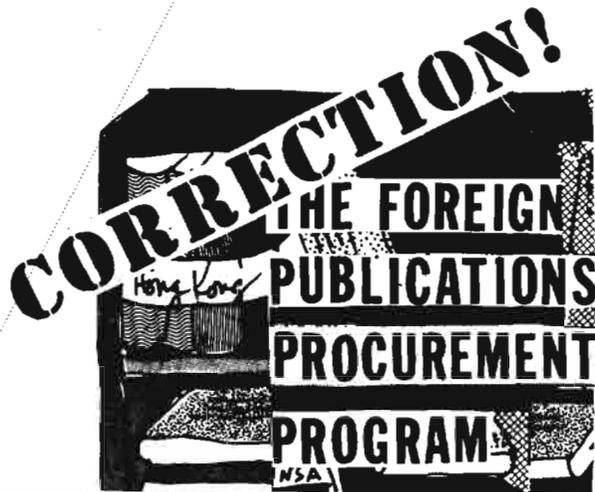
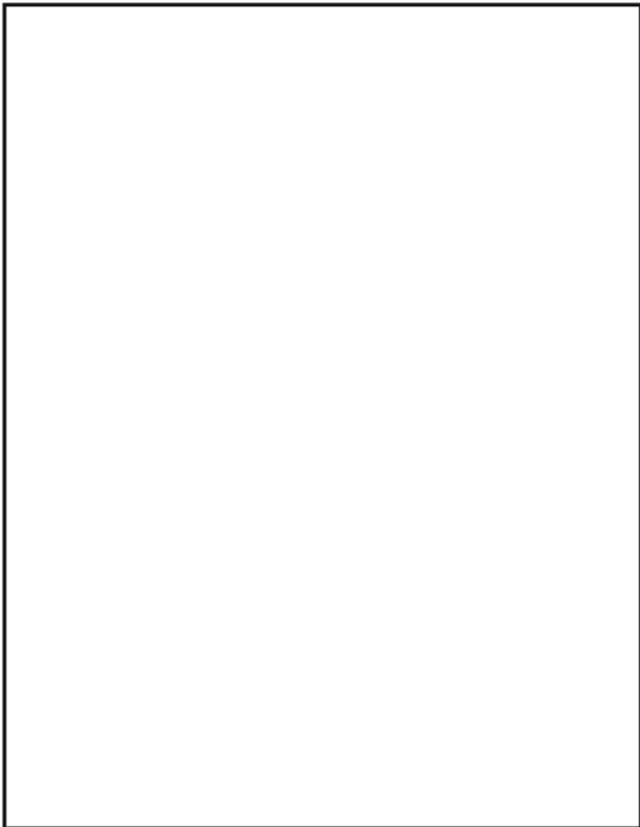
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I

“*A*nd, in conclusion, one of the most important lessons to be learned from this exercise is that nothing should be taken for granted,” the teacher droned on. “Even when your ideas seem to be working out well, there may be a better explanation.” The students stifled a collective yawn. They had heard it all before -- several times.





Some time after the September 1976 issue of CRYPTOLOG was forwarded to the printer in July, and before that issue actually appeared, the room number and telephone number given in the article on the Foreign Publications Procurement Program were changed. Please change the note to read: "If, after reading the article, you realize that you have some intelligence needs that can be filled by the Program, visit Room B5121 at FANX-III or call 8-7301 concerning your requirements for foreign publications."

~~(SECRET SPOKE)~~

~~(CONFIDENTIAL)~~



# TEXTA "WORD-SEEK"



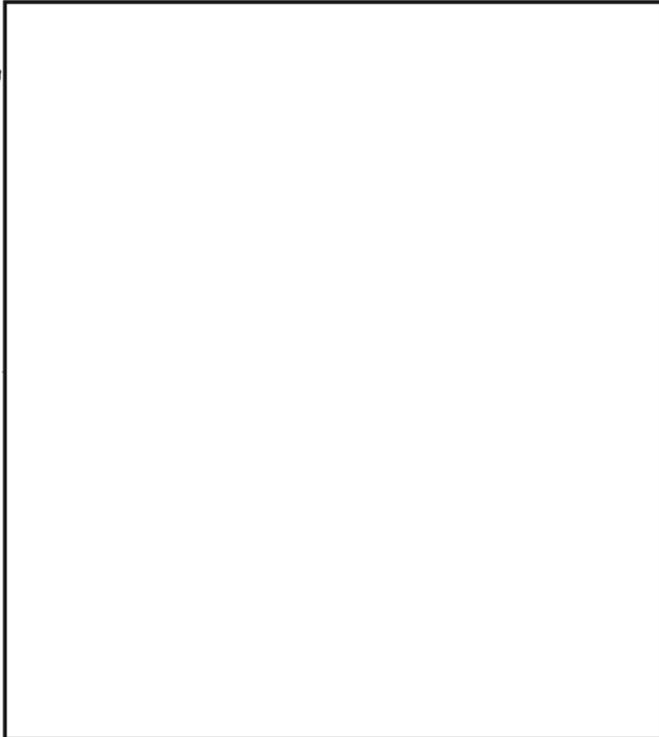
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Try to find the 26 service letter TEXTA meanings (for other than "R" and "W" tetragraphs). Words read forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally. Any letter may be used more than once.

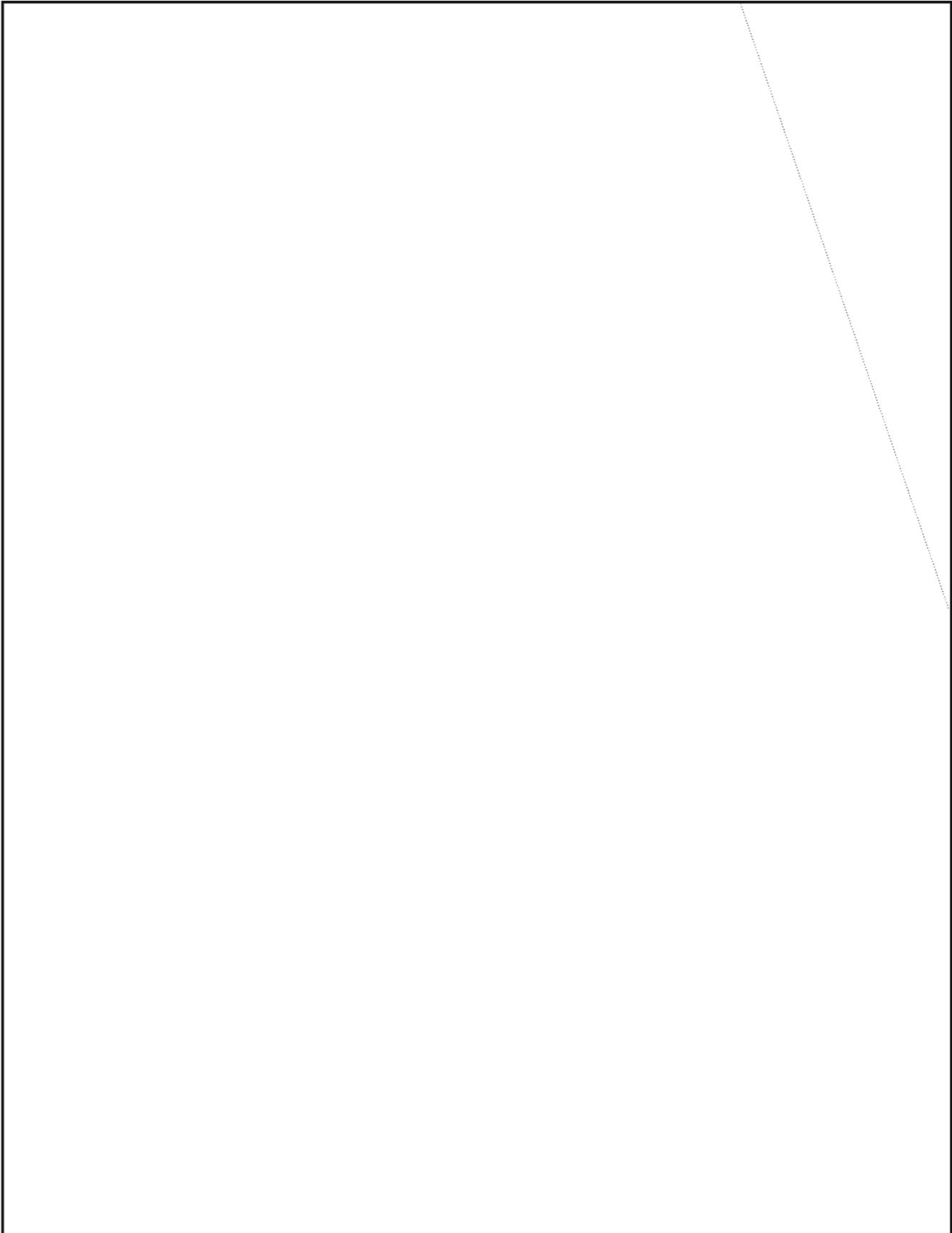
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*(Solution will appear next month.)*



~~(SECRET CCO)~~

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~~SECRET~~

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# ANSWER TO "A VEXING AGENCY-WIDE PROBLEM"

(See CRYPTOLOG, October 1976)

Frederic O. Mason, Jr., PII



The first three card positions, alternating A and B cards, occur in the following sequence. That is, a cup having a poker hand beginning with  $7\clubsuit 8\spadesuit K\heartsuit$  will always be immediately followed by one beginning  $Q\clubsuit 9\spadesuit Q\heartsuit$ , or position 20 followed by position 21 in the sequence.

