


O.P. 1-SPK


ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Key West Bureau

FROM: Chief, Operations Group	EXTENSION	NO.	DATE August 1988
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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.)
	RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. C/Ops		12 Sep	B	
2.				
3. C/E&PS		9/13	L	
4. DD/FBIS		11	B	
5. D/FBIS			R	
6.				
7. PO/RA		9/14	Om	
8. SA/CD		14 Sep	CD	
9. C/PERS				
10. C/AS				
11. C/B&F/AS				
12.				
13.				
14. C/AG		27/9		
15. Exec. Reg.				

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**FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
KEY WEST BUREAU**



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KEY WEST, FLORIDA 33041-1056

FBIS-4054-88
2 September 1988

NAVAL AIR STATION
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report--Key West Bureau--August 1988

I. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The loquacious Fidel kept our word processors humming this month as he nipped down to Ecuador to attend the inaugural of that country's new president. At a press conference toward the end of his visit, which was aired on Havana TV, Fidel joked that he was so enthusiastic about seeing so many Latin American leaders that he almost applauded Secretary of State Shultz. The Cuban media earlier made the most out of Mr Shultz being seated so that he could not avoid staring at a mural depicting the CIA as a sort of Nazi ghoul.



Portion of mural contains anti-CIA image

2. Cuba's more open coverage of its military presence in Angola continued this month as the media followed the progress of the ongoing peace negotiations. At month's end, we were poised to pick up on radio and TV coverage of the quadripartite talks which are scheduled to resume on 5 September.

3. On the lighter side of the news, Radio Reloj reported that customs agents at Jose Marti International Airport in Havana had thwarted a clandestine attempt to smuggle out some \$50,000 worth of Cuban cigars. The unnamed guilty foreign firm apparently was tripped up when it packed the Montecristi and Coiba stogies in containers not meeting export specifications.

B. Communications

1. We were happy to welcome [redacted] chief of the HQS Computer Section, and his wife [redacted] on 24 August. While here on a quick TDY, [redacted] had a chance to see our operation and update us on developments in Reston.

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2. During his TDY, [redacted] also gave us some inside information on the ill-fated ASCII conversion exercise we had gone through the previous week. Although we had anticipated a smooth transition, our latest attempt to convert from Baudot to ASCII brought the system down on our heads. Right after the conversion, our monitors did little else but answer communications service messages from various consumers who were receiving gobbledygook rather than our usual clear copy. Unexpected code translation problems at State and elsewhere took the blame and forced us back to Baudot once again. Had our traffic gotten through without incident, we would have served as the prototype bureau for ASCII conversion.

3. Bureau Engineer [redacted] successfully tested our IDD system this month. The system is very similar to the Pro-Comm software we use with our contractor in Port-au-Prince.

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C. Technical

1. Wolfgang also prepared a detailed report this month on our antenna system. Chief/ESG had asked for the information in preparation for a proposed visit this fall by a vendor who possibly can improve our TV reception of Cuba.

2. Radio Marti technicians removed their recording equipment from the bureau this month. Since we had been unable to accommodate their varied and frequent requests for special recordings, they hired a contractor in the Key West area to look after their special needs.

D. Cruising

1. Coverage of the Dominican Republic continued to be a problem this month. On the positive side, we picked up the only known major Santo Domingo newscast that is aired simultaneously over TV and radio. The network is monitored in the early morning, but fades in and out due to strong competition from a medium-wave transmitter near Matanzas, Cuba. Our few actual processed items, though, came from a morning newscast via Santo Domingo's Radio Central, the main station in a major radio network. In toto, we were not able to provide much, especially since both shortwave relays of Radio Mil Informado were silent throughout the month.

2. Bureau Puerto Rican nationalists [redacted] and [redacted] couldn't believe their eyes when they picked up Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, TV early in the month. According to

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Radio Hilversum, the most abundant meteor shower of modern time explained our fluke reception, which also let us view TV from Panama, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Venezuela.

II. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. The bureau's newest employee [redacted] and wife Anna arrived in Key West on 22 August. Of Cuban heritage, Pedro grew up in Puerto Rico and went to school in Tennessee. He joined our ranks after spending the first two weeks of the month processing in at HQS and being introduced to the FBIS people at Reston.

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2. As we welcomed the [redacted] family, we also said good-bye to our long-time administrative assistant, [redacted] who resigned this month to take a teaching position.

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3. [redacted] our senior monitor/editor, spent 8-12 August at HQS for a refresher orientation week. Although former Chief of Operations [redacted] had wanted to start such a program some 18 months ago, we were just now able to schedule it since we have been understaffed up to now and not able to spare anyone. We are planning on a visit by [redacted] in the spring.

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B. Building and Grounds

1. On the last day of the month we took possession of a new 1989 Dodge Caravan mini-van. Sad to report, but our old 1982 Plymouth station wagon was quickly whisked away at trade-in time to the least desirable "Conch Cruiser" section of the used car lot.

2. Our handymen this month sectioned off part of our newly purchased storage shed, put in insulation, nailed up wall board, and installed the necessary wiring. As a result, we now have an air-conditioned place to store a variety of equipment in addition to the mountains of teletype paper that have to be kept cool and dry.

3. The houses got another upgrade this month as shower doors went up and the wet curtains came down. Slowly but surely, we are beginning to justify the "Conch Train" tour conductors who, as they pass the Southernmost Point just outside our housing site, tell their passengers they too could live in those luxury homes just inside the fence if they would only join the Navy.

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III. VISITS

A. To the Bureau:

1. HQS Computer Section Chief [redacted] and wife Karen,
24 August. STAT

2. Don Donohue, Public Affairs Officer, National Guard HQS,
31 August.

B. From the Bureau:

Senior Monitor/Editor [redacted] FBIS HQS, 8-12 August. STAT

IV. COMMUNITY EVENTS

1. The bureau chief and wife Lilian attended a reception on the 24th hosted by MG Milligan, commander of U.S. Forces Caribbean, for French General Jean-Claude Gautier, commander of French Forces for the Antilles and Guiana. Lilian found herself quickly pressed into service as a translator since neither the general nor his wife spoke more than rudimentary English.

2. As Key West steadily becomes gentrified, the town's (in)famous laid back lifestyle is beginning to change. Please see attached article from the MIAMI HERALD for the expensive details.

3. Timothy Dalton, the new James Bond, was in town most of the month filming parts of License Revoked, his latest film. You'll have to wait till the film is released next summer to try to spot any familiar faces in the cast of extras.



Chief, Key West Bureau

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Attachments: Key West Going Upscale

cc: C/Panama Bureau, C/Paraguay Bureau

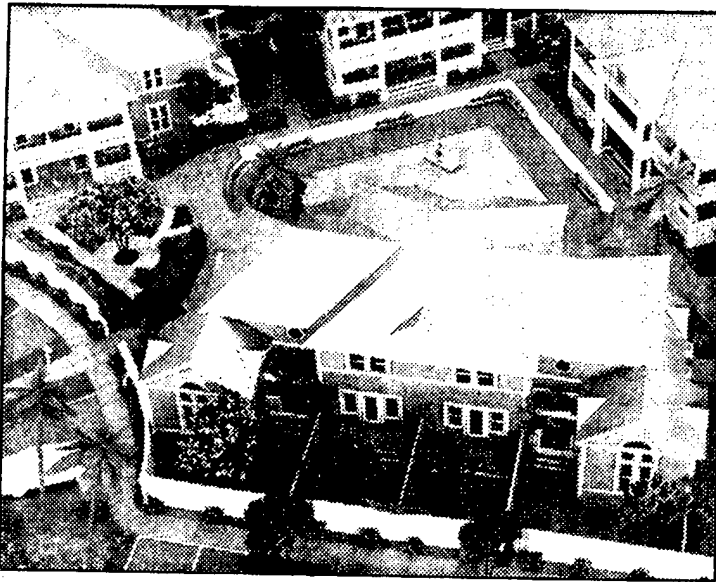
The Miami Herald

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1988

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Key West going upscale Pricey resort, condos to revive Truman Annex



Architect's rendition has townhouses clustered at pool.

