

MNC-7003
4 March 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau -- February

I. GENERAL

A. Work at the new bureau is starting to show signs of winding down as all major projects have been completed or are nearing completion in the next few weeks. Interior painting has begun and the laying of carpets and installation of furniture and monitoring equipment will begin late in March. We are working with the contractor to coordinate our preparatory work inside the building as the contractor completes various areas of the building. The contractor's site engineer feels that the building will be completed by the end of March. On that basis we are shooting for a 21 April activation date. However, it must be added that inclement weather and other factors could force a change. We are taking it as it comes to ensure a smooth transition from the old to the new offices.

B. February witnessed a resurgence in the AKEL-generated campaign against the Government of Cyprus (GOC) for its willingness to allow U.S. "spy stations" to operate on the island. The campaign was launched by a 5 February address at the House of Representatives by AKEL Secretary General Ezekias Papaioannou in which he again accused the GOC of "illegally" granting the USG permission to construct a "radio monitoring station" near Arkhangelos in Nicosia. This was followed by critical articles and editorials in the 8 and 9 February editions of the AKEL paper KHARAVYI in which the GOC was accused of allowing Cyprus to become a "telecommunications-espionage center" for the "imperialist secret services." These charges prompted a GOC spokesman to issue a denial on 9 February, which included a brief overview of past and present FBIS operations on the island. "Foreign Ministry circles" in northern Cyprus also denied the existence of "U.S. monitoring stations" in their territory in a short report published in the 11 February edition of BOZKURT. The issue continued to generate press reports and comment for several subsequent days; all reports have been filed to Headquarters.

C. A brief Nicosia radio report on the evening of 14 February cited a Cypriot Police announcement of an "explosion" in the Arkhangelos area of Nicosia. As this is the area in which our new bureau is located, the bureau guard contacted the police and was informed that the explosion had occurred over 2 miles from our new site, and that the incident was under investigation. This information was supplied to Headquarters in an FYI and the Embassy was informed. At month's end no new information on the incident was available.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The bureau extended its operating hours on 1 February to complete processing and filing of Egyptian President Mubarak's live

"Police Day" address, in which he discussed the recent ICO summit in Kuwait and alluded to Egypt's possession of a "bulging file" on Syria's illicit activities, including apparent Syrian contacts with Israel. Mubarak went on to say, however, that it was beneath Egypt's dignity to use that information at present in retaliation for Syria's attack on Egypt at the ICO conference.

2. Ongoing developments in the issue of the U.S. hostages in Lebanon and Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite's apparent kidnapping prompted the bureau to remain open past its usual time of closure on two occasions. On 7 February, the bureau stayed open in light of conflicting reports on Waite's release. However, the two hourly Voice of Lebanon newscasts monitored after our normal COB offered no confirmation of Waite's release, later established to have been a false alarm, and the bureau closed with Wire concurrence. On 9 February, the bureau laid plans to remain open around the clock in response to the midnight deadline established earlier by the Islamic Jihad Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (IJLP) by which it would execute the four latest hostages, three of whom are American, unless Israel agreed to release some 400 Palestinians under detention (an ultimatum that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres had rejected the day before). However, we received a last-minute reprieve in the form of a late AFP report citing an announcement by the IJLP that it was "deferring" the execution "for the time being" in response to "certain positive points" contained in earlier remarks by Israeli officials, and closed only an hour after our usual COB.

3. A Radio Free Lebanon report of an unusual midnight flight over Beirut and its suburbs by "unidentified warplanes" on 16 February prompted the bureau to remain open past its COB for a fourth time. The 2315 GMT Voice of Lebanon newscast offered no additional information on the incident, and we received Wire approval of our closure shortly thereafter.