	$8\spadesuit 10\heartsuit$	$2\heartsuit$	$7\heartsuit A\heartsuit$	$K\heartsuit$	$9\spadesuit Q\heartsuit$	$J\heartsuit$	$2\spadesuit A\heartsuit$	$9\heartsuit$
$10\clubsuit$	1		19		13		7	
$7\clubsuit 8\spadesuit$		2		20		14		8
$Q\clubsuit$	9		3		21		15	
$K\clubsuit 9\spadesuit$		10		4		22		16
$A\clubsuit$	17		11		5		23	
$J\clubsuit 8\spadesuit$		18		12		6		24

And the last two card positions occur in the following sequence (shown at left below). Combining the two pattern position numbers (PPNs) gives a unique PPN for each possible hand (shown at right below).

	$K\spadesuit$	$10\spadesuit$	$J\spadesuit$	$A\spadesuit$	$Q\spadesuit$	So,	$10\clubsuit 8\spadesuit 10\heartsuit 2\spadesuit K\spadesuit$	is	1-1
$2\spadesuit$	1	22	8	29	15		$7\clubsuit 8\spadesuit 2\heartsuit J\spadesuit 10\heartsuit$	is	2-2
$J\spadesuit$	16	2	23	9	30		$Q\clubsuit 7\heartsuit A\heartsuit Q\spadesuit J\spadesuit$	is	3-3
$Q\spadesuit$	31	17	3	24	10		$K\clubsuit 9\spadesuit K\heartsuit 9\spadesuit A\spadesuit$	is	4-4
$9\spadesuit$	11	32	18	4	25		$A\clubsuit 9\spadesuit Q\heartsuit 10\spadesuit Q\spadesuit$	is	5-5
$10\spadesuit$	26	12	33	19	5		$J\clubsuit 8\spadesuit J\heartsuit K\spadesuit K\spadesuit$	is	6-6
$K\spadesuit$	6	27	13	34	20		$10\clubsuit 2\spadesuit A\heartsuit A\spadesuit 10\heartsuit$	is	7-7
$A\spadesuit$	21	7	28	14	35		$7\clubsuit 8\spadesuit 9\heartsuit 2\spadesuit J\spadesuit$	is	8-8
							$Q\clubsuit 8\spadesuit 10\heartsuit J\spadesuit A\spadesuit$	is	9-9

So the sequence of pattern position numbers is:

1-1, 2-2, 3-3, 4-4, 5-5, 6-6, 7-7, 8-8, 9-9, 10-10, . . . 23-23, 24-24, 1-25, 2-26, 3-27, 4-28, 5-29, 6-30, 7-31, 8-32, 9-33, 10-34, 11-35, 12-1, . . . 23-24, 24-35, 1-1 (again).

Given one cup, find its two PPNs and add one to each to produce the PPN of the next cup. (Remember that the number after 24 in the first position of the PPN is 1, and that following 35 in the second position is also 1.)

So much is easy, but the determination of the absolute PPN (in the total sequence of  $24 \times 35 = 840$ ) for any given cup is more difficult.

If one considers only the PPN of the first hand in each sequence of 24 -- that is, cups or hands with PPN 1 for the first three cards -- the following shows, for the top line, the second PPN incrementing at intervals of 24. The second line shows the largest multiple of 35 (the second PPN cycle) which can be subtracted without giving a negative result. And the third line shows the result of the subtraction -- providing a unique sequence from 1 to 35.

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 1, 25, 49, 73, 97, 121, 145, \\ - \quad \quad 35 \quad 70 \quad 105 \quad 140 \\ \hline 1 \quad 25 \quad 14 \quad 3 \quad 27 \quad 16 \quad 5 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 169, 193, 217, 241, 265, 289, \\ - 140 \quad 175 \quad 210 \quad 210 \quad 245 \quad 280 \\ \hline 29 \quad 18 \quad 7 \quad 31 \quad 20 \quad 9 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 313, 337, 361, 385, 409, 433, \\ - 280 \quad 315 \quad 350 \quad 350 \quad 385 \quad 420 \\ \hline 33 \quad 22 \quad 11 \quad 35/0 \quad 24 \quad 13 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 457, 481, 505, \textcircled{529}, 553, 577, \\ - 455 \quad 455 \quad 490 \quad 525 \quad 525 \quad 560 \\ \hline 2 \quad 26 \quad 15 \quad \textcircled{4} \quad 28 \quad 17 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 601, 625, 649, 673, 697, 721, \\ - 595 \quad 595 \quad 630 \quad 665 \quad 665 \quad 700 \\ \hline 6 \quad 30 \quad 19 \quad 8 \quad 32 \quad 21 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1- 745, 769, 793, 817, 841 \\ - 735 \quad 735 \quad 770 \quad 805 \quad 840 \\ \hline 10 \quad 34 \quad 23 \quad 12 \quad 1 \end{array}$$

The four-Aces hand must consist of  $A\spadesuit 7\heartsuit A\heartsuit A\spadesuit A\spadesuit$  at PPN 11-14. To reduce it to PPN 1-?, subtract  $x=10$  from both sides...

$1-4 = 529$ , as circled above. Now add  $x=10$  to the result to get its absolute PPN of 539.

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Being linguists, you are aware that God speaks English. You may also have noted that He speaks an especially elegant kind of English. That is because he learned it in 1611, during the reign of King James II. God still speaks this 1611 English, or at any rate He did in the church I attended as a boy, and we do our best to talk back to *Him* in 1611 English.

It was this God-English that first focused my attention on the power of words and set me to listening to people around me -- not only to understand *what* they were saying, but also to observe *how* they were saying it. From God-English I progressed to the observation of how educationists use English, then the U. S. Navy, the U. S. Government, sociologists, policemen, radio announcers -- in short, I became a word-watcher. I began wordwatching at an early age, but the climax of my career came when I was extra-officially (and there are those who would say *frivolously*) appointed Chief Wordwatcher of one of the operating divisions of the Central Intelligence Agency. I have since that time retired, but because of the great interest I have found in the straight world in the subject of Elegant English, I have not abandoned my mission, but rather have even felt compelled to broaden the scope of my research and expand the audience for whom I do it. Before I retired, I had prepared two written reports, which appeared in *Studies in Intelligence*, and this evening, at the invitation of Mrs. Filby, and with your indulgence, I am presenting my first oral report on the uses of Elegant English in various parts of our society.

I am going to take the liberty of incorporating into this first oral report some excerpts from the two written reports, with the thought that even though some of you may have read one or both of the written reports, you may nevertheless find it of some interest to renew your acquaintance with the contents this evening.

#### Wordwatcher's Credentials

Since I appear before you in the capacity of an authority on the subject, I believe you deserve to hear something of my experience along these lines -- my credentials as a

watcher of words -- and if you will bear with me for a moment, I shall give you a brief *overview*, if you will forgive the use of that splendid word right here before we even really get started.

As I implied a moment ago, church was the scene of my first awakening, and I can even identify the person who started me out. It was Mr. Darrell, my Sunday School teacher for a number of years. Mr. Darrell was a sweet and saintly man, but when he prayed or read in 1611 English, wonderful things happened to words, and I spent many glorious hours contemplating these things.

If you know anything about Southern Baptists, you know that they take seriously Jesus' injunction against the "vain repetitions of the heathen." Prayer, to us Southern Baptists, had to be extemporaneous, fished up out of your guilty soul at the very moment of your confrontation with God; and whatever you fished up had to be explained to Him in 1611 English.

Mr. Darrell understood this, and he had a goodly collection of *Thee's* and *Thou's* and *unto's*, although he was a bit shaky about the nominative and objective cases of personal pronouns, and also somewhat hazy about conjugating verbs to suit them. Still, Mr. Darrell was in his mid-fifties, and he had been speaking to God for, I suppose, about 45 of those years, and I must assume that during those years God had learned to cope with Darrellese -- that He understood Mr. Darrell when he ended his prayers, as he invariably did, with the supplication, "We wouldst ask Thee to give us willing hands and receptacle hearts."

When Mr. Darrell read from the passage where Jesus' disciples were preparing to shoo the little children away, and Jesus rebuked them and said "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," Mr. Darrell always put the stress on the wrong word, saying, "suffer the little children to come unto me..." It was easier for him to imagine that Jesus had constructed an English sentence backward than

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that King James II might have known another meaning for the word "suffer."