By CHRISTOPHER BOYD
Herald Real Estate Writer

KEY WEST — Margaritaville will take a huge leap toward becoming Champagne City on Sunday when construction begins on the largest resort and condominium project ever built on this tiny island.

The development will revive the long-abandoned Truman Annex Naval Station, for generations a center of the island's economy. The project includes a five-star hotel, 179 pricey houses and condos, a croquet course, an aviary and a marina. Where sunburned sailors once swabbed

briny decks, yacht owners with platinum plastic cards will soon rent costly slips and dine at a posh waterfront club.

Forty schoolchildren wearing pint-sized hard hats and carrying tiny shovels will help backhoe-driving developer Pritam Singh break ground on the pivotal project. For Singh, who once earned a living collecting Key West seashells, the Truman Annex project is the fulfillment of a dream.

"This property is the life and soul of Key West," Singh said. "It is at the center of one of America's most unique cities, a place with more wackos per square inch than anywhere in Florida."

The 35-year-old developer has captured the city's imagination. Singh, a convert to the Sikh faith, walks the city's streets wearing a blue turban and dungarees. Last Easter, he invited the island's children to Truman Annex for an egg hunt. He dressed as the Easter bunny and passed out treats.

Singh returned to Key West two years ago to pay \$17 million for the 103-acre annex at a highly publicized auction. In off-beat Key West, the man

with the wispy brown beard, laid-back clothes and wire rim glasses became an instant curiosity. As his plans for the \$200 million development took shape, Singh staged public meetings to court the Conchs, the island's fiercely independent natives.

"This man is a master of public relations," said Key West Mayor Richard Heyman. "Of course people want to listen to him. He's the largest single landholder in Key West and that carries weight. It's like E.F. Hutton speaking."

Singh said a lot of things the locals wanted to hear. He promised to restore the historic buildings in the old Navy base, including the Little White House where President Harry S. Truman wintered. His architectural renderings show a development that is compatible with Old Town, the adjacent district of 19th Century clapboard houses. And he says he will include low-cost space for artists, writers and civic groups.

Despite Singh's accommodations, some Conchs worry that the development will speed a trend that is transforming Key West from a quirky island retreat to a glitzy destination for the affluent. The city, they say, is losing the easy-going style that singer Jimmy Buffett captured in his song *Margaritaville*.

"The Margaritaville people are moving to places like Maui and Mexico," said Tom Wilson, the assistant city planner. "As the frontier people move out, the marketing executives move in. There's a demographic shift under way and soon the quiet town we once had will be gone."

Singh's plans are aimed at the monied. Condos in the annex will cost from \$225,000 to \$600,000. A yacht club will occupy the former Customs House building and upscale retail outlets will fill much of the 90,000 square feet of commercial space. A dolphin pool, aviary and shrubbery maze are planned on 58-acre Tank Island, the offshore portion of the development.

Key Westers openly wonder whether the project, a huge development in a city smaller than Miami International Airport, will set a tone for the future.

"I'm worried that these new developments will sterilize the place to the point where the charm will be lost," said Wendy Waterline, a commercial artist who works in the Guild Hall Gallery on Duval Street. "There won't be too much reason to drive down here if the city eventually ends up looking like Miami. If you remove Key West's character, people will decide to stay home and go to Dadeland."

The debate over the city's future began raging when the Navy pulled out of the annex in 1974. For 12 years, Conchs and city commissioners assailed some development plans as too dense, others as esthetically mismatched with Old Town.

