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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Jordan Bureau Monthly Report - August 1981

I. General

A. As a member of the Country Team, the bureau chief was among the delegation greeting newly appointed Ambassador Richard Viets at the airport upon his arrival and attending his presentation of credentials to King Husayn. The Ambassador's arrival engendered more than the usual amount of chaos even for Jordan. First, as the motorcade was preparing to leave the embassy, word was passed that the plane would be an hour late, allowing all concerned to retire to the American Club for refreshments. Then as foam mustaches were beginning to appear around the bar, word came that the plane already landed. This was followed by a mad scramble for the cars, with two of the slower chugalugers being left behind, and a frantic dash for the airport, where it was learned that the plane was still an hour late. The chaos didn't end there. Rushing out of the Embassy the next day to catch a car to the DCM's luncheon for the Ambassador, the consul fell into a ditch being dug for a sewer main. Despite breaking his glasses, tearing the knees out of his pants and suffering numerous cuts and bruises, he managed to climb out unaided and showed up in time for dessert.

B. Before presenting his credentials, Ambassador Viets told the Country Team that depending upon his reception by King Husayn, he would either be sending back a 4-word or 400-word cable to Washington. It appeared that it would be a 4-word cable when the audience lasted only a brief few minutes, but upon returning to the Embassy residence, the Ambassador informed everyone that the King has invited him back for a lengthy visit that afternoon, and relations have been good between the two since.

C. The week after his arrival, the Ambassador paid a 45-minute visit to the Bureau, having become acquainted with FBIS during his tour in Tel-Aviv. The Ambassador had nothing but praise for FBIS and its product, stressing its importance and efficiency while citing its low operating costs. He went on to state that if there were any problems such as low starting salaries for monitors, he would be glad to go to bat for the Bureau and FBIS with the department.

The Ambassador said that his only problem was that he was not receiving our copy quickly enough, whereupon the Political officer accompanying him acknowledged that it was his section's fault because they were only picking up the copy once a day and then screening it before passing it on. The officer said he would make arrangements to have the copy collected throughout the day. The Bureau later proposed that a printer be installed in the Political Section and a ponyline

fed from the bure so that copy would be received within minutes. The Ambassador was delighted with the proposal and the Bureau Chief and the head of the Political Section are now working out the details.

## II. OPERATIONS

A. Jordan and Gulf bureaus eliminated a chronic source of duplicate processing by transferring to Gulf on 22 August primary coverage of GNA, QNA and ENA to complement Gulf Bureau's coverage of the Gulf radios. Jordan Bureau is retaining coverage of the GNA 2030-2100 GMT transmission for processing of priority material.

B. The Bureau has formally assumed coverage of the hourly newscasts of the Monacan commercial radio station Radio Monte Carlo. The bureau had placed these casts on special coverage in the early days of the Syrian missile crisis. Over time, it became clear that this station, with its own staff of regional correspondents, provides reporting on Middle East developments that rivals the Western news agencies both in speed and coverage.

C. A rash of rumors concerning Jordanian political and military affairs appeared in the regional media during August. Among them were reports of an attempted coup d'etat, subsequently denied by the Prime Minister according to Monte Carlo Radio, and the Jordanian downing of two Israeli aircraft. One surprise Jordanian announcement, according to Embassy officers notified by FBIS, was the replacement and resignation of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Majali.

D. Syrian television on 18 August telecast lengthy and rare footage of Rif'at al-Asad, the Syrian president's brother and commander of the Syrian defense squads, observing a women's airborne exercise. A videorecording of the telecast was pouched to Headquarters.

## III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Monitor [ ] and monitor trainee [ ] submitted their intentions to resign effective the end of the month. STAT

B. Chief Monitor [ ] returned from EOC leave 13 August. STAT

C. Bureau Chief [ ] and children arrived from the States to join him 14 August. STAT

## IV. VISITS

Chief Analyst [ ] TDY 5-9 August STAT

## V. OTHER

Senior Editor [ ] ended his Amman athletic career by winning in concert with his partner, a member of the military's I-HAWK contingent, a two-day round-robin doubles tournament among U.S. Embassy employees. STAT

[ ]  
Chief, Jordan Bureau STAT