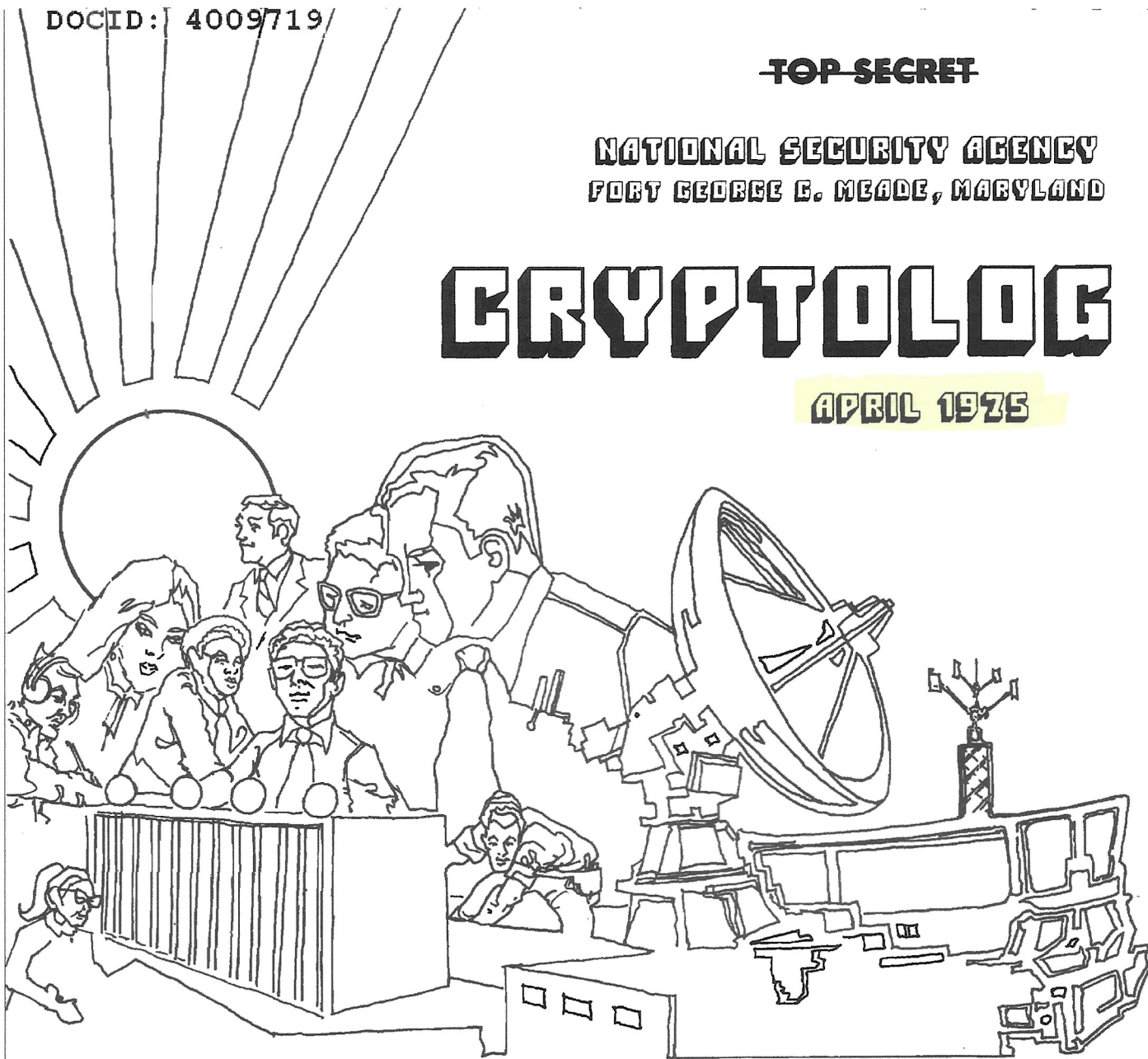


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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND

CRYPTOLOG

APRIL 1975



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~~THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CODEWORD MATERIAL~~

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Declassified and Approved for Release by NSA on 10-11-2012 pursuant to E.O. 13526, MDR Case # 54778

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A Comm Change at Ramasun Station

The document below originally appeared as part of the Weekly Operations Review for the week 9-16 January at USM-7 in Udorn, Thailand. It was an open letter from the Officer in Charge of the Collection Management Branch to all personnel at Ramasun Station, just after a hectic day involving one communications change [redacted] by Cambodian guerrillas. We reprint it here, with the author's permission, for the vivid glimpse it provides into the working of a field station at such a time.

