

4 August 1986
MBK-6013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- August 1986

I. GENERAL

A. The major political activities following last month's elections held most people's attention throughout the month. General Prem Tinsulanon was again named prime minister, indicating a general continuation of previous policies. Disputes within the largest coalition partner, heavy opposition criticism of Prem's formal government statement, and particularly the furor created by a minister's alleged lese majeste statements touching the monarchy during the election campaign threatened to paralyze the government before it had a chance to begin its work. The major roadblock was removed on 1 September when the minister in question resigned to let legal proceedings run their course.

B. The Bureau continues to expand the use of its IBM PCs and is already experiencing what we consider to be significant gains. FSRs, budget messages, satellite and radio cruising messages, the monthly report, cabinet and diplomatic lists, and other administrative uses are proving to be real time savers. By eliminating retyping and after-the-fact proofreading, accuracy and efficiency have increased and corrections have decreased. During the month the satellite cruising monitor and his assistant began providing cruising messages on diskettes, much to the relief of teletypists and busy editors. The one day delay (more when a weekend was involved) inherent in getting such messages from Bang Ping to the Bureau will shortly be overcome when a defective modem is repaired and the messages can then be sent the same day via telephone lines. In addition, about half of the Bureau's monitorial staff are now using the PCs. Their items are also edited on PCs and given to the teletypists who attach the appropriate headers but no longer need to repunch the items themselves. Teletypists are also enthusiastic about the one machine they have available to them. A strict timetable has been set up by the unit chief to ensure that all teletypists are able to have their fair share of time on the PC, and the unit is eagerly looking forward to the arrival of a second machine already ordered by ADD. So far use of the PC has been strictly voluntary, and the reactions of those involved have all been positive.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. On the 3rd, the Bureau's ROSET capability was used to help cover the Malaysian elections. The audio from a Kuala Lumpur television station was fed to the Bureau while the Malaysian press agency BERNAMA was monitored on another satellite circuit.

2. On the 12th, the Bureau began filing material from the Sri Lanka press agency LANKA PUWATH off the 60 east Intelsat. It has produced good material, particularly with the Tamil insurgency causing so many problems.

3. The levels of unrest in Pakistan and parts of India are also very high, which is reflected in the number of items being filed on these areas. Items in this category judged to have news value to BBC are now being filed at dual O/P precedence at BBC's request. On the 11th, the Bureau held monitors past normal closing to finish processing of an important speech by Pakistani Prime Minister Junejo.

4. On the 15th, both ROSET dishes were pressed into service to cover two overlapping live events being covered on two different satellites. The audio of the independence day speeches by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Indonesian President Suharto was fed live to the Bureau from Bang Ping where full staffing in the South Asian and Indonesia/Burma/Malaysia units had been laid on. The speeches were processed expeditiously and later VSLs were processed on both events.

5. The Bureau's Vietnamese unit helped Okinawa Bureau process several lengthy installments of the Hanoi city party organization's draft political report broadcast on the 22d and 23d and took over coverage on the 30th to help ease their burden while one of their monitors was on sick leave. Then on the 26th the Bureau covered several of Okinawa's Vietnamese casts because of staffing problems associated with typhoon Vera.

B. Lateral Services

1. On the 19th, the Bureau received a request from the American Consulate in Peshawar asking that it be added as a recipient of FBIS material on Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Bureau began sending them responsive material and the request was passed on to L&R.

2. The Bureau processed one item at the request of the American Embassy in Laos during the month.

C. Technical

Four racks of microwave equipment and two dish antennas were received from Headquarters. The new microwave will replace the current one which is not capable of handling the ROSET television capability.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

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1. On the 2nd, [] departed for home leave and reassignment to London Bureau. Also on the 2nd, [] arrived PCS to join the Bureau and her husband [] transferred from Abidjan Bureau.

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2. On 3 August, Editors [redacted] were promoted to GS-10.

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3. The Bureau received word on the 30th that South Asian Unit Chief [redacted] had had successful heart surgery in Oakland, California while on end-of-tour travel. The surgery came as a surprise to us at the Bureau, but we were all glad to hear that [redacted] came through it nicely. STAT The doctor has prescribed a minimum of 2 months rest.

IV. VISITS

1. On the 14th, Nicosia Bureau monitor [redacted] while on STAT personal travel in Thailand.

2. Dennis Halpin, State INR political analyst for Indochina, visited the Bureau for a tour and discussion on current area topics with Bureau management and monitors.

3. Harriet Isom, charge-designate for the American Embassy in Laos (chief of mission there), on 26 August for Bureau orientation, tour, and discussion of FBIS services being provided the Embassy in Vientiane.