The city's natives were as distrustful of the earlier developers as they were of their ideas. Singh, unlike his predecessors, staged a campaign for the Conchs' hearts and minds. The natives accepted him, and some recalled when they knew him as Paul LaBombard, an 18-year-old hippie who shot pool in Key West bar rooms.

Singh has done what he can to fill in the gap since his Key West days. In order to establish confidence, he flew city commissioners to New England where he had spent 10 years restoring historic buildings. They saw his projects, including the \$11 million Inn By the Sea in Cape Elizabeth, Maine, and the \$3.1 million Ammerdown Place apartment complex in Portland.

Tony Tarracino, owner of one of the town's best known taverns and a former mayoral candidate, was one of Singh's earliest supporters. He said he feels a strong rapport with the developer, whom he got to know when Singh was a beachcomber.

"He's an artist, a dreamer," Tarracino said. "He's also very clever. I watched him set up the political machine to work on his side. He won over the city commission."

Tarracino's bar, Capt. Tony's, is less than two blocks from Truman Annex. He said Singh's project might help business, but he's still not happy with the trend it represents.

"The people down here are losing their character," said Tarracino, who moved to the island in the late 1940s. "Years ago, everybody was a character here. We used to have some good fights on Saturday nights. Still, I can't see Key West completely changing. It's like New Orleans — you can do what you want to the city, but you can't hurt the French Quarter."

Everywhere, there are reminders of the days when Key West was a haven for quarrelsome writers and secretive smugglers. Papa Hemingway's portrait still hangs near the bar in Sloppy Joe's, the writer's favorite watering hole. Tightrope walkers and fire-eaters gather each night for sunset on Mallory Square, a reminder of the days when Key West was a hippie's paradise. But many Conchs have a foreboding that their old customs are fading away.

As Singh breaks ground, Key West remains a city divided. The Conchs say rapidly increasing real estate prices are pushing their taxes through the roof, forcing them to sell their homes. Yet others, including Singh, say the new affluence is making the island a better place to live.

"Key West was once the richest city in Florida. It eventually became one of the poorest," Singh said. "Now it's coming back again. There's no question that our project is an accelerated part of a trend that started when wealthier people began fixing up the old Conch houses. This is change, and it is good."

Higher prices are a big part of the trend. A generation ago, the island's small wooden houses often sold for less than \$1,000. Now, according to the Key West Board of Realtors, the average home costs \$167,000. Hotel rooms cost more than \$150 a day during the tourist season and rent levels are soaring.

Singh says he will build 167 "affordable" rental apartments that later will be sold for less than \$100,000 each. But critics say that the housing will do little to accommodate Truman Annex's 900 workers.

Jimmy Weekly, a city commissioner whose family has lived in Key West for generations, says the city no longer will be able to house its own people.

"Truman Annex will have a tremendous impact on this community," Weekly said. "Pritam Singh isn't providing enough housing for the work force he is creating. If you work here, you won't be able to live here. The resorts will have to start busing in their employees from the Upper Keys. We call this the Conch Republic, but soon it may be the Conch Riviera. It will be a rich man's playground."

Mayor Heyman, who says that on balance the Truman Annex project will help the city, says the housing problem will grow worse unless the city devises a plan. Already, he said, some of the city's lowest paid workers must live on the streets in order to stay in town.

"The cost of housing is one very large problem," said Heyman, who owns an art gallery on Duval Street. "We need to come up with a plan. Our people will stay here if they can afford to."

Edward Knight, a Key West real estate broker for more than 30 years, said the Truman Annex development will add value to the city as it raises real estate values.

"We need more tax money and this will generate more dollars per square foot than any other plan ever put forward," Knight said. "The planning is good. In my business we say success depends on location, location, location. This land qualifies on all three counts."

In the bars along Duval Street and in small groups under the island's lush Banyan trees, Key Westers worry about the changes going on around them.

Ray Peters, a social worker and


retired clergyman, was eating a bag lunch inside the gates of Truman Annex this week, watching workman restore an old Navy house.

