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Defending Our Nation. Securing The Future.

(U//~~FOUO~~) History Today - 24 January 2008

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(U) Once upon a time, at NSA Fort Meade's "Big Four," there was an alternative to vending machines for seeking sustenance without long-distance travel to the cafeterias. What we now call the "Old Headquarters Building," then formally known as "Annex I," contained a unique and now all-but-forgotten- except-to-old-timers feature. At the end of each odd-numbered floor was a snack bar.

(U) All the snack bars were manned by an actual human being who served up a variety of food. The typical fare was sandwiches, doughnuts, chips, soda, and candy. Hot food was available as well. One could obtain cheeseburgers off the grill, or hot dogs; soups could be dished out; piping coffee could be doctored to taste; for a time they had deep fryers.

(U) These canteens flourished for a short period from the opening of HQS in 1965. But by the early 1970s, this convenience had fallen victim to the ever-looming menace of "reorg." The snack bars were covered over, had dispensing machines placed in front of them, or were taken out entirely. Over the years, there have been occasions when one of them has been unexpectedly "unearthed" to the astonishment of construction workers. Otherwise, they are just fading memories.

(U) TOMORROW: a little something on one of the most frequently asked questions about food and drink at NSA.

(U) [Larger view of photo](#)

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