4. The closure of Beirut International Airport early in February due to fighting and the Lebanese Forces' threats that it would be shelled put an effective end to the timely receipt of the Beirut press under coverage at the bureau, as the papers must now travel by ship at irregular intervals. In response, the bureau arranged with the U.S. Embassy in Beirut to have the papers supplied via the official twice-weekly air link to and from our Embassy here, until the airport reopens. An immediate benefit of this arrangement was the bureau's receipt from the Beirut Embassy of the 9 February edition of AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, which contained three interviews with Hizballah leaders in which a high-level Washington consumer had expressed interest. We were able to file the interviews on 13 February, and received a message of thanks from the DRD managing editor for the effort, which we passed along to the Embassy in Beirut.

5. The new clandestine Voice of the People radio, sponsored by the Lebanese Communist Party, was added to coverage on 10 February following a week's sampling. On 20 February, the bureau also assumed coverage of Tehran International Service's daily 1730 GMT Arabic cast when it was dropped by LD/BBC because of continuing reception problems. Finally, on 26 February we assumed London Bureau's coverage of the evening listing

programs broadcast by Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic and Moscow International Service in Arabic, for the short term, in response to BBC staffing difficulties.

6. Following Syria's decision to send several battalions into West Beirut on 22 February to quell the factional fighting that had been taking place there for some time, the bureau filed ZZ a 24 February Beirut Domestic Service report on an Israeli air strike against Syrian troop concentrations in the area of Khaldah in Lebanon, and placed all monitorable Lebanese transmitters on open watch. A subsequent Voice of Lebanon report cited security sources as indicating that the Israeli raid was intended to warn Syria against expanding militarily outside of West Beirut, but the PSP's Voice of the Mountain and the Amal Movement's Voice of National Resistance both claimed that no such raid had occurred. They attributed the firing heard in Khaldah to shots fired into the air by exuberant gunmen as the PSP's fighters withdrew from Beirut. The bureau's initial ZZ report did not generate a critic, and the open watch was suspended when it was determined that all radios were adhering to normal programming schedules.

7. Tehran Domestic Service shortwave transmissions were completely untraced at Nicosia Bureau from 22 February to 26 February, although it was determined that mediumwave broadcasts and IRNA transmissions continued throughout the period. Tehran's shortwave broadcasts were again heard on 27 February and thereafter; no explanation for the hiatus was monitored.

8. Athens radio interrupted its transmission for 3 hours on 12 February in response to a work stoppage called by the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Hellenic Radio and Television Personnel Associations within an ongoing labor dispute.

9. Since early December, the bureau has been conducting audio-only tests of Cairo television from our usual monitoring site in Limassol and from our remote site in Lara. All three Cairo TV programs have been checked, with emphasis both on comparison of reception at the two sites and on evaluation of programming content for coverage potential. Observations to date indicate that reception at Lara is generally better than that at Limassol, and that at least one feature program, the weekly "Spotlight on the News," merits regular coverage. In contrast, it has been determined that regular audio-only coverage of Cairo TV newscasts would add nothing to current monitoring of Cairo radio and MENA.

B. Communications

1. The bureau received a ZZ service message [redacted] late on STAT February requesting that we contact the Embassy in Beirut and advise them to reopen their CPU to receive NIACT traffic. The Embassy was contacted via telephone and [redacted] request was relayed. STAT

C. Lateral Services

1. The bureau provided two translations at the request of the Embassy DEA detachment in February, one of an article in the Cypriot paper ALITHIA on the use of Cyprus as a conduit in the Lebanese narcotics trade, and the other an Interpol document in French.

2. At their request, Embassy officers were kept informed throughout the month on relevant developments in the hostages issue in Lebanon, including a 1 February report broadcast by the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon on a threat by the IJLP that the four latest hostages would be killed and their bodies thrown in garbage dumps in Cyprus if the 400 Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails were not released within a week.

3. The Embassy Regional Security Officer was apprised of a report appearing in the 3 February issue of APOGEVMATINI, an independent paper not on regular coverage, indicating that two "secret Arab organizations" had made joint plans to kidnap U.S. and UK diplomats or dependents in Nicosia and hold them hostage to prevent the United States from undertaking any aggressive action against Lebanon or Syria.