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For those unfamiliar with the context, the following short glossary will be helpful: [redacted]

[redacted] ASB, CMB, DFSB--Analytic Support Branch, Collection Management Branch, Direction Finding Support Branch; TI--Traffic Identification; KSR--a keyboard on line to a computer; CATWALK--an in-station mechanized target identification system; ASRP--Airborne SIGINT Reconnaissance Platform; CEG--trigraph for Cambodian Guerrilla; SOT--Signal Operating Instructions; CIL, OSB, IMF--Central Intelligence Library, Operations Support Branch, Intercept Maintenance Facility.

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[redacted] Though this change was expected and accurately predicted by ASB, the actual degree and seriousness of the change was not known.

I spent much of the day running around like a chicken with its head cut off (such is the career of Warrant Officers), coordinating between ASB, DFSB and the intercept bays. The scenes I encountered during that day reaffirmed my faith in USASA operational personnel, and, in particular, my faith in the potential and professionalism of the personnel of USM-7. I would like you, each and every one, to know what thoughts go through the mind of a Warrant Officer with my MOS and experience, as I venture through the heart of a field station on the day of a Comm Change.

Scene: ASB. Great! All the key NCO's are here at once!...There's a couple of people in civvies. They're probably trying to muscle in on my overtime fund!...Look at the analysts--every one of them looks like he or she has the weight of the world on his or her shoulders. I can still remember my very first Comm Change, circa 1954, in Europe. How eager, nervous, and desperate I was to recover as many targets as possible! I wonder--do I still have that drive? That interest? I hope so!...I talk with the appropriate supervisors and learn that they have everything well in hand. Arrangements have been made for every possible contingency. I move on to the bays.

Scene: Bay One. Good God! Look at all the people! TI personnel sitting on operators' laps. TI personnel standing in the aisle. An ASB/CMB NCO running back and forth, dodging bodies, leaning over operators' shoulders, competing with the bay supervisor for room and access to pounding, searching operators. They've already isolated numerous good suspects, targets which will be developed through a concerted effort by intercept operators, ASB personnel, and good ole DFSB.

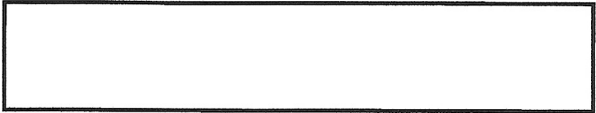
[redacted] Ha! Ignorance is truly bliss... Later I will see the swing trick come in and relieve the day trick in Bay One. The transition of one operator on the position to another operator on the position is smooth, though filled with anxious, interested queries. All known history of what has happened to date is passed along, all down the lines of positions, and from one bay supervisor to the next.

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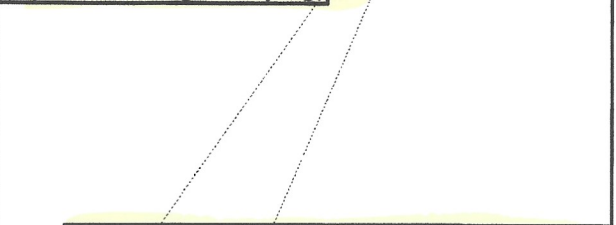
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Scene: Bays Two and Four. At last! A small semblance of normalcy. Just the same old thing! Bay supervisors handing out folders like they were dealing cards; operators hunched over their keyboards, fingers flying;

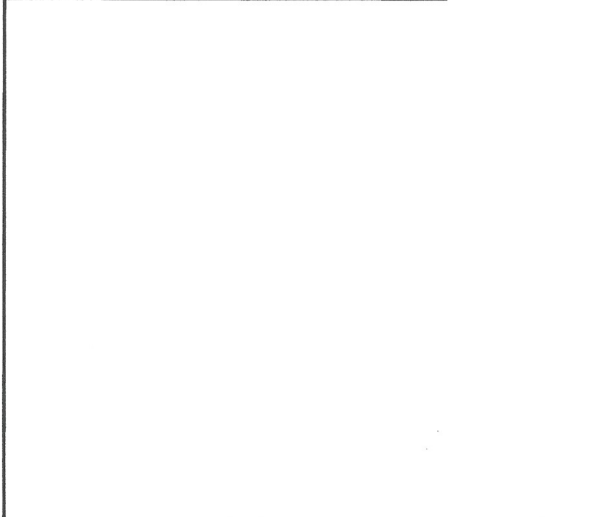
Scene: Bays Five and Six. I make several trips into these bays, and each time I am awed by the concentration of all operators, and the coordination between the operators and the professional Air Force floorwalkers. The reason?



Without these personnel--men and women who give of themselves selflessly; men and women who endure hours of noise, nerve-racking tension, mental strain and fatigue; men and women willing to endure the responsibility and discipline of military life; men and women who often bitch about the unfairness, the inequity of their plight, but never fail to get the job done-- How would the free world know?