"Most people in Key West can't even dream about this kind of house," Peters said. "My wife and I live in a mobile home and we can't afford to buy the land under it. If the landlord sells the land, we will have to move up the Keys."

In Bahama Village, several blocks from Truman Annex, small houses that have gone without paint for decades are being sold and renovated. Their inhabitants, among the city's lowest paid laborers, have been forced to leave the island.

"One of these days," Peters said, "the rich will come here and they'll have to carry their own trays in a cafeteria because there won't be anybody left to wait on their tables."

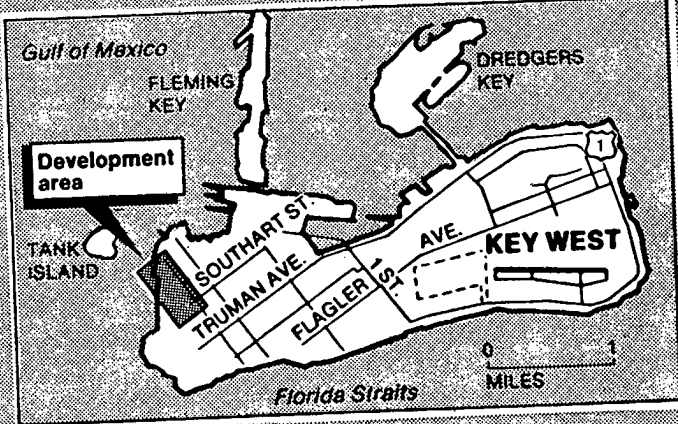
TRUMAN ANNEX



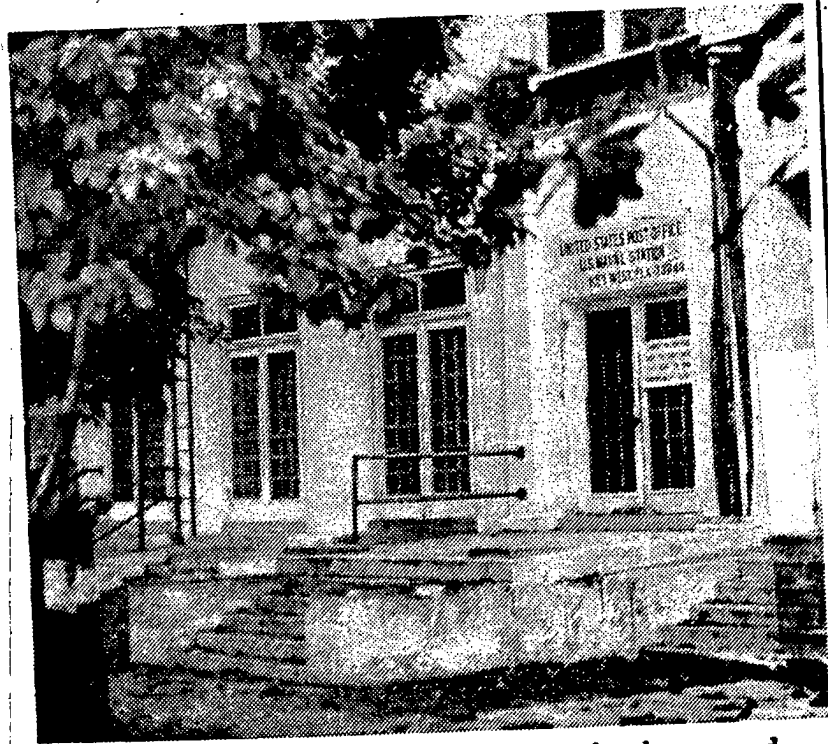
'Key West was once the richest city in Florida. It eventually became one of the poorest. Now it's coming back again. There's no question that our project is an accelerated part of a trend that started when wealthier people began fixing up the old Conch houses. This is change, and it is good.'

Pritam Singh

Pritam Singh, developer



The Miami Herald



Post office at Truman Annex Naval Station has been razed.