If Mr. Darrell had been called upon to recite another line which was set down at about the same time that the quotation from Jesus was translated -- "Oh, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? [meaning, in Elizabethan English, "Oh, *why* are you Romeo?"] Deny thy father and refuse thy name. . ." -- he undoubtedly would have said it as almost everyone else else does nowadays, with the wrong stress, plus a comma, "Oh, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore *art* thou, Romeo?" [presumed meaning "Where *are* you, Romeo?", or even more with-it, "Where are you *at*, Romeo?"] English is, after all, English.

It is not that Mr. Darrell was altogether without instruction. He had been to school! He had learned, for example, that when a word appears in italics, it is to be emphasized. Unfortunately, the scholars whom King James commissioned for his great project had such a spirit of reverence for Holy Writ that they were afraid of being accused of sacrilege if they changed it in any way. Whenever they came upon a Greek phrase, therefore, which required more words in English to express the same thought, they put the extra words in italics -- not for emphasis, but to apologize to God for adding words to His. Mr. Darrell did not understand this, and when he read from the Bible, the effect could be wondrous, indeed. In reading, for example, the 60th Psalm, he would really hit those italicized words, "That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with* thy right hand, and hear me. . . Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine. . . Who will bring me *into* the strong city? . . . Give us help from trouble; for vain *is* the help of man." We have echoes *of* that style of English *in* our midst today, which I shall speak to you about in a moment. But for now let me continue with the discussion of my development as a wordwatcher.

From U.S. Navy to the Argentine

I had had two years at Missouri University when World War II came, and I enlisted in the Navy. Since I could type, I was immediately assigned to the Office of Naval Intelligence. Since I had had two years of Spanish at the University, I was forthwith transferred to the joint British-U.S. Naval Routing Office in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I was, as it were, *qualified*. I thus made the leap from 1611 English, through English Composition and Rhetoric I and II, to the passive voice of Navy communications, and the River Plate English of the Anglo-Argentines.

My experience with River Plate English began immediately upon my arrival in Buenos Aires. I had bought a watch before leaving the United States, which was guaranteed to be shockproof, and was. No matter how I banged it on the table, it would not run. I therefore went to a jewelry shop in downtown Buenos Aires. The young lady behind the counter not only sold me a watch --

she married me about 18 months later. She was Anglo-Argentine. She belonged to one of the most *charming* and baffling communities on the face of the earth. Her English was fascinating. It still is, on occasion.

I first began to suspect that speaking with her might be a bit of a problem when I showed her a series of cartoons I thought were especially funny, and she laughed and showed them to her sister, who did not laugh. Finally, she pointed to the crucial place on the page and said, "No, no, che, tenés que mirar ahí abajo, que ahí está the funny part!"

The Anglo-Argentines have a language all their own, with partakes of both English and Spanish. In Spanish, when they go to a doctor, for example, it is so that he can *revisarles*, and then, if he finds an injection to be indicated, he may *pincharles*. And so, when they go to a doctor in English, it is to have him "revise" them, and then perhaps "pinch" them with a hypodermic needle. The countryside beyond the outskirts of Buenos Aires is known as *el campo*, and so the Anglo-Argentine, if he has a day off, or a weekend free, may decide to spend it in "the camp."

In Spanish, *horno* means "oven," and therefore *Cabo de Hornos* should be translated "Oven Cape" or "Cape of Ovens," but the entire English-speaking world knows it by the Anglo-Argentine version of "Cape Horn." The same sort of thing happened to the *Rio de la Plata*, which should be translated as "Silver River" or "River of Silver," but which is known to the English-speaking world as "the River Plate."

Back to Missouri

If you think I had a problem, you should have seen the reaction of my fellow Missourians when I took her back to Brookfield with me after the war. She could never understand that in English almost the only thing you ever hang without an *up* is a man, and so when people came to see us they were puzzled when she would say, "Let me hang your coats." She once asked a neighbor whose responsibility it was in their household to "throw the garbage" every day. In Buenos Aires, when she wanted to vacuum the floor, what she did was *pasar la aspiradora*. When a friend came to call on us once and my wife said that she had just "passed the vacuum sweeper," he was not sure what she meant, and was afraid to ask. But they all loved her, because she laughed with them when they found her English to be a bit strange, although it did not seem at all strange to her to tell them, for instance, that she and I had just "combed ourselves" and "put our clothes" and had gone downtown "on an automobile" whose engine did not "march very well."

It was in a local movie theater one evening, before the advent of television and X-rated movies, and in a day when four-letter words were almost never heard in public, and certainly

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not from the lips of a cultured young woman, that she saw in a newsreel her first view of American football. She was captivated by it. She grasped me by the arm and exclaimed, "Ay, Viejo, Viejo! Mirá esos hombres mastodontes hitting each other in the guts!" You could almost feel the shock of astonishment and revulsion in the theater around us, and I explained quickly that, while I used that phrase around the house now and then, it was not appropriate to public gatherings.

As you may have noted from my recounting of that episode, she calls me "Viejo." She has called me "Viejo" since we were first married, and it was at that time simply a term of endearment, but of course as each year passes it becomes ever more appropriate for her to call me "old man." To the Missouri ear, however, "Viejo" sounds like "vehicle," and I could tell by the expressions on the faces of my friends and family and neighbors that they were bemused, to say the least, by this bizarre term of endearment. They would have understood and accepted "darling," "sweetheart," "honey," or "mi amor," -- but "vehicle"?

Well, I shall not dwell any further on my domestic problems of communication, except to urge any of you who happen to know the difference between "the house burned up" and "the house burned down" to come forward later and explain it to her -- and to me, too.

#### U. S. Navalese

Let us return now to Buenos Aires, and my introduction to the English of U.S. Navy communications. It is fortunate for us all, I think, that the guns of the U.S. Navy have never spoken with the same impact which its official correspondence makes. A U.S. Navy sentence never propels a thought from one place to another, like a projectile from a gun. One of the reasons for this effect is that a Navy sentence can never boast the luxury of an "I" or a "we" for a gun, or a "you" for a target, because the words, "I," "you," and "we" are taboo in Navy correspondence. I learned this under the instruction of a gray-haired warrant officer who had been constructing Navy sentences since the days of coal (and of some sail, too, I think). I learned that the predicate of a Navy sentence must be set up so that it just floats around in a fragrant passive soup, unattached to anything in particular. Let me show you what I mean.

You have received some equipment which does not work. You cannot write to the Bureau of Yards and Docks and ask, "Shall we return the defective equipment to you?" In the first place, this is a direct question, and direct questions are not in accordance with the high class and elevated tone of Navy correspondence. In the second place, it includes two of the taboo words. An experienced Navy writer will have no trouble with this situation, however.

He will put together a sentence something like this: "It is wondered if it is desired that subject equipment be returned to the Bureau of Yards and Docks."

The passive voice! Nobody actually *does* anything in the passive voice, and so nobody can be blamed for anything. You have not fired any information or questions at the Bureau of Yards and Docks. You have merely lobbed some words into the air, and the Bureau of Yards and Docks may retrieve subject words or not, as it sees fit.

I lived with this elegance during my entire service in the Navy, but it wasn't until years later that I discovered that it had a purpose. Professor Calvin Linton, who for many years as a consultant for about 30 U.S. government agencies on report writing, revealed the truth to me when he described how the scales had fallen from his own eyes early in his career as a consultant. He wrote me,

I suggested to the writer of the sentence, "Desire is expressed by this office that the equipment be procured on a loan basis for a period of six months' time," that he might try saying, "We would like to borrow the equipment for six months." His reply was, "Of course I could write it like that. But we'd never get the equipment. We don't 'borrow' around here; we 'procure on a loan basis for a period of. . .'"

Professor Linton got a hint of where he was going wrong from that example, but the true revelation came to him somewhat later:

I suggested to the Civil Service Commission that the sentence "Advice regarding date of birth is herewith requested" might be changed to "Please tell us your birth date." I was told (though not in these words) that the tone of the original was purposeful, not accidental. It was to suggest to the reader that he was up against something far more powerful and menacing than merely one human being asking another for information.

#### Stylish Words

Professor Linton's discovery is valid for the entire range of uses of Elegant English. Elegant English has a much more serious purpose than merely to ask for or to give information. It must, above all, impress the listener or reader with the erudition of the writer, with the vividness of his imagination, the originality of his thoughts, the modern contents of his vocabulary, and the aristocracy of his soul. Not only must he know how to phrase things so as to instill awe in the mind of the reader, but he must also be alert for the stylish word or phrase -- the word of the year or the month -- the unusual word that dresses up a sentence and makes the reader admire the writer's cleverness and originality. The truly elegant writer constantly observes the English of his contempo-

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aries, and the moment he hears a new words, such as "parameters," he locks onto it, nurses and nurtures it in his own syntactical feed lot, and launches it into the marketplace at every opportunity.

