

3 April 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director FBIS
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Nicosia Bureau--March 1981

I. GENERAL

During March the bureau set a new record for filed wordage since it reopened in Nicosia in 1975--over 480,000 words. Across-the-board Arabic, Persian and Greek-language coverage augmentation since the beginning of the year, plus coverage from AFP of events in Poland and a record-breaking plane hijacking incident which ended in Damascus, accounted for the increase in wordage.

On 1 April the bureau activated the remoting of Athens radios from the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority's Pissouri antenna site on the southern coast of Cyprus following signing of an initial one year formal agreement.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. On 15 March and 24 March the bureau temporarily resumed primary coverage of the clandestine Voice of Palestine radio 1100-1300 and 0500-0700 gmt broadcasts respectively, as those casts became unmonitored at Jordan Bureau.

2. MAY, the weekly newspaper of the ruling Egyptian National Democratic Party, commenced publication on 1 March. Articles in initial issues, including a weekly article by President as-Sadat, were heavily covered by MENA. The bureau is texting any MENA versions of the first eight articles by As-Sadat to aid in determining whether they should be added to mandatory texting requirements.

3. On 29 March the bureau became involved in a sample check of the Iranian clandestine Voice of Iran Persian-language radio when it became evident that reception of the 1805-1900 cast was better at Nicosia than at Gulf Bureau, where the radio was first identified.

4. The bureau phonepatched part of a Tehran radio broadcast to BBC on 16 March.

2.

B. Lateral/Special Services

1. On 18 March Beirut Embassy requested the text of a Voice of Hope radio statement by disaffected Lebanese Army Major Sa'd Haddad calling for retaliation shelling of Southern Lebanon. Unfortunately, the statement had not been monitored by Nicosia, as Haddad's radio, broadcasting from an enclave in Lebanon, follows no set program schedule. On 20 March, headquarters chimed in with a request--kicked off by a Washington POST article on Haddad--to provide fullest coverage possible of Haddad's utterances. The bureau's filed wordage for Voice of Hope subsequently jumped from 1,000 words in February to 11,000 in March.

2. During the month the bureau wirefiled sample program summaries for two sets of Damascus TV videotapes sent from Tel Aviv Bureau.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Senior Editor [redacted] has been designated standby editor for Brindisi.] STAT

B. [redacted] Eloise Page visited the bureau on 19 March. STAT

C. A State Department inspectors' team visited the bureau on 12 March.

D. Regional Engineer [redacted] visited Tel Aviv TDY 17 February-8 March. STAT

E. Chief Monitor [redacted] visited Abdijan TDY 12-31 March. STAT

[redacted] STAT
Nicosia Bureau Chief

Attachments:

- A. Operations (including Production and Traffic Reports)
- B. Engineering Report