Scene: Comm Center. Though I did not have time to enter the Comm Center, nor any valid reason to intrude on their hectic day, I have had enough familiarization with communications centers to readily visualize their frenzied chores on this "bad day at Black Rock." Inside their secure vault, teletypes are clacking out their incessant chatter. Bells are ringing and lights are flashing. Tired, blurry eyes are scanning incoming messages which pertain to every element of life and business on our post. Experienced fingers deftly twist and fold the individual punched tapes from each message and staple them to their messages. Outgoing messages are patiently poked onto tape, and then transmitted to all points of the world. This hustling, busy center of activity is often overlooked in our daily lives. But without these men and women contributing their bit to our unique tasks here at Ramasun station, we would have no contact with the real world. They too are a vital part of our organization; and the analytical answers, the operational facts that we discover on each and every day of the year are relayed swiftly to our headquarters and NSA by the devoted toil of these men and women.

Scene: Bay Three. Aha, the CEGs tried to catch the world with its pants down!

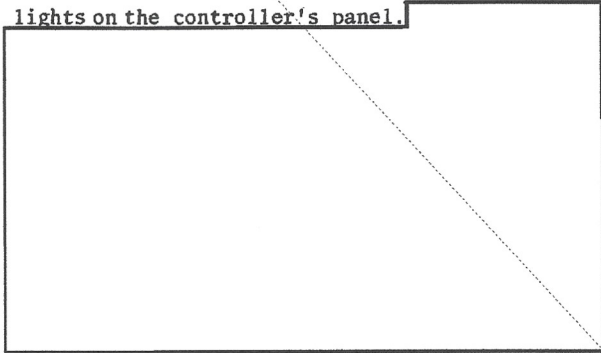


Scene: DFSB. Ye gods! Another bedlam and bustle of activity! That poor controller! Look at those damned lights--how can he possibly tell which one has priority? Which one came on first? There--four of them together! Rots o' ruck, fella! And over there--and there! Those crazy, almost psychedelic, whirling circles of light! And look how fast they are able to align the bearing with the null of the signal! Yes, here too the pros are at work. All the key NCO's present for whatever assistance may be needed, all the shift personnel hustling to keep up with the constant and continuous blinking of the

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lights on the controller's panel.

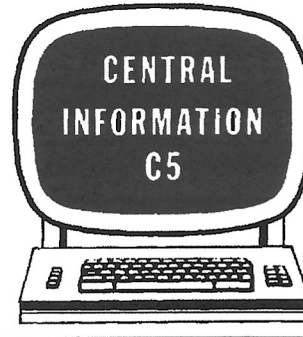


Scene: The Operations Gate, CIL, OSB, IMF. Though the personnel who man these activities are not intimately involved with the actual recovery of the communications change, without them we could not function successfully. These are the men and women who ensure our security; who support our intercept and analysis efforts with regulatory and historical documentation; who furnish the material things we need to operate with; and who maintain and repair the equipment so vital to our efforts. Though we, the operators and analysts, may often feel that we are the only reason Ramasun station exists, it would behoove us, particularly at times of crises, to reflect that without these various vital supporting elements we could not do our jobs. We are a team. A professional team. Our victories and our successes are not measured in terms of individual heroes. They are accomplished by the united efforts of every member of our team. Without our "security guards, our water-boys, our equipment managers, our coaches, and our fans," who serve quietly and unnoticed on the sidelines, our team could not exist. These people are pros, too, every single one of them.

When 04 Jan 75 finally came to an end, when I crawled into my bed, one thought made me glow, made me proud, and made my career seem very worthwhile. These men and women down in the box, these operators, analysts, DF operators and Comm Center personnel were a glorious, unsung breed. And I'd go to hell and back with any one of them! I slept very well. I thank you; all of you, and each of you. Very much!

[Redacted]
CW3, MI
OIC, CMB

A GUIDE TO



The little directory given away at the INFO '75 exhibit seemed to us to be worth reprinting, just in case you missed it. So here it is.

Central Reference Service	2C051	3258s
Information Services Officer	2E099	4853s
Book and Periodical Libraries		
Main Library	2C051	5848s
S Branch	C1A09	2341s
Fanx Branch	B6B06	8447s
Inter-Library Loan	2N072	4868s
Soviet Information	B1B20	8445s
	Fanx 3	
Middle East	4A187	4806s
Southeast Asia	6A198	4278s
China	7A187	5320s
International Information	2C051	3258s
Geography and Maps	2N075	5918s
Technical Documents	2N090	5759s
Collateral Documents	2E024	5670s
SIGINT Repository	2E054	5853s
Cryptologic Library	3W076	4017s
Language Library	3W076	4017s
Field Support	2E029	3265s
Publications Purchasing	2N111	3096s
24-Hour Service	2E099	4853s

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The Intelligence Department of the National Cryptologic School is interested in contacting NSA employees who would like to teach English writing courses on a part-time basis. These courses emphasize intermediate and advanced writing skills and usually meet six hours a week for eight weeks. Anyone interested in teaching should contact [Redacted] E12, telephone 7119s.

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