I collect these stylish words and phrases, of which the following are only a small sample:

<i>rationale</i>	<i>inoperative</i>
<i>thrust</i>	<i>input</i>
<i>interface</i>	<i>throughput</i>
<i>dichotomy</i>	<i>pre-planned</i>
<i>forthcoming</i>	<i>infrastructure</i>
<i>profile</i>	<i>posit</i>
<i>options</i>	<i>construct</i>
<i>life-style</i>	<i>viable</i>
<i>posture</i>	<i>quantify</i>
<i>meaningful</i>	<i>minimal</i>
<i>relevant</i>	<i>optimal</i>
<i>overview</i>	<i>feedback</i>
<i>parameters</i>	<i>point in time</i>

If you want to use Elegant English, I recommend that you use these words wherever you can fit them into your discourse. Note that most of these elegant words are not words that describe a simple thing or act, such as "house," "man," "hit," "run." No, these words justify their use by *sounding elegant*, and they deserve to be taken out of the narrow functions which they were originally intended to perform, and made to dress up our prose.

Thus, if you have a reason for doing something, it becomes your "rationale." If you are describing a confusion or a conflict, why not call it a "dichotomy"? If a man is being candid or frank with you, he may certainly be said to be "forthcoming." And almost anything you can name may be said to be "relevant" or "irrelevant," so long as you careful never to specify *what to*.

Let me show you how this list can be put to use. One of the purposes of my talk this evening is to discuss how Elegant English affects government communications. If we take that simple statement of purpose and put it into as elegant a sentence as we can manage, using as many of these magnificent tools as we can squeeze in, we might come up with something like this:

The thrust of the input into the overview which is being presented this evening has been pre-planned in order to posit meaningful and relevant parameters for the formulation of a judgment of how Elegant English, utilized in the throughput of governmental correspondence, tends to exacerbate the dichotomy which usually exists at the interface between the infrastructure levels of the bureaucratic construct.

Is that not an elegant sentence? Does it not sound familiar? Would you not agree that it is grammatically impeccable? Would you not also agree that if the listener understands it, it needs more work?

The list is by no means exhaustive. In fact, it barely scratches the surface. You undoubtedly have your own special elegant words, and that is sufficient rationale for anybody, so long as everything is viable, and you do not have to quantify your options.

The challenge of Elegant English is at its greatest when one is expected to write a report or a memorandum, but has nothing to say, or has so little that he could say it in one or two sentences. You could find your job eliminated if you wrote a report containing only two sentences. Most bureaucrats realize this instinctively. One of the most popular series of lectures Professor Linton ever gave was entitled "How to Write Without Saying Anything."

#### Plan-Speak

Planners are the champions at this practice of writing a great deal without saying anything. I discovered this fairly late in my career, when I was assigned to the plans section of my division. I learned that planners are adept at producing long, involved papers, replete with footnotes, attachments, tables, and cross references, and that they have even gone so far as to change the very processes they engage in. (Oh, and permit me a bit of an apostrophe about that word. If you are going to be elegant in oral as well as written English, you must cultivate the habit of pronouncing it "proh-cess-ees". . .) As I was saying, planners have changed slightly the very processes they engage in, and often like to refer to those processes as "pre-planning."

Now, you might think at first glance that the very concept of *pre-planning* is tautological, but if you do, it probably shows a lack of experience. Almost anybody with any number of years of service in our government can recall at least one incident, one event, one development, which was very good and also accidental. One does not report such a development to his superiors as being fortuitous. In a case like that, the report must necessarily say that the incident was pre-planned, so that nobody on the higher level will suspect that it was, in fact, post-planned.

Among planners, educationist planners are perhaps the most accomplished euphuists in the English-speaking world. This is important, I think, because, after all, they are teaching our children (our little "throughputs," you might say) and the future of Elegant English thus seems assured. Gone are the days when teachers used words like "fail" and "reading and writing" and "poor" and "disobedient." Now, children are sometimes "underachievers," who must work diligently to "acquire language skills," although some of them may be so "disadvantaged" that they cannot be expected to work in any way except "at their own level," and in some instances may even become "severe norm violators."

(Continued on page 19)

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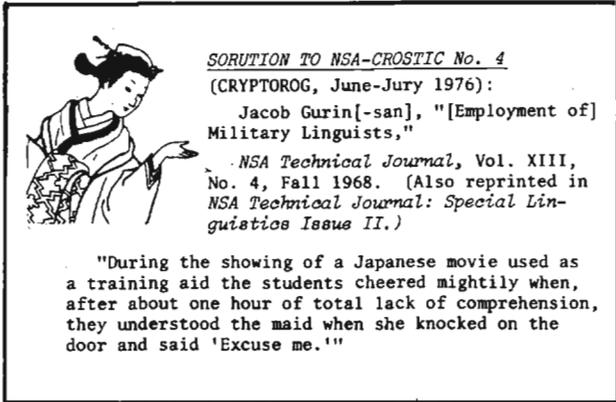
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*Toujours la politesse...*

STUART H. BUCK, P16

I remember very well the incident Jack Gurin refers to in NSA-croctic No. 4 (CRYPTOLOG, June-July 1976; solution, August 1976) -- for



*SOLUTION TO NSA-CROSTIC No. 4*  
(CRYPTOROG, June-July 1976):  
Jacob Gurin[-san], "[Employment of  
Military Linguists,"

*NSA Technical Journal*, Vol. XIII,  
No. 4, Fall 1968. (Also reprinted in  
*NSA Technical Journal: Special Lin-  
guistics Issue II.*)

"During the showing of a Japanese movie used as a training aid the students cheered mightily when, after about one hour of total lack of comprehension, they understood the maid when she knocked on the door and said 'Excuse me.'"

the simple reason that I was there. In fact, I am grateful to Jack for jogging my memory on the subject. It has brought back a flood of memories that I am about to share with CRYPTOLOG readers.

Jack and I were in the first MISLS unit assigned to study Japanese at the University of Michigan. In a sense, we were guinea pigs. Professor Joseph K. Yamagiwa, who was in charge of the language program, struck us as a man who knew what he was about. It seemed as though he had been preparing for years for our arrival -- and was ready and anxious to try out his theories (and his new book) on us. Of course, he had a great advantage in being bilingual in Japanese and English, and, on top of that, he was clearly a "scientific" linguist. Any doubts on that score would be quickly dispelled by a glance at his text, entitled *Modern Conversational Japanese*. I don't want to knock the book, so I suggest that the reader take a look at it and ask himself if this is a proper text for a rank beginner. I just mention the book because the ideas contained in it have a bearing on the story.

Shortly after we arrived at Ann Arbor, some of the professor's minions appeared bearing gifts -- huge stacks of printed matter purported to guide us through the torments of learning Japanese. A rumor quickly spread that the course materials had been delivered upside down, and that we had started on the first day with the last lesson in the course. If so, one would expect the lessons to be easier later on, but that was not the case, so I suppose the rumor was just the product of some embittered mind. One thing was certain -- the Army expected quite a lot from us. When turned loose in the field, we were supposed to interrogate prisoners (in any dialect) or to translate at sight any captured document (no matter how "grassy"); in short, to cope

with any language task that might turn up. To keep our zeal at a fever pitch, laggards were constantly reminded that they could always be reassigned to less pleasant (and more hazardous) duty. Well, there was a war on, so I suppose an atmosphere of urgency was natural enough.

What was not natural for some of us was the Yamagiwa approach to language study. Many of us were used to graded lessons, rules, exercises, and old-fashioned terminology -- all of which was heartily condemned by Yamagiwa. Apparently, he saw the human brain not as an organ capable of rational thought, but as a sponge that merely soaked up everything and anything exposed to it. So there was to be no old-style analysis when he was around. Evidently, language learning was a matter of pure conditioning, and the sooner you got going with it, the better. Before we knew any Japanese at all, he had us assemble and listen to him carry on lengthy conversations in Japanese with the Nisei instructors. I don't know what effect this had on the others, but I always departed from these sessions wondering what in the devil they had been talking about. I guess I was never tuned in on the right wave length. There may have been some sound pedagogical reason for all this, but I never discovered it. Equally baffling was his idea of having us memorize long lists of unrelated words. I still remember the very first Japanese word that I learned -- *rappa*, meaning "bugle." For some reason it stuck in my mind, but I was never able to work it into a conversation.

I don't want to sound too critical of Yamagiwa, for I'm sure that he was on our side in the war. Besides, he did provide us with reams of model sentences to memorize. Many of these had to do with the social amenities. *Gomen nasai*, meaning "pardon me," was one of them. For practice, we used it whenever we met, accompanying it with a sucking in of the breath (in the best Hollywood tradition). It was reassuring to have something reliable to fall back on. At this stage, we didn't know any Japanese to speak of, but we certainly were polite.

