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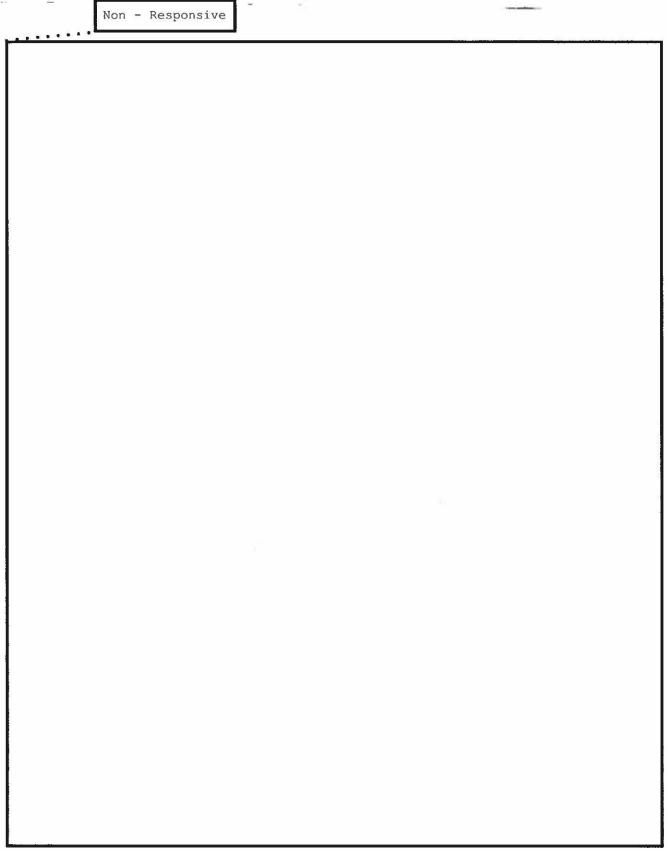
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The characters with the little sketch tell us, "Life is limited, but knowledge is boundless."

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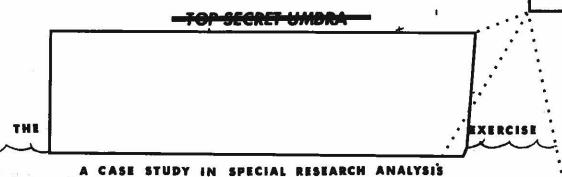
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This article is adapted from a reportwriting exercise formerly used in the SIGINT reporting course. It is presented here as a case study in COMINT analysis, research, and reporting, not only for SRAs but also--and even more--for the purpose of showing readers not well acquainted with the SRA field some of its variety and complexity, its frustrations and rewards. The message around which it centers and all the research data are authentic. (Except in the message itself, Cyrillic letters have been transliterated into English letters for the purpose of this article.) Some Agency organizational elements and procedures have changed since this was written, but the essentials of special research, analysis, and reporting remain the same, and the "case" described

Here, them, is a day (and then another) in the life of an SRA.

is not at all untypical.

by VERA R. FILBY

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TOP SECRET UMBRA

CTOBER WJANE E.

reading an overlap or stripping key, as it is at times called. This basic crypt technique is a lot of fun when conditions are right and something else when they are wrong—as they usually are. In the puzzle which begins below and continues on the facing page, we have given you all the breaks. If you want to try your ingenuity and pencil (with eraser) there are a few facts you will need to know.

The messages, correctly aligned under the 30-digit key, are proverbs or quotations, in English, from famous authors. The beginning and ending of each message is marked by an open or close bracket.

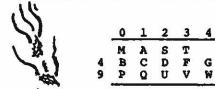
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Literal text of a message is converted to digits by substitution

through the mononome-dinome matrix shown here.



A letter from the top row of the matrix is represented by a single digit; a letter or punctuation mark from the other two rows, by a dinome. Thus 2=S, but 42=D, and 92=U.

After the text is converted to digits, the messages are enciphered by an additive key 30 digits long, repeated as often as necessary to accommodate all the digits of the text. Each message begins at its own spot in the 30-digit key stream, as indicated by the open bracket, and overlaps upon itself and the other messages in the writeout—hence, the term overlap. All digits in a given column of the overlap are enciphered by the non-carrying addition of the same key digit (8+3=1, 9+6=5, 2+3=5, etc.).

Clues and cribs are scattered around. There is one garble.

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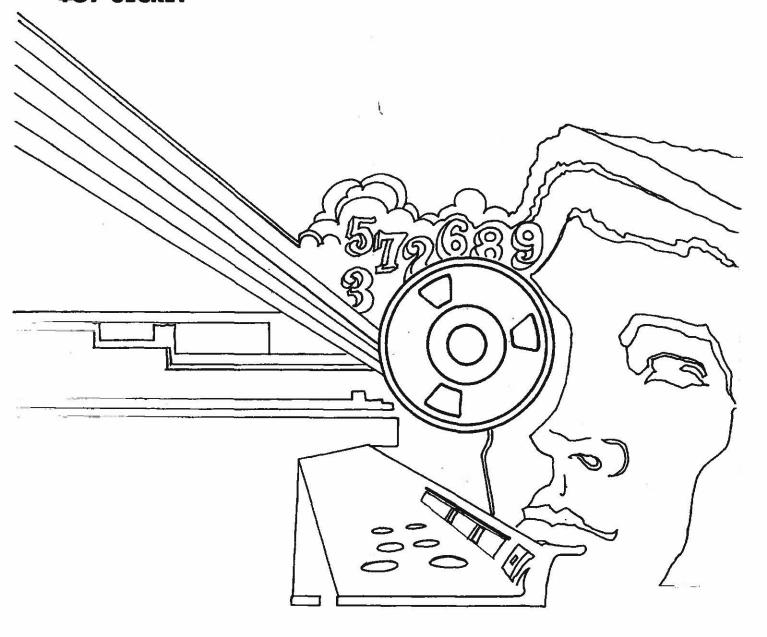
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(Answers next month)

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