D. Technical

1. A beverage antenna damaged by lightning at the bureau's remote site in Pissouri was repaired, with the replacement of various transformers and a multicoupler. Work was also done to repair a TV/FM antenna and its mast at the Lara remote site, damaged by high winds.

2. Two local technicians will be hired on short-term contract in early March to assist in preparing our new site for occupancy.

3. Upon expiration of the old warehouse lease, the bureau leased a new, larger warehouse closer to our new bureau.

[Redacted] STAT

III. Administration

A. Personnel

1. Arabic monitor [Redacted] TDY at the bureau since his 28 Augu. STAT
1986 transfer from Gulf Bureau, was converted to PCS status on 1 February.

[Redacted Signature]

Bureau Chief
Nicosia Bureau

ATTACHMENT: Production Report

Nicosia Bureau Production Report for February 1987

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	344810
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	119770
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1261

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
II. INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE: (minutes or issues per week)	9180.00 min.	22260.00 min.	125.00 issues

III. OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:
(publishable words per month)

CHINA

Beijing in Persian to Iran	0
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CLANDESTINE

(Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic	28330
(Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian	0
(Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic	14380
(Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic	2320

CYPRUS

Nicosia Domestic Service in Greek	10050
Nicosia Television Service in Greek	700
Nicosia ALITHIA in Greek	360
Nicosia APOGEVMATINI in Greek	420
Nicosia BOZKURT in Turkish	100
Nicosia Cyprus MAIL in English	370
Nicosia ELEVTherotiPIA in Greek	0
Nicosia ELEVTherotiPIA tis DHEFTERAS in Greek	0

- 2 -

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
Nicosia I SIMERINI in Greek			2190
Nicosia I SIMERINI tis DHEFTERAS in Greek			0
Nicosia KHARAVYI in Greek			4620
Nicosia KHARAVYI tis DHEFTERAS in Greek			620
Nicosia O AGON in Greek			510
Nicosia O FILELEVTHEOS in Greek			1650
Nicosia O FILELEVTHEOS tis DHEFTERAS in Greek			0
Nicosia PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICE in Greek			600
Nicosia PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICE in English			720
Nicosia TA NEA in Greek			1820
Nicosia THE CYPRUS WEEKLY in English			470
EGYPT			
Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic	23700		
Cairo Television Service in English	1480		
Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic	620		
Cairo MENA in Arabic		50550	
Cairo MENA in English		5050	
FRANCE			
Paris AFP in English		27200	
GREECE			
Athens Domestic Service in Greek	15470		
Athens ATHENS NEWS in English			1150

- 3 -

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
Athens ELEVHEROTIPIA in Greek			2590
Athens I KATHIMERINI in Greek			930
Athens KIRIAKATI KI ELEVHEROTIPIA in Greek			0
Athens KIRIAKATI KOS RIZOSPASTIS in Greek			1230
Athens RIZOSPASTIS in Greek			1060
IRAN			
Tehran International Service in Turkish	310		
Tehran Domestic Service in Persian	19940		
IRAQ			
Baghdad in Persian to Iran	0		
LEBANON			
Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic	43410		
Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic	29850		
Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic	6370		
Beirut Ihdin Radio of Free & Unified Lebanon in Arabic	170		
Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic			1850
Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic			4560
Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic			180
Beirut MONDAY MORNING in English			0
LIBYA			
Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic	590		
Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic	100		

- 4 -

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATIONS
QATAR			
Doha Domestic Service in Arabic	880		
TURKEY			
Ankara YANKI in Turkish			0
Istanbul BULVAR in Turkish			1020
Istanbul CUMHURIYET in Turkish			6060
Istanbul DUNYA in Turkish			0
Istanbul GUNAYDIN in Turkish			710
Istanbul HURRIYET in Turkish			6730
Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish			6610
Istanbul TERCUMAN in Turkish			5740
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS			
Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Persian	1260		
Moscow in Greek to Cyprus	0		
Moscow in Persian to Iran	3090		
Baku Domestic Service in Azeri	1390		
Tashkent Domestic Service in Uzbek	920		
UNITED KINGDOM			
London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic			1810