After his mystifying conversations with the Nisei instructors, Yamagiwa liked to take us all to the movies -- Japanese movies, that is. The purpose, we soon discovered, was not to provide entertainment. Presumably, we were expected to soak up the language just by being there. For me, at least, it didn't work. The film that Jack Gurin refers to was a real gem. To this day, I don't know whether it was a clever satire or an outright imitation of some ancient American movie. One thing was clear from the action: the story concerned the age-

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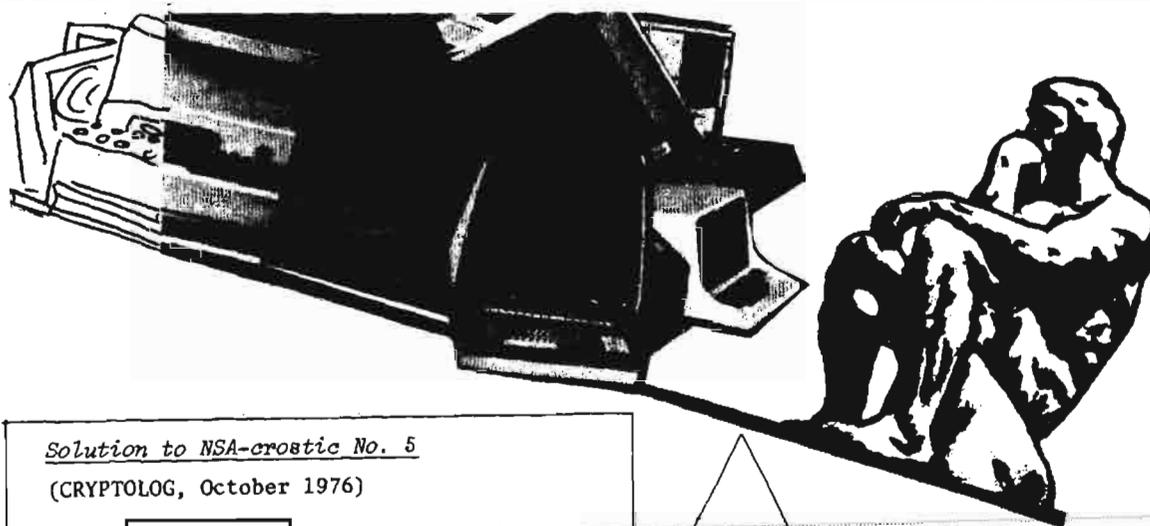
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old struggle between good and evil. In other words, a morality play. You could tell the villain right off by the way he twirled his wax moustache and jiggled his eyebrows, Groucho Marx style. The heroine seemed to be struggling throughout most of the film to protect her virtue, so you knew *she* was good. Then there was her boy friend, poor but honest. You could tell where he stood. So everything was reasonably clear, except the language. So far as we could tell, the plot concerned the abduction of a simple country girl by the fellow with the trick moustache, obviously for nefarious purposes. Falling for the blandishments of this snake, the poor girl was lured into a car and away they went towards some den of iniquity. Sensing that his beloved was in peril, the honest country lad leaped on his bicycle and went pedaling over the hills like some Gold Medal winner. Back in the village, the girl's poor but honest parents sat grieving in the doorway of their humble cottage. During a good part of the film, the camera went hopping back and forth between these three scenes: (1) girl screaming and struggling in the car (after it dawned on her that they weren't just taking a turn about the park), (2) sturdy country lad, head down, pedaling uphill and down, and (3) grieving parents sitting in the doorway.

It was a scenario worthy of Max Sennett. Finally the villainous one reached the hideaway where, one assumed, his geisha girls were pro-

fessionalized, and dragged his wailing and kicking victim out of the car and into the house. Once inside, however, she broke loose, and then began a mad chase around a large table, both screaming in Japanese at the top of their lungs. Every now and then, they would reverse direction -- she keeping a few jumps ahead. To break up the action, there would be an occasional switch to the tireless cyclist, then to the grieving parents. At least *they* didn't say anything -- which was a relief to us. The country girl and her wicked abductor, on the other hand, never stopped shrieking at each other -- and we didn't understand *one word* of what they were saying. Then came a moment when the two stopped, breathless, in their tracks, about to change direction, I suppose. There was a long silence, with only the sound of their heavy breathing. Suddenly a door opened and a geisha girl, dressed in the regalia of her trade, peered over her fan into the room. Sizing up the situation in a glance and seeing that her services were obviously not needed at the moment, she lisped, "*Gomen nasai*," and withdrew, giggling behind her fan. For the very first time, we heard something in Japanese that we understood. The pent-up emotions of weeks past came pouring out, and the walls shook with our applause. I don't suppose you could call this a linguistic breakthrough. It was more like a glimmer of hope which came when we needed it most.

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*Solution to NSA-croctic No. 5*

(CRYPTOLOG, October 1976)

"Machine Intelligence:  
 [Promise or Delusion?]",  
 CRYPTOLOG, July 1975

"The branch of computer science called Artificial Intelligence involves the attempt to program or build a digital computer capable of producing behavior that a human being would accept as truly intelligent."

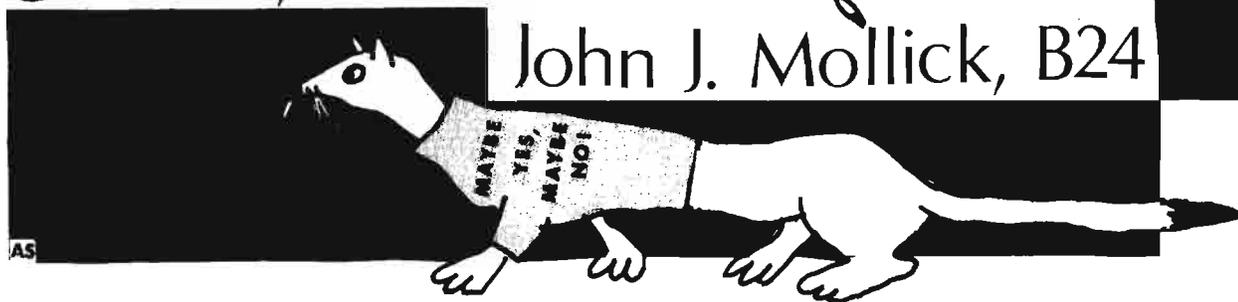
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## CLARITY, THY NAME IS QUALIFIER

John J. Mollick, B24



*It took me forty years on earth  
To reach this one conclusion:  
There is no heaven but clarity,  
No hell except confusion.*

Jan Struther (1901-1952)

"Probably," "possibly," "it is tentatively suggested that. . ." Qualifiers like that are very common in intelligence reports. And most people in our business -- whether they are reporters or readers of our product -- will probably agree (oops! now it's got me doing it!) that qualifiers can be overworked. Yes, indeed, it really would be nice to write or to read a report in which every statement stood on its own without qualification! Simple statements of fact! "X happened, then Y happened, and that means that Z is going to happen." Instead of that wearying style, "It is assumed that X happened, and, if so, then there is a good likelihood that Y happened. Thus, if previous indicators continue to be valid, there is a possibility that, barring unforeseen international developments, Z will happen."

Why don't intelligence reporters write smoothly? Why don't they just throw out all those qualifiers? It is because, in intelligence reporting, smoothness of style must take second place to precision of meaning. When Arthur Symons wrote, "While clearness is a virtue of style, explicitness is not a necessary virtue," he was talking about good literature, not about good intelligence reporting. In intelligence reporting, explicitness is the necessary virtue.

I was shocked recently to hear a highly-respected user of our product remark that he tried not to pay much attention to whether something was reported as a possible, probable, or definite fact. Picture the physician who feels that qualifiers are unimportant. If he tells me that I need brain surgery when he means to say that I *might* need it, he stands a good chance of having an A-validity cardiac case on his hands! Imagine the damage if a research analyst reports that some nation is preparing to launch an attack on the United States when he means that it *might* be preparing to launch an attack!

Perhaps the major problem with qualifiers is the common misconception that they are, by nature, obfuscatory. There is no doubt that qualifiers can be, and sometimes are, used as "weasel words" to purposely avoid taking a forthright stand. However, if qualifiers are properly used, they should clarify and not obscure. The use of qualifiers to weasel out of responsibility for taking a position is intellectual cowardice; the use of qualifiers to accurately indicate the degree of credibility that should be attached to an intelligence statements on the basis of available evidence is a moral obligation.

A *Washington Post* article of 25 July 1976 demonstrated that the media also often are forced to call an ace a possible/probable ace. The article concerned speculation that the Chinese were posthumously rehabilitating the image of Lin Piao, Mao Tse-tung's former (you should pardon the expression) "right-hand man." Its short 35 paragraphs contained 21 qualifiers, including such double-barreled sentences as, "An effort to erase black marks against Lin, which *appears evident* in several recent press articles, *would indicate* that some Chinese leaders want to win the army's favor. . . Since Lin's *alleged* conspiracy in 1971, other military leaders *apparently* linked to his plot have not been named. . . Thousands of officers with *apparently* no links to the conspiracy *undoubtedly* remain in the army. . . The *most likely* advocates of such strategy are radicals, with most of the government *apparently* in the hands of moderates. . ."

There is no doubt that the *Post* article would have been more interesting to read with fewer qualifiers; however, it seems that the news reporter who wrote it took seriously the responsibility of the press to indicate validity as accurately as possible. How much more important it is that intelligence analysts always keep in mind the overriding significance of validity and clarity! Over 300 years ago George Herbert stated, "Good words are worth much, and cost little." Those in our profession might add that accurate qualifiers are the best of words -- and *that* is an unqualified A-validity fact!

