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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

November 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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FED Secretary			
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FBIS-4819-88
9 December 88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau -- November

I. OPERATIONS

1. Renewed ethnic violence in the Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan sparked yet another flurry of activity at the bureau at the end of the month. Coincidentally, the bureau began the process of hiring a promising Armenian contract monitor to supplement Armenian/Persian monitor [redacted]. The bureau also increased coverage of Yerevan and Baku casts in Armenian, Azeri, and Russian as much as the single monitor in each language could handle and added one Russian program from the Georgian capital Tblisi, following protests in that republic. A number of programs from all three sources were phone-patched to the BBC so that their Russian and Azeri monitors could share part of the coverage load and insure timely coverage when Nicosia monitors were off duty, or in the case of Azeri, to overcome delays inherent in processing by our contract Turkish/Azeri monitor, who lives and works in the Turkish-controlled part of the island. To speed up filing of his material, bureau staffers had to make numerous unscheduled trips to deliver and pick up material. Early in December the bureau began eliminating the need for some of these trips when the contract monitor began fax'ing some urgent items to Tel Aviv Bureau for relay to Nicosia. The number of phone feeds to the BBC of Soviet regional material grew to five casts (1 hour and 15 minutes) on many days in early December and the specific programs to be fed were often readjusted to take account of FBIS and BBC monitors' work schedules.

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2. After months of effort spearheaded by Deputy Chief [redacted] and a major assist from [redacted] of the BBC, FED in Headquarters now has in hand what should be a complete "bit map" identifying which Armenian alphabet character to print for each possible teletype code sequence. In a month or two, this should lead to production of a new printer chip to enable printing the Soviet ARMENPRES agency transmission in the Armenian alphabet, instead of Cyrillic characters as at present. The Armenian monitor must now devote time to transcribing ARMENPRES items into Armenian before selecting and processing from the agency.

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3. The recent Nicosia newspaper campaign against the bureau stopped on 7 November after the Government Spokesman issued a widely publicized statement saying the bureau was "nothing to worry about." From 8 November on, there has been no direct comment or reportage on FBIS affiliation or its purported spy mission.

4. The anti-Al-Qadhdhafi "Voice of the Libyan People" program on Cairo's Voice of the Arabs radio, carried in the past when Egyptian-Libyan relations have been severely strained and resumed most recently in September after a hiatus of six months, has not been heard since 21 October.

5. The bureau returned coverage responsibility for one evening newscast of Tripoli Voice of the Greater Arab Homeland to the BBC, after covering it since early 1987, now that reception has improved again at London.

6. Beirut Voice of National Resistance radio, which had not been monitored at the bureau since 22 August, was picked up broadcasting on a different frequency on 9 November and has remained monitorable since then.

7. With a fresh outbreak of fighting in Beirut this month between the Syrian-supported Amal Movement and the Iranian-backed Hizballah, the bureau put one morning newscast of the Voice of the Oppressed radio, the mouthpiece of Hizballah, on experimental coverage, and it has proved to be a productive source.

8. With Headquarters concurrence, the bureau switched to a new method for delivering Tehran TV newscast videotapes to London for daily Internet relay. The DHL courier service was dropped in favor of "Datapost," which delivers the daily tapes an average of five days from the time of broadcast and is expected to save as much as \$18K a year.

II. ADMINISTRATION

1. Regional Engineer [redacted] was on TDY in Amman 13-18 November, and in Tel Aviv 27 November - 1 December. STAT

2. Chief monitor [redacted] in his capacity as STAT
cruising monitor, spent one week at Tel Aviv Bureau to familiarize
the new staff cruising officer with regional radios. He returned
3 November.

3. Greek monitoring section chief [redacted] STAT
was guest of honor at a small bureau luncheon marking his 40 years
of service with FBIS, which began on 15 November 1948 at the
former Medburo in Karavas when [redacted] was bureau chief. STAT

III. VISITS

1. Editor trainees [redacted] along with [redacted] left on 22 November after completing their three-month training TDY's.

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2. FED engineer [redacted] visited the bureau 6-10 November for familiarization on field technical operations prior to assignment to Panama Bureau.

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[redacted]

**Bureau Chief
Nicosia Bureau**

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