

MSK-5012  
4 June 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS  
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group  
SUBJECT : Monthly Report - Seoul Bureau - May 1985

I. GENERAL

1. The major event of the month for the Embassy and the Bureau was the 23-26 May occupation of the USIS library in Seoul by Korean university students. Throughout the occupation, the Bureau was under pressure to provide rapid processing of official ROK reaction, as well as media treatment by North and South. Items on the subject were hand-delivered almost hourly to all key players in the Embassy. At the suggestion of the DCM, Embassy officers showed the students Pyongyang material on the takeover monitored by the Bureau, to demonstrate how the DPRK was using the incident to damage the South and possibly disrupt the North-South Red Cross talks scheduled to begin 27 May in Seoul. On the evening of the 25th, the Bureau alerted the Embassy to an abrupt appearance in ROK media of statements and commentary opposing the U.S. approach of trying to solve the incident through dialogue with the students. This came at a time when some ROK Government officials were advising Embassy staff that the time had come to remove the students by force, and the change in media tone probably reflected a campaign to manipulate public opinion in favor of the use of force. Also on the 25th, the Embassy requested Bureau assistance in rapid translation of a letter to the student occupiers from Kim Tae-chung and Kim Young-sam, the two most influential ROK opposition politicians. The Embassy needed text of the letter in English immediately, and it was quickly translated by Korean monitor [redacted]. On the 26th, a few hours after the students peacefully left the library, Embassy secretaries used Bureau transcribers and typewriters to facilitate transcription of a lengthy press conference by Ambassador Walker and other senior Embassy officers on the conclusion of the takeover. Political Counselor Harry Dunlop, who handled most of the negotiations with the students, expressed specific thanks to the Bureau for its support at the weekly Country Team meeting on the 31st.

2. Another event in front of the Embassy, though less widely reported than the USIS sit-in, also reveals something about the Korean character. On the afternoon of the 10th the Bureau Chief was brought to his feet by a loud crash on the street outside. He looked out the window to see that two cases of soft drinks had fallen from a passing truck, spreading a wide swath of broken glass across the busy avenue. Literally within seconds, a previously invisible group of uniformed street cleaners appeared, armed with brooms, large dustpans and a wheel barrow. Dodging heavy traffic, they cleaned up

the entire mess in considerably less than five minutes. This has led several observers to suggest that Seoul's constant tidy appearance may be due to a vast, unsung cleaning crew that waits underground, always alert to the sound of breaking glass.

## II. OPERATIONS

### A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. A variety of events other than the USIS occupation helped push the Bureau's total publishable wordage and Korean translated wordage figures to all-time highs. Total wordage was just under 730,000, only the second time the Bureau has topped the 700,000 mark.

2. In Seoul, the recently elected National Assembly opened its first session on 13 May, featuring a vibrant opposition party for the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic. The opposition New Korea Democratic Party led off the session by demanding discussion of several issues that the ruling DJP sees as anathema. The confrontational nature of such politics, and the ROK media's willingness or ability to report on them, demands broader and more diligent selection from the ROK media, and the Bureau has raised its selection threshold accordingly in response to this new reality.

3. North and South Korea opened the long-delayed economic and Red Cross talks during the month, with both sides quickly surfacing proposals to open trade and resolve the problem of reunifying families separated during the Korean War. North and South continued to offer proposals for beginning Parliamentary talks during the month as well, with the South proposing preliminary discussions on the subject for 10 July. The Bureau filed extensive official reportage and media comment from both sides on the various aspects of the talks, with many of the items used as the basis for Embassy cables.

4. Other contributors to the record monthly wordage were visits to the DPRK by Chinese leader Hu Yaobang early in May, and Bulgaria's Todor Zhivkov in the last few days of the month. The Zhivkov visit in particular, with voluminous reportage on several dinners, leader meetings, and tours, added significantly to the Bureau workload.

5. In an effort to reduce the workload on Chinese monitors in Hong Kong, in mid-May Seoul took over coverage of Hebei and Beijing City radios and the two provincial papers of the area. This additional work probably will nudge translated wordage in Seoul's Chinese Unit to an average of over 100,000 words per month--well over double what it was in 1983, before Hong Kong transferred coverage of five provincial papers to Seoul.

### B. Communications

Continuing problems with the new Primary Mode II communications path through Clark AFB caused the Bureau and TCU to temporarily switch back to the old  path until Clark completes the upgrade of its equipment, which should end the poor quality of the circuit.

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C. Technical

The Bureau received three new Sony transcribers from Headquarters --the first installment of a Headquarters-approved plan to gradually replace all the Bureau's aging transcribers over 2 years. In addition, some 35 old audio cassette recorders, recently made redundant with the purchase of improved replacements, were sold at Embassy auction.

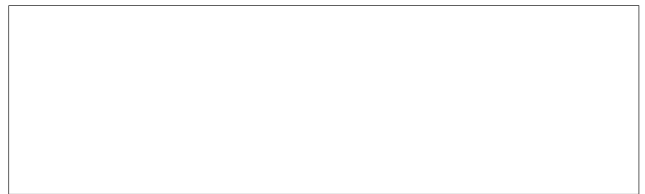
III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

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Chief, Seoul Bureau

Attachment

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Hong Kong Bureau  
Acting Chief, Okinawa Bureau

SEOUL BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR May, 1985I. TOTAL FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	729,960
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	147,630
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,804

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	13,265 min	5,850 min	104 issues
III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			

CHINA (PRC)			
Beijing in			
Korean to Korea	3,950		
Beijing City Service in			
Mandarin	900		
Changchun Jilin Provincial Service in			
Mandarin	4,570		
Harbin Heilongjiang Provincial Service in			
Mandarin	15,550		
Hohhot Nei Monggol Regional Service in			
Mandarin	5,450		
Jinan Shandong Provincial Service in			
Mandarin	8,270		
Shenyang Liaoning Provincial Service in			
Mandarin	5,050		
Shijiazhuang Hebei Provincial Service in			
Mandarin	2,550		
Tianjin City Service in			
Mandarin	4,540		
Beijing BEIJING RIBAO in			-0-
Chinese			
Changchun JILIN RIBAO in			2,050
Chinese			
Harbin HEILONGJIANG RIBAO in			3,570
Chinese			
Hohhot NEIMENGGU RIBAO in			16,300
Chinese			
Jinan DAZHONG RIBAO in			1,850
Chinese			
Shenyang LIAONING RIBAO IN			4,950
Chinese			
Shijiazhuang HEBEI RIBAO in			-0-
Chinese			
Tianjin TIANJIN RIBAO IN			55,100
Chinese			

CLANDESTINE (Clandestine) Voice of the Revolutionary Party for Reunification in Korean to South Korea	54,290
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	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
KOREA (NORTH)			
Pyongyang Domestic Service in Korean	150,620		
Pyongyang KCNA in English		169,950	
Pyongyang KULLOJA in Korean			-0-
KOREA (SOUTH)			
Seoul Domestic Service in Korean	29,230		
Seoul YONHAP in English		51,300	
Seoul CHOSON ILBO in Korean			7,950
Seoul CHUANGANG ILBO in Korean			7,050
Seoul HANGUK ILBO in Korean			4,950
Seoul KYONGHYANG SINMUN in Korean			500
Seoul SEOUL SINMUN in Korean			3,270
Seoul THE KOREA HERALD in English			58,990
Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English			36,230
Seoul TONG-A ILBO in Korean			15,180
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS			
Moscow in Korean to Korea	5,800		