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# Department of GOLDEN OLIVES

## THE THINGS THEY SAY!

The following article is as pertinent today as it was when it first appeared in KEYWORD in August 1968. There is, in fact, much that is "golden" in the file copies of KEYWORD (published 1968 through 1973) which can be read in the NSA Cryptologic Collection, Room 3W076. Ed.

**DORIS E. MILLER, P16**  
(RETIRED)



Publication of [redacted] article "Transliteration Traps" in the May 1968 KEYWORD reminded me that I once wrote a short piece on the pitfalls of COMINT translation: not those in the text, but those in the mind of the translator, especially the beginner. Certain remarks recurred so frequently among our trainees that I felt moved to record them, and to do a little talking back. Since some of these may still be heard today, I present them below.



"These people don't know their own grammar!" Well, it's ten to one they know it better than you do; even if they don't know the rules, they know the patterns and follow them instinctively, and any slight grammatical irregularities they may indulge in will not affect the meaning of the message. Beware, therefore, of trying to support a far-fetched interpretation by assuming grammatical error. Assume, instead, that the grammar is correct, and reexamine your interpretation until you can reconcile it with the text. (It is worthwhile, of course, to familiarize yourself with certain commonplace errors of the "he don't" and "between you and I" type, simply to speed up recognition, even though they seldom occur in traffic or affect the meaning of it.)

"It's obviously an idiom, meaning. . ." You may be right; but a lot of "idioms" have been invented at NSA that never existed except in the mind of a desperate translator. (Ditto for "old proverbs" and "dialectal variants.") The



and with tenses in the text, as you have rendered them? Maybe it should be "will arrive" rather than "has arrived." Are paragraphs and subparagraphs all numbered and accounted for? Maybe that passage would be clearer if you realized that it consisted of two unrelated points. Are speeds, tonnages, calibers reasonable? Don't make a new-fangled weapon out of an old-fashioned garble! Does price times number work out to the total given? Look again at the terms of the contract. It is surprising how often this simple process will point up unsuspected errors, or bring a fuzzy picture into focus.

translator's chances of discovering a new idiom P.L. 86-36 vary of course with the language, the degree to which it has been studied and recorded, and the nature of the traffic; but in most cases further work resolves the passage in some quite prosaic way. If a putative idiom does seem to be the only possible answer, it should be treated as warily and documented as carefully as a tenuous code recovery until it achieves "A validity."

Handwritten notes: 11,152, 4,680, 283,410, 10,535, 269,098, 100 bbl @ 8.00, 160 bbl @ 15. I H H A 2.75 min

"I'm a translator, not a bookkeeper." True, but routinely checking the numbers in a message is one of the best possible ways to check your own translation. Are the dates (including message and intercept dates) compatible with each other

and with tenses in the text, as you have rendered them? Maybe it should be "will arrive" rather than "has arrived." Are paragraphs and subparagraphs all numbered and accounted for? Maybe that passage would be clearer if you realized that it consisted of two unrelated points. Are speeds, tonnages, calibers reasonable? Don't make a new-fangled weapon out of an old-fashioned garble! Does price times number work out to the total given? Look again at the terms of the contract. It is surprising how often this simple process will point up unsuspected errors, or bring a fuzzy picture into focus.

"It's a plant!" Sooner or later, it seems, everyone comes upon a message the facts of which cannot be squared with what he knows, and he reasons that the message must be a fake, deliberately "planted" to deceive us, the



interceptors. But it's highly unlikely, and evidence of a particularly convincing kind would be needed to support such an assumption. Any practical advantage to the sender of deceiving us would in most cases be far outweighed by the risk of confusing his own side. If he is simply worried about being read, he changes his crypt system. Look for the usual explanations, garbles misinterpretations, a gap in your own knowledge. (Or, now and then, of course, a prank by someone in the group. If you really do smell a rat, look around for the local funster!)

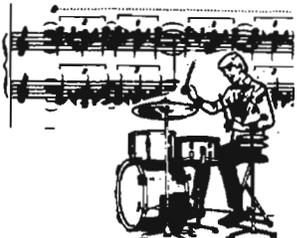


"I've written a footnote explaining what I think." This amounts to saying that you don't understand the text, and have probably botched it; for when you get the right answer, it stands on its own feet. Just keep working until en-

lightenment comes. (If you publish that footnote, I predict it will haunt you!)

"Well, this is MY interpretation. . ."

The unspoken end of this, ". . . you may have yours. Can we not both be right?" No, by jing, we can both be wrong, but we cannot both be right. A telegram is not a



poem, or a parable, or a Zen riddle. It is a straightforward communication, having -- or meant to have -- only one possible interpretation. The man who receives it is expected to react in some very specific way; to issue that visa, move that battalion, buy that wheat; or file that report, make that decision, sound out that delegate. The correspondents must under-

stand each other, or the world's work would break down. (In some countries, heads would roll.) And our job is to determine what it is they are saying, and put it into English "in words as hard as cannonballs."

~~P~~ ~~O~~ ~~Z~~ ~~D~~ ~~L~~ ~~E~~ ~~M~~ ~~E~~ ~~X~~ ~~A~~ ~~M~~

"It said DUMPS, but we've never had DUMPS so I degarbled it to PUMPS."

And that, men, is how we lost Slambang Air Base. It is just as dangerous to degarble good text as not to degarble bad, and familiarity alone should never be the criterion.

Keep an open mind; don't spare the research; and remember that a new word is often the tip-off to a new story.

"I know it doesn't make sense, but that's what it says!" This is the granddaddy of them all, the classic disclaimer -- and the Chimborazo of the humoresque. Do we really believe that all these responsible types,



these makers and shippers, are filling the airways with nonsense all over the world? Do we really think that foreigners don't "add up"? Not necessarily. This is just the most spontaneous, universal, and irrepressible outcry in the translating world; there is no one in the business who hasn't given tongue to it at some time. But the person who says it seriously, or very often, is in trouble. For all good translators know, deep down, that if it doesn't make sense, then *that isn't what it says.*

~~(CONFIDENTIAL)~~

## Department of GOLDEN not-too-OLDFIES

If you liked Doris Miller's Golden Oldie, "The Things They Say!" (and who wouldn't like it?), why not try to get in her league yourself? Even though Doris is retired, this is how she can help you. In March 1975 she gave a talk entitled "You Too Can WIN By Writing," under the sponsorship of WIN (Women in NSA). In that talk she stressed the importance of having NSAers -- women and men alike -- express their views in Agency publications. To help her audience to get started, Doris handed out copies of the "Getting Started" form that is reprinted on the next page. Fill it out! You might find yourself getting an idea for an article for the *NSA Technical Journal*, *Spectrum*, or, need I suggest, *CRYPTOLOG*? And then -- who knows how soon? -- you might find yourself in the Department of Golden Oldies too.

(For information on WIN, contact  G613, 4A187, x4767.)



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P.L. 86-36

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Scribe



# GETTING STARTED

1. *My object is to:*

- Make a report on something that has been accomplished.
- Call attention to something that is wrong.
- Suggest a better method or idea.
- Share a personal experience.
- Enlist support.

- Explain a process.
- Ask a question.
- Defend a principle.
- Report news or announce a coming event.
- Recognize an achievement.
- Amuse and entertain.
- React to something someone else has written.
- None of the above, but something else, namely: \_\_\_\_\_

2. *My working title is:*

- "A Better Way to \_\_\_\_\_."
- "Hurray for \_\_\_\_\_!"
- "The Fallacy of \_\_\_\_\_."
- "It's Time to \_\_\_\_\_."
- "The Scandal of \_\_\_\_\_."
- "Are We Paying Too Much For \_\_\_\_\_?"
- "After \_\_\_\_\_, What?"
- "A Proposal for \_\_\_\_\_."
- "What Happened at \_\_\_\_\_."
- "Why I Agree/Disagree with \_\_\_\_\_ Who Wrote \_\_\_\_\_."
- "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to \_\_\_\_\_."
- None of the above, but " \_\_\_\_\_."

3. *I will consider this, in my own mind, an open letter to \_\_\_\_\_ and will address it primarily to her/him/them.*

4. \_\_\_\_\_ *This would be a particularly good time for such an article to appear because \_\_\_\_\_.* (or)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *This subject is timeless.*

5. \_\_\_\_\_ *I am especially well qualified to write on this because \_\_\_\_\_*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (or on the other hand)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *I want to speak up on this even though I am no expert on it, because \_\_\_\_\_*

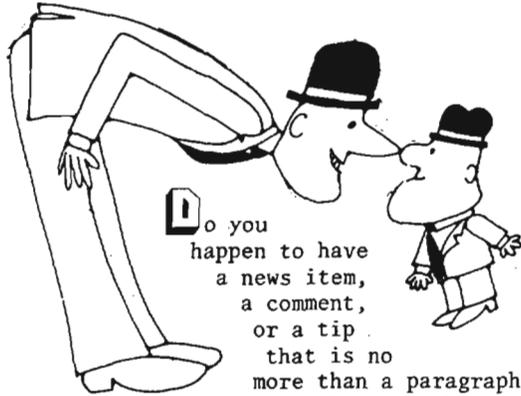
6. *Some tentative suggestions for a final title are \_\_\_\_\_*

7. *I think it would be most appropriate for publication in:*

- NSA Technical Journal* (major papers on scientific or technical subjects or cryptologic policy, up to and including Top Secret Codeword; distribution to named persons)
- Spectrum* (general-interest articles on Agency policy, management, techniques, history, current topics; up to Secret, but no Codeword; general distribution throughout the Agency)
- CRYPTOLOG* (see reverse side of this page; distribution in Operations and elsewhere to individual subscribers as requested)

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# Contributions Solicited



Do you happen to have a news item, a comment, or a tip that is no more than a paragraph? Or perhaps you have an

article of several thousands words...? Long or short, if it has something worthwhile to say, we'll print it. (For your interest and guidance, one page of typescript, double-spaced, makes about one column in CRYPTOLOG.)

