

Tekst 5

Code-breakers must read (5, 9)

JANUARY 1942 was a bleak month. As German U-boats stalked Allied convoys in the North Atlantic, cipher experts at Bletchley Park struggled to find additional manpower. With other departments unwilling to spare personnel, the Government turned to *The Daily Telegraph*. As we report on Page 33, military intelligence took advantage of a timed crossword competition at *The Daily Telegraph* to recruit the code-breakers it needed. The skills needed to tackle crosswords — lateral thinking and the ability to look at words as though for the first time — were put to patriotic use, deciphering German naval messages and keeping open the sea lanes.

There is something very fitting about this. Crosswords, after all, are an elemental part of our national character. The language of Shakespeare, with its sublime versatility, its shades of ambiguity, its puns and nuances, is uniquely fitted to word games. The crossword has entered into the psyche of the English-speaking peoples in a way which is barely compre-

hensible to those trapped by more meagre idioms. Stanley Baldwin, perhaps the most quintessentially British of all our Prime Ministers, used to flick briefly through the leading articles and obituary sections of the main newspapers before settling down to the *Telegraph* crossword. The solving of these cryptic puzzles is one of the officially approved pastimes in Her Majesty's prisons. In 1982, a strike was called on the lower Clyde to protest about the dismissal of a shop steward for completing crosswords during working time.

It was all this and more that the Bletchley code-breakers were working to preserve. They were defending the eccentricity, humour and irony of the English-speaking world. And, in their way, they perfectly embodied those virtues, combining a certain quirkiness with steely determination. Theirs was not the most glamorous part of the war-effort; indeed, they were forbidden to discuss their work. But when the nation needed them, these *Telegraph* readers got quietly on with their task.

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- 1p 23 ■ What is the main point made in the first paragraph?
During World War II
- A British ministries struggled with staff shortages because many men had joined the army.
 - B British newspapers tried to entertain their readers by presenting more crossword puzzles than usual.
 - C the British armed forces had great difficulty deciphering the German naval codes.
 - D the British secret service attracted staff among newspaper readers who were good at solving crosswords.
- 1p 24 ■ What are the examples in the second paragraph meant to show?
- A Crosswords have had great influence on the English language.
 - B Solving crosswords is a basic aspect of being British.
 - C The British are better than any other nation at designing crosswords.
 - D The origins of the crossword puzzle lie in the language of Shakespeare.
- 1p 25 ■ What is the main function of the last paragraph?
- A To express pity for the Bletchley code-breakers.
 - B To mock the Bletchley code-breakers.
 - C To praise the Bletchley code-breakers.