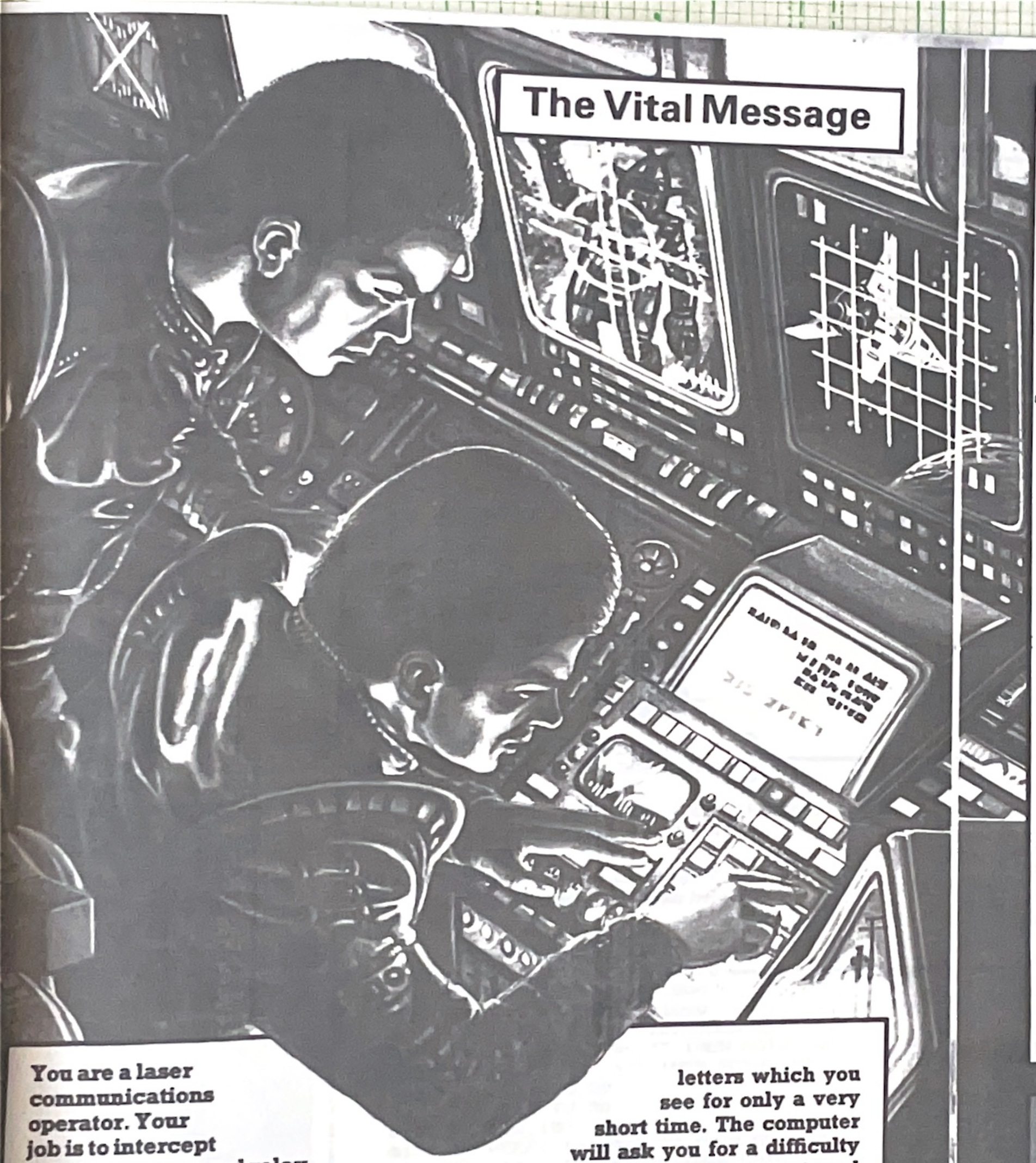
The Vital Message



You are a laser communications operator. Your job is to intercept robot messages and relay them to Command HQ. A vital code message is expected. If you relay it correctly, the Robot attack will be crushed.

This game tests your skill at remembering a group of letters which you see for only a very short time. The computer will ask you for a difficulty from 4 to 10. When you have typed in your answer, letters will appear top left of your screen and disappear again fairly quickly. Memorize them and then type them into the computer and see if you were right.

1K

How the program works

```
▲●10 CLS
  20 PRINT "VITAL MESSAGE"
  30 PRINT
  40 PRINT "HOW DIFFICULT? (4-10)"
  50 INPUT D
  60 IF D<4 OR D>10 THEN GOTO 40
```

Clears screen before game starts.

Asks you for a "difficulty number" and puts it in D.

Checks your number isn't less than 4 or more than 10.

```
  70 LET M$=""
```

Sets up an empty ("null" in computer language) string labelled M$ in which the computer can store the secret message.

```
  80 FOR I=1 TO D
s★■▲●90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND*26+38))
 100 NEXT I
```

Computer loops round D times. Each loop it chooses a letter and adds it to the string of letters it has already chosen and put in M$.

```
▲●110 CLS
 120 PRINT "SEND THIS MESSAGE:"
 130 PRINT
 140 PRINT M$
```

Clears screen and then prints the message.

```
★■▲●150 FOR I=1 TO D*8
 160 NEXT I
```

Message stays on screen while computer loops round, doing nothing, for a number of times depending on D.

```
▲●170 CLS
```

Clears screen when loop has finished.

```
 180 INPUT N$
```

Puts your version of the message in N$.

```
 190 IF N$=M$ THEN GOTO 240
```

Checks if your message is the same as the message in M$ and jumps to 240 if it is.

```
 200 PRINT "YOU GOT IT WRONG"
 210 PRINT "YOU SHOULD HAVE SENT:"
 220 PRINT M$
 230 GOTO 260
 240 PRINT "MESSAGE CORRECT"
 250 PRINT "THE WAR IS OVER"
 260 STOP
```

Prints if you are wrong, telling you what the message should have been.

The above listing will work on a ZX81. For other computers, make the changes below.

```
  ●10,110,170 HOME
  ▲10,110,170 PRINT CHR$(147)
★▲●90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND(1)*26+65))
  ■90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND(0)*26+65))
  s90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND*26+65))
■▲●150 FOR I=1 TO D*180
  ★150 FOR I=1 TO D*400
```

Notice that the ZX81 uses a different code for the keyboard characters. All the other computers use the "ASCII" code.

How to make the game harder

You can change the program to include numbers and punctuation marks in the secret message. Do this by changing line 90 as follows:

```
  s90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND*43+21))
★▲●90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND(1)*43+48))
  ■90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND(0)*43+48))
  s90 LET M$=M$+CHR$(INT(RND*43+48))
```

Puzzle corner

Can you work out how to make the message stay on the screen longer?