First-person articles or stories about your own experiences are welcome, so long as they relate to our work.



Want anonymity? A thoughtful piece on a subject of interest to many readers will be considered for anonymous publication, if the writer requests it. (The writer must, however, identify himself to the editor in an accompanying note or by a personal call.) Needless to say, personal or trivial complaints will not be considered.

Photographic illustrations can be reproduced, at the same quality as those in the NSA Newsletter.



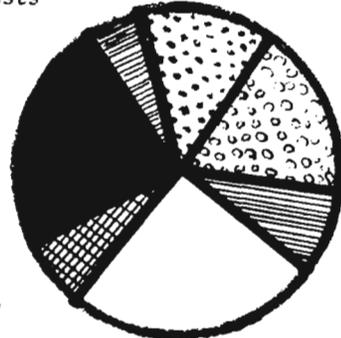
Sensitive materials? No. We'll go all the way to Top Secret Codeword, but we have to draw the line at compartmented or otherwise exclusive sources.



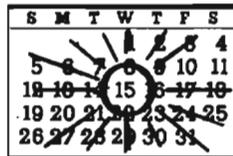
Your contribution does not have to be typed; we'll give preference to content over form, every time. (Though, especially in the case of a long piece, the editorial eye will appreciate any effort you can make in that direction--garbles and strikeovers freely forgiven.)

Something missing? If you feel that your work or your interests are not being well represented in CRYPTOLOG, it's probably because you and your friends are not contributing.

The editors earnestly want to cover the whole territory, but articles don't grow on trees, y'know! Somebody (who knows the subject matter) has to write them.



Need assistance? You may have an idea, or some notes, or even a half-finished paper that you feel has possibilities but you don't quite know what to do with. A call to the appropriate departmental editor will get you a "story conference" and possibly inspire you to finish it up and get it into print.



Our deadline is theoretically the middle of the month (the 15th of August, for publication in October, and so on), but don't let that

stop you if something good comes along on the 16th. And anyhow, this is a monthly publication; if you miss this month's deadline you'll be just in time for next month's CRYPTOLOG. See you!

ADDRESS: P1, CRYPTOLOG

## ELEGANT ENGLISH *(Continued from page 10)*

Once, while looking over a bibliography, Professor Linton came across the titles of two works written by this kind of educator. These were the titles:

"Sociological Implications of the Dynamics of Volunteerism," and

"A Pilot Study Directed Toward the Development of Means of Evaluating the Noncognitive Aspects of Education, Particularly in the Affective Domain."

Now, if you ever find yourself in a situation where there does not seem to be any escape from using a plain old Anglo-Saxon word, without any beauty of sound or appearance, the best thing to do is to define it carefully for your reader, so that he will realize that, however simple and earthy the word may seem to be, it is in reality heavily freighted with style and nuances.

Do you know, for example, what a "need" is? You may *think* you do, but a planner, especially an educationist or a sociologist who plans, cannot use such a simple word with the easy assumption that the reader will fully appreciate just what he is getting. I should like to read to you from a copy of an interoffice memorandum recently circulated in a university in this metropolitan area. It was part of a program to set up statements of what the university staff conceived its functions to be. The document was entitled "Preparation of Mission and Goals Statement for the Library," and these are short excerpts:

In organizing your ideas, use the pattern outlined in these materials:

1. Identify needs (see Sec. III.A.)
2. Articulate goals to meet the needs (see Sec. III.B for checklist; see Sec. III.C for examples)
3. Develop objectives to meet each goal (see Sec. IV)

Write separate documents for each step in the procedure: a list of needs, a statement of goals, and a list of objectives. The following list of definitions may help you in your preparation of the documents for your area:

- Needs - Those things required by the various people the activity serves.
- Goals - A series of statements, each broad and general, describing ends, not means, and aimed at meeting needs.
- Objectives - Specific accomplishments or processes [read "prohcesses"] which should be measurable and which should be concerned with means for achieving goals.

Many pages further along in this document is something called a "Goal Identification Check List," which is a series of questions by means of which you can test whether what you have articulated are, in fact, goals. This is what the check list looks like:

### GOAL IDENTIFICATION CHECK LIST

1. Is the goal expressed in ends not means/activity terms?
2. Is the goal flexible (provide opportunities for innovation)?
3. Is the goal achievable (both implementable as well as realizable)?
4. Is progress toward the goal measurable/assessable?
5. Is the goal capable of exacting commitment from all sectors?
6. Is the goal available to be changed (not written in cement) and challenged, "updatable"?
7. Is the goal free of the constraints of quantification and temporality?
8. Is the goal related to needs and problems?

Now, that is the kind of a library you want for your university! Not just a place where they keep an orderly collection of books and papers for students to read, but a place that is alive with goals that are implementable and realizable, and updatable, achievable, measurable and assessable, and, above all, not constrained by quantification and temporality!

It is from such universities as this that our bureaucracy is staffed, I am happy to say -- or, at any rate, those parts of the bureaucracy with which I am familiar seem to be peopled largely with graduates of that school or schools very much like it. In my second written report I cited a number of sentences which show ample evidence of having been hammered out on just such an academic forge. They included the following:

Jones appears to be in excellent financial straits.

We feel that the university, while still an important element, is less so than it once was. Even if it were, the situation on campus makes the procedure impossible.

He helped his daughter, with whom he is quite close, out financially.

He believes the risk will be minimal if students and instructors utilize reasonable jurisprudence in the course of the exercise.

This announcement by the two officials would put an end to specific rumors of one firing the other, or vice versa.

At that time, they were in the first stages of a broken marriage.

The Cubans were the largest and only exile group in the country.

Also in my second report I included several examples from my collection of what I call the "Technique of Traumatic Terseness." We all know what a great impact can be achieved by making portentous statements in few words: "Lafayette, we are here"; "I cannot spare this general -- he fights." Now, note how much greater an impact can be achieved when the short statement describes the totally unexpected, not to say unbelievable:

Doe and his wife had a daughter of four. When he last saw her she was pregnant.

Jones's wife was in her late twenties, and their daughter, Mary, is aged about five. The latter is rather pale and sickly. She doesn't like Germany very much. She smokes.

Roe was one of seven children, and was raised without a father, who was killed by a log in a forest.

From the content of these sentences you may have divined that we in the CIA live in more of a Tolkien world than a James Bond world. Fleming, after all, never sent Bond out into a forest where the very logs rise up to smite you. The people we deal with are surrounded by dangers James Bond never dreamed of, and that may explain why they feel impelled to begin enjoying life, and reproducing it, at a very early age.

#### Elegance in the Media

The news media and the popular arts are doing their share to maintain the standards of posh English, and they deserve to be mentioned here, I think. There is, for example, the radio announcer who livens up what would otherwise be rather pedestrian broadcasts by emphasizing unimportant words in a high-class way, which shows that he is a radio announcer, knows what he is doing, and does not belong among the herds of ordinary mortals who do not know how to talk on the radio.

We used to have some noteworthy practitioners of this art in our own metropolitan area, but not anymore. I refer to the policemen in the traffic helicopters who, until somebody took them in hand and utterly destroyed their charm, used to give us bulletins in this manner:

There has been a four-car collision at the entrance to the Woodrow Wilson

Bridge on the Virginia side. There will be some delay there until we can get a patrol car to the scene of this accident. Officers are responding to this situation and we hope that the bridge will be cleared soon.

The art is not lost, however. It still flourishes in small towns throughout the country, and if you keep your car radio tuned to the radio stations in these towns as you travel through the countryside, you can often hear this type of classy elocution. I recently taped a short excerpt from a news broadcast from station WELD, of Fisher, West Virginia. While I was taping the sequence, I found to my surprise that I was getting homesick. It was only after several minutes that I realized why. I was hearing echoes of dear old Mr. Darrell, reading to our Sunday School class from the 60th Psalm.

That announcer obviously cares very much about his profession. He does not want the radio audience to get the idea that radio announcers are just ordinary people, who speak as ordinary people do. If he were sitting with a group of his friends, he would certainly not use this special way of speaking, because if he did they would most assuredly drown him in the Cheat River. But when he gets behind a microphone, and they get behind a radio set, everything changes, and one must maintain the standards of the art.