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V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

[redacted] wife of Senior Editor [redacted] has volunteered to be a den mother with the large cub scout contingent here at post. STAT

[redacted]

Acting Chief,
Bangkok Bureau

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Attachment: Monthly Production Report



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
SEOUL BUREAU



MSK-6015
3 September 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Seoul Bureau -- August 1986

I. GENERAL

1. After months of political and civil crises throughout the Korean peninsula, August seemed calm, with only a major Cabinet reshuffle, a long press conference by President Chon, and continuing negotiations between ROK ruling and opposition parties on constitutional revision attracting close domestic attention. And these events were largely overshadowed by last-minute preparations for the Asian Games which begin in Seoul on 20 September, and by Typhoon Vera which paid a brief but chaotic visit to the Republic during the last week of the month.

2. With the opening of the Asian Games less than three weeks away, the country is gearing up for thousands of visitors. Athletes from about 30 countries are expected to participate, and the PRC alone is sending a contingent of nearly 700, in charter flights of the Chinese airline CAAC. The games are also scheduled to be televised live in the PRC. The PRC's large-scale participation seems to have irritated the DPRK, which is not participating and has urged other countries to boycott as well because of the "political" nature of the Games. Hotel space in Seoul will be nonexistent from now until at least the middle of October. Security measures have been increased, and critics of the Games claim that security forces will outnumber spectators at some events.

3. Seoul suffered relatively little damage from Typhoon Vera, but the southern area of the country was much less fortunate. Continuous winds of over 100 mph were recorded for nearly 12 hours on 28 September on the island of Cheju-do, off the south coast. There was considerable damage to crops, particularly rice which is nearing harvest. An offshore oil-drilling platform being constructed for Norway by a Korean firm, with 225 aboard, broke its moorings and drifted ashore along the southeast coast. The platform suffered some flooding, the deck listed, and for several hours the rig was in danger of breaking apart and sinking. Eventually many of those aboard were rescued by helicopter, and there was no loss of life. The Bureau closed early on the evening of the 28th, in anticipation of heavy wind in Seoul. The worst of the storm bypassed Seoul, however, and Bureau operations returned to normal on the 29th.

4. Bureau employees, their families, and invited guests celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Bureau's founding at a picnic on the 31st. Hamburgers were consumed, volleyball was played, and the Bureau Chief gave a very short speech before Senior Editor [redacted] performed a ceremonial cutting of the anniversary cake. The first piece was presented to Associate Editor [redacted] the Bureau's first local employee. The founding Bureau Chief, [redacted] was in Seoul earlier in the week, but was unable to stay for the anniversary celebration. In his honor, a small party was held at the Bureau on the 29th, during which he was the first recipient of a 10th anniversary Bureau coffee cup, made especially for the occasion.

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ILLEGIB

Dangerous. I have one of these from [redacted] last anniversary!

II. OPERATIONS

Editorial/Monitorial

1. Bureau wordage during August was the lowest since mid-1985, and provided a welcome respite from months of near-record output. The Korean Unit in particular enjoyed the slower pace, though reduced wordage did not mean Bureau operations were completely uneventful. A strange sequence of reports on Pyongyang radio of firing incidents in the DMZ served to keep Bureau editors alert and attracted the attention of Korea watchers. It has been several years since reports of firing along the DMZ have been monitored. The first incident, on 5 August, received full follow-up treatment by Pyongyang after the initial report, but the subsequent three did not, and apparently were contrived by the DPRK for unknown reasons. Pyongyang radio reports of the real or imagined incidents, monitored late in the evening, provided good experience for monitors and editors, since on two of the occasions the evening shift editor was called back to the Bureau to file the reports and follow-up messages.

2. In South Korea the month saw long-awaited leadership reshuffles of first the ruling DJP and then of the ROK cabinet. The changes seem to have strengthened the hand of the DJP Chairman, No Tae-u. Most local observers believe that No will be the DJP presidential candidate in the 1988 elections, and the maneuvering in August seems to have solidified his position as heir-apparent to President Chon.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. The Bureau's campaign to recruit Japanese monitors for Okinawa Bureau continued throughout August. Five "finalists" emerged from tests and interviews, and Okinawa Bureau Chief [redacted] came to Seoul on the 27th to conduct final interviews. [redacted] hopes to hire two of the applicants, and if Headquarters concurs firm offers will be made within the next few days.

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2. Senior Editor [redacted] and family were in Hawaii on R&R from 2-20 August.

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3. Associate Editor [redacted] plans to resign effective 11 October, to accompany her husband to the United States. [redacted] was the first local employee hired by the Bureau; she entered on duty as an administrative assistant in August 1976. Efforts are now underway to recruit a replacement.

