

documents a year. On the assumption that this material can be accommodated at a rate of 1,500 documents to the foot, it would require about 40 four-drawer file cabinets to hold it. If these were retained for only 5 years, you would have a file acquisition of 2½ million documents in 200 filing cabinets. To search for one document in a file system of this size is quite a task. However, it becomes much more difficult when we wish to seek out all documents which have one or more common relationships.

I would not try to guess what records, secret or otherwise, you possess. I can only create hypothetical situations to illustrate the latest developments in information retrieval that might some day be useful to you. Let us take for example the crisis in Rhodesia. It may suddenly become necessary that you retrieve for immediate perusal all of the messages that arrived from certain major posts on that subject during a specific two-week period. These are on file and even if kept current they are intermingled with the 20,000 other documents that arrived during that period.

You all have a general knowledge of microfilming and know that up to a short time ago the images of a microfilm could be reached only by running them through a viewer, locating by sight the alphabetical or numerical designation of the frame or frames you wanted to examine. Many new locating devices and methods for rapid use of microfilm are in the course of development and some are already with us.

Aperture Cards - The automatic punched card sorter has been borrowed to help put in sequence and file large numbers of microfilmed images containing documents, maps, drawings, codes and all sorts of information. These transparencies are mounted in punched cards which are coded and which can then be sorted, merged, collated, sequenced or withdrawn from the files when desired. While it is unlikely that you would run a huge batch of such cards to extract one document you would certainly do so to extract a large number of documents related to one subject. Example: retrieval of all drawings related to the fire control system of a class of destroyer up for redesign.

Film Jacket or Strips - Clear acetate film strips are available in jackets each with 12 frames on related subjects. The individual frames may be updated. The user can make prints while the film is in its jacket. Plastic strips are also available that will hold up to 31 frames.

Microfiche Films - These are rectangular sheets of film made with a step camera. Each one holds about 70 images, usually on one subject. A disadvantage is that a single frame cannot be altered without altering the whole unit.