If the policy of detente, or whatever diplomatic line we pursue in the future to keep the peace of the world, should ever fail us, which God forbid, I hope I am near Fisher, West Virginia, so that I can get the news from WELD. It would come in a bulletin something like this, I think:

Twenty-one American cities were destroyed yesterday by atom bombs launched from the Soviet Union. Communications with Washington, D. C. have been interrupted since early this morning, at which time President Ford announced that he had pushed the button which would launch 85 missiles toward targets. . . in . . . the (ritardando e diminuendo) Soviet. . . Union. Elsewhere in the news today. . .

That announcer in Fisher, incidentally, did the ultimate recently to our old friend, the "chaise longue." We long ago gave up any silly insistence that this means, in French, simply "long chair," because Sears, Ward's, and Hechinger's, among others, have decreed that it is, fact, a *lounge* chair. But the WELD announcer has an even better idea. He calls it a "chase lounge," and the implications of that pronunciation I leave to your own imagination.

Some radio announcers have trouble with the nominative and objective case of even modern

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English pronouns when two or more of them occur in a series, but this really should be no problem at all. In case of a question, heaviest weight must always be given to elegance of sound, rather than grammatical correctness. I think you will agree with me that the phrase "you and me" sounds low-class and ought to be avoided at all costs. I remember hearing a radio broadcast from St. Louis many years ago, in which Harry Caray was describing a Cardinals baseball game, assisted by that great old ballplayer, Gabby Street. You may remember Gabby -- he was the one who caught the baseball tossed from the top of the Washington Monument many, many years ago. Gabby was commenting on an umpire's decision, and he said, ". . . between you and me, Harry. . ." and then he realized what he said, and quickly changed it. ". . . I guess what I should have said was 'between you and I'. . ." Whereupon Harry congratulated him for having spotted and corrected the error all by himself, without anybody having to point it out to him. Gabby was intensely pleased to have thus been admitted into the company of the elite and he pointed out to Harry that the reason he had made the mistake in the first place was that he had not had much education when he was a boy.

Even newspaper writers and editors are not immune to the problem of the objective and nominative cases for personal pronouns. Mr. Colman McCarthy, of the editorial staff of the *Washington Post*, tells of an editor who certainly belonged among us elegant thinkers and writers. (If you think "among we elegant thinkers and writers" sounds better, have it that way by all means.) According to Mr. McCarthy, this editor came upon a story which had been turned in by a reporter detailing the events of a police line-up that contained a notorious murderer. A witness to her latest crime was brought in, took one look, and exclaimed, "My God, that's her!" The reporter was so struck by the immediate and unequivocal identification that he put that statement in direct quotes in the lead sentence of his story. Our elegant editor would have none of that however, and he corrected it so that on the printed page the article quoted the witness as having said, "My God, that's *she*!"

#### Elegance in Popular Music

And, now, finally, to the popular arts -- specifically, popular music.

Have you noticed that the lyrics of popular songs seem to have overcome, at least, the problem of *lie* and *lay*. Lyrics these days are less constrained by delicacy and discretion than they used to be, and *lying* and *laying* figure much more prominently and often in love songs than they did in my youth. And so, Helen Reddy signs a ballad in which she entreats me to "come and lay by me," and I believe it was Lou Rawls who recently crooned a song to his lady love who was "laying beside him on the bed."

In at least one respect the poetry of popular music today is more admirable than the work of a T. S. Eliot or an Emily Dickinson. It is because the writers of lyrics today have voluntarily given themselves an almost overwhelming handicap. They have determined to write great music using no other words except *baby*, *luv*, *we can make it*, *I want you*, *I ne-e-e-d you*, and *come on*.

Even in cases where they violate these restrictions, however, they are still inoculated against the case-virus for personal pronouns. It was Engelbert Humperdinck, I think (the latest Engelbert Humperdinck, that is) who sang a song recently, whose lyrics are the epitome of originality and poetic imagery of which today's songwriters can be so proud. "I'm yours," sang Mr. Humperdinck, "till the stars fall from the sky, for you and I."

#### Final Caution

Before concluding, there is one word I should like to caution you about, and that word is *majority*. I once read a report from one of our officers in the field, in the aftermath of a serious flood, in which he said that the majority of the water had receded. Now there is no denying that "majority" sounds much more high-class than plain old "most." But don't you see the danger here? By using "majority" that way, the writer was implying that there was a *minority* of the water still around him, and from experience I would be willing to bet that the officer did not even know the definition of the word *majority*. He may, in fact, have been talking about a *plurality* of the water. So, if you are not absolutely certain of the definition, I recommend great care with these words.

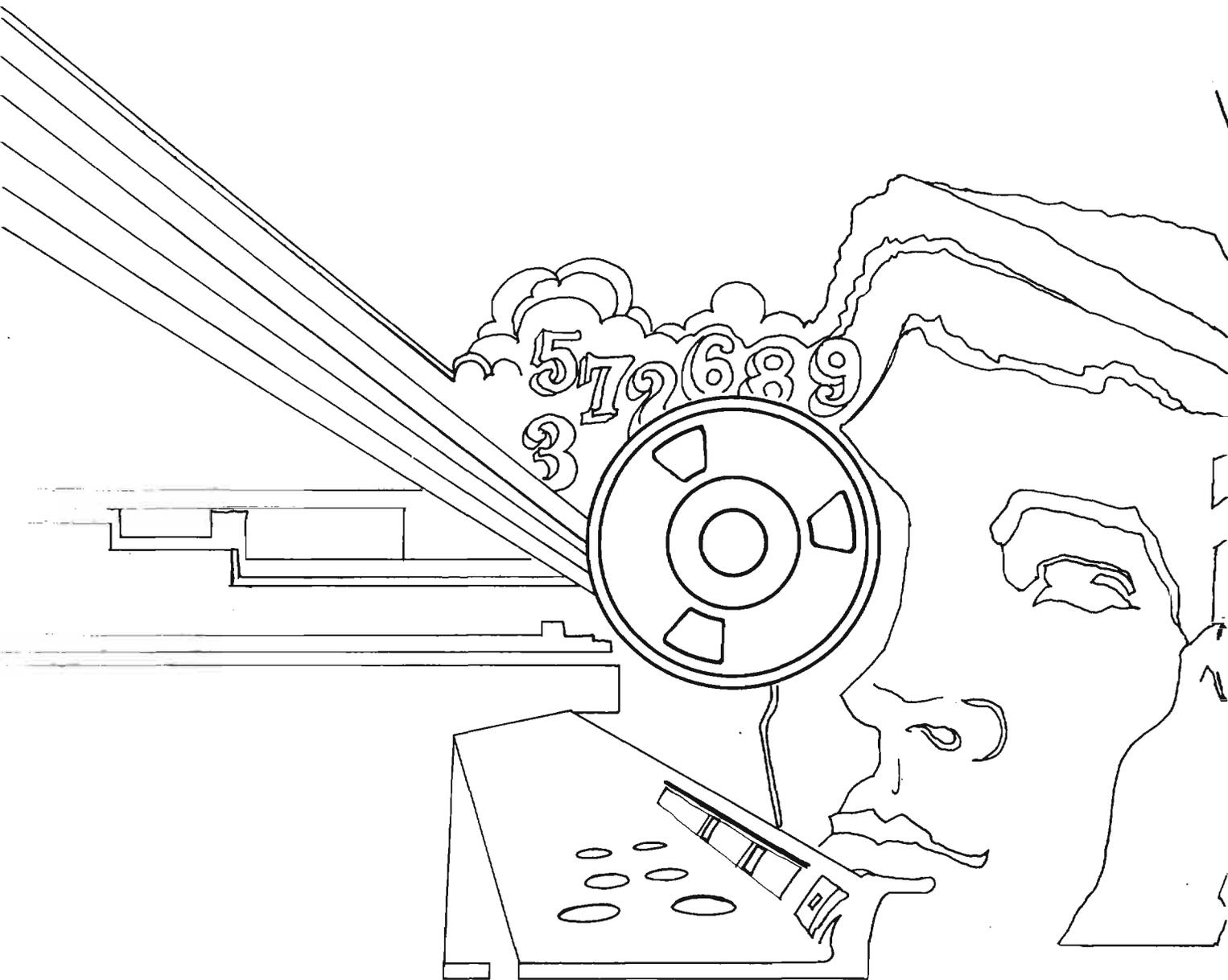
This completes my report this evening, and it remains for me now only to thank you for inviting me here to give it, and for having listened to it so attentively and politely. In concluding, I can think of no better way to exhort you to continue the good fight than to quote the words of a USAID officer in the field who was surveying his situation, his country of assignment, and the future, about which he was quite concerned. I would have you listen carefully to his words, because he has laid down a rule which I believe to be valid for you and me, and for the entire bureaucracy in which we move and have our being. This is what he wrote:

With regard to future plans, we must steer a careful course between doing nothing and doing the irrelevant.

That is precisely what I have been attempting to do this evening -- steer a careful course between nothing and the irrelevant. I hope that in so doing I may have inspired you to go forth and do likewise, and to do it elegantly.

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