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B. Audit

The Bureau was audited from 18-21 August. The Headquarters auditor found no discrepancies in Bureau record-keeping, and recommended no changes in existing procedures.

IV. VISITS

1. Lt. Col. Robert Howell and Maj. Charles Davenport, from the C-2 PsyOps Division of the ROK/US Combined Forces Command, visited the Bureau on 5 August for an orientation and to discuss uses their office might make of Pyongyang television broadcasts monitored by the Bureau.

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2. Okinawa Bureau Chief [redacted] and his wife [redacted] were in Seoul from 27-30 August. [redacted] came to interview Japanese monitor candidates recruited by the Bureau.

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[redacted]

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Chief, Seoul Bureau

Attachment

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Okinawa Bureau
Chief, Hong Kong Bureau

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Chief, Seoul Bureau

Attachment

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Okinawa Bureau
Chief, Hong Kong Bureau



Embassy of the United States of America

P.O. Box 199, Mbabane, Swaziland

9 September 1986
MMB-6007

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Swaziland Bureau -- August 1986

I. GENERAL

A. In the month of August, the Bureau received approval to begin a search for a new house to be occupied by our new editor, [redacted] who is filling a new slot. Working through a local real estate agency, the Bureau Chief found a 12-year-old house for sale on the same street as the Deputy Chief's house, and within walking distance of the Bureau Chief's house. Working frantically to beat the end of the fiscal year and obligate FY-86 funds for the house, by the end of the month the Bureau had received permission to gather the necessary documents to send to FBO, which must approve the purchase. By 5 September, all documents had been collected and sent via DHL courier to FBO. The Bureau is now awaiting approval from FBO, at which time the Bureau Chief and Embassy GSO officer will negotiate the contract of sale. Assuming all goes well, [redacted] could occupy the new house some time in November.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. From 26 August until 7 September, the Nonaligned Movement met in Harare, Zimbabwe. Foreign ministry delegations held meetings during the first week and the heads of state met during the second. Harare Radio carried an excerpt of the speech by Foreign Minister Mangwende opening the foreign ministers' meeting and carried live the speeches by Prime Minister Mugabe and others during the first session of the heads of state meeting. Although the radio had announced further live coverage, none was carried, possibly because of the serious conflict among the participants, according to other media. Bureau kept an open watch on Harare Radio throughout the session and processed most of the speeches carried and a variety of news reports. The bureau remained open until 0200 local on the first night of the heads of state meeting, was somewhat late the remainder of the week, and staffed up for evening shifts on Saturdays and Sundays the first week and Saturdays the second, as the conference closed -- without the planned closing ceremony -- on Saturday, 7 September.

2. Although the South African press remains restricted, some willingness to report material which had generally been missing in the press since the second

state of emergency in June has been noted during the month. For example, SAPA has resumed carrying at least some reports citing sources in such opposition groups as the United Democratic Front and the End Conscription Campaign. Furthermore, a limited number of unrest reports citing other than official sources have been carried, although the government moved to halt this by reissuing restrictions on press coverage of the emergency. The result has been a slightly more liberalized press and a few more worthwhile items.

3. RSA State President P.W. Botha opened the National Party congress in Durban on 14 August in a speech which was carefully watched by observers. Although he said that the party was prepared to consider other reforms, he also said the West would have to deal with the current government and warned against attempts to meddle in RSA affairs. The bureau filed many reports on the speech from SAPA and remained open until 0430 local to clear the speech, which was mostly in Afrikaans.

4. On the 20th, a question-and-answer session by Zimbabwean Prime Minister Robert Mugabe was carried on Harare Radio. Among other things, Mugabe reiterated his demand for Western sanctions against South Africa and criticized President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher. The session was fyled and texted for priority filing.

B. Cruising

Cruising surveys of Umtata Capital Radio, Harare Radio, Johannesburg Television, and Luanda Radio were done during the month. Black Cockerel, UNITA's radio, has been checked for several weeks and heard on a few occasions.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Pretoria political officer Tim Carney called to say goodbye as he was leaving post to return to Washington. He said he appreciated the "absolutely fantastic" service provided by the Bureau to the Embassy in Pretoria and the Consulate General in Cape Town.

2. Monitor [redacted] departed 5 September on TDY to Headquarters to participate in the Foreign National Orientation Program. STAT

3. Monitor [redacted] was married on 28 August to the former [redacted] STAT
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4. New Deputy Chief [redacted] and family arrived PCS on 2 September. STAT

[redacted] STAT
Chief, Swaziland Bureau