

**FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE  
KEY WEST BUREAU**



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MFL-6004  
21 February 1986

MEMORANDUM TO: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service  
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group  
SUBJECT: Monthly Report--Key West Bureau--January 1986

I. GENERAL

By the end of the month foundation work on the FBIS housing project on Truman Annex was near completion. Further delays were encountered when it was discovered the grade of fill being used did not meet specifications. The Navy's local project officer estimates housing is about 20 percent complete and, now that above-ground work has been initiated, it should move forward quickly from this point. A set of photos of the site taken 3 February has been forwarded under separate cover.

Progress on restoring the damage caused by the collapse of one of our TV towers has been slower than anticipated. The damaged sections of the tower have been replaced, preassembled and weatherproofed prior to scheduled erection on/about 18 February when contractor plans to install new regulation concrete base and anchors. The contract for repair of operations building roof was awarded 23 January upon receipt of a check from Dynalectron Corp.'s insurer in amount of \$15,700. Contractor estimates he will initiate work in mid-March and will need 7-10 workdays to complete project. As main operations area will be unusable during construction, plans have been worked out to set up temporary monitoring positions elsewhere in bureau.

An interesting article in the 29 January Washington TIMES, entitled "Castro Appears To Be Frail in a TV Film of His Speech," reporting on a videotape of a Castro 28 December speech to the National Assembly, obviously was based on a tape supplied by this bureau, either to headquarters or Radio Marti (copy of article attached).



Our primary AUTODIN communications paths have been remarkably trouble-free ever since NAS Naval Communications Unit installed its new MODE I computer. However, all outgoing traffic must still be handled manually at headquarters due to slow progress on getting a requested software change through the military bureaucracy. Latest word is that the request is now awaiting DCA approval, having moved successfully but slowly through the lower echelons.

#### C. Cruising

Much effort was expended observing Haitian and Dominican Republic radio behavior due to deteriorating political situations in both countries. Unfortunately, the bureau's primary antenna for those areas had to be dismantled temporarily due to construction on adjoining NSGA property through which the antenna passes. A close watch was kept on Catholic-sponsored Radio Soleil in Port au Prince which would likely start reporting local developments once government censorship is lifted. Several recordings of Haitian broadcasts in French and Creole were forwarded to headquarters for evaluation.

A mini-survey was conducted at a potential remote antenna site at Boca Chica Naval Air Station, 10 miles from the bureau, to determine extent of interference to target broadcasts by periodic radar blips on all wavelengths every 12 seconds. Evaluation of recordings shows radar noise not to be an impediment to processing of either weak or strong signals. Next phase of survey will be conducted after erection of a temporary 2,400-ft longwire antenna, hopefully by late February.

In a continuation of a low-keyed "war of the airwaves," Cuba again attempted to block local reception of anti-Castro stations broadcasting from south Florida. A review of available frequency data shows that all operating frequencies for mediumwave transmitters of 25 or more kilowatts in southern Florida and along the Gulf Coast are now also used by at least one Cuban transmitter emanating from central and western Cuba.

#### D. Liaison

In response to an inquiry from the American Embassy in Port au Prince on 16 January regarding possible FBIS monitoring of Haitian Creole broadcasts, it was advised of our inability to provide such service. Its request to USINT/Havana for data on Havana and Moscow broadcasts to Haiti was referred to Panama Bureau and headquarters.

On 25 January the BBC Newsburo requested immediate filing of significant political reaction to an 11-week tour of the Caribbean by an English cricket team. The BBC later sent a message of appreciation for responsive items filed by bureau.

At the request of VOA/Radio Marti's Research Department, the cruising monitor recorded and mailed six consecutive broadcasts of Radio Havana's program to the Americas in Spanish carried at 2300-2315 GMT for purposes of evaluating differences in program content from that carried by Havana domestic services. It would seem Radio Marti does not trust FBIS' evaluation as we "only perform spot checks of Cuban broadcasts."

#### E. Technical

The overall design and technical details of the bureau's TV antenna system, which is to replace the damaged log periodic array for channels 7-13, were worked out with personnel from Scala Electronic Corporation in Medford, Oregon (Scala produces the "Cadillac" of the TV antenna world!). The new antenna array, to be delivered in early February, will consist of two pairs of horizontally stacked, high quality, single-channel 10-element Yagis, one each for channels 9 and 13 carrying the two Cuban TV networks transmitted via relays in Matanzas Province. Should these Yagis produce the expected improved reception, more may be ordered for the secondary channels monitorable in Key West (CH 2,5,6). We would then remove the CH 2-6 log periodic array on our second tower, not only for reception but also for safety reasons as the tower was not designed to support the weight of the array.

A headquarters-supplied Jerrold VIP-307 VHF TV/FM antenna, which was mounted on the second tower immediately after the November accident, was fitted with a heavy duty Hy-Gain HAM IV rotor and control unit. A second locally procured Jerrold broadband TV antenna of the same type was installed on the 70-ft wooden pole near the northeast corner of the operations building. A new preamplifier, lead-in, and rotor control cables were also installed. This assembly replaced a heavily corroded and partially damaged antenna system installed on the pole 7 years ago. The temporary broadband TV antennas have significantly improved reception quality of Havana telecasts. We are now getting 5X5 color and audio about 80 percent of the time, with monitorable reception almost 100 percent of the time, whereas previously color came in only 20 percent and monitorable video only 70 percent of the time. In this regard, the tower accident could be termed "a blessing in disguise!"

The 750-ft longwire antenna oriented toward the eastern Caribbean, which had been dismantled due to nearby construction, was reinstalled on a priority basis on 31 January in view of breaking developments in Haiti.

Because of continuing problems with a Sony VCR tape stacker combination used to obtain some 18 hours of unattended Havana TV recordings on weekends, four locally procured Sony SL-10 VCR's

were mounted in a custom-made rack in the TV monitoring area. Patch panels and cables in the TV signal distribution rack were reconfigured to accommodate the additional recorders.

A list and diagrams of bureau antennas with detailed descriptions and azimuthal information on a Key West-centered equidistant projection chart were forwarded to MOD at its request.

After much frustration in procuring the needed technical advice, we were finally able to come up with the right combination of switch settings on our two IBM PC's so as to utilize the Superdrive and Superspool features of the AST boards supplied with the units. A "full house" of 640K ram is necessary, but worth the expense. The RAM drive and print spooling features have greatly improved the speed and ease of use of both Lotus and MultiMate software programs used by the bureau. The RAM-resident "Spotlight" program, with screen overlay of calendar, notepad, phone directory, calculator, etc., has also proven to be most useful.

### III. ADMINISTRATION

#### A. Personnel

Deputy Chief/Operations Officer [redacted] has officially put in for retirement after 27 years federal service, to be effective no later than 2 January 1987.

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Part-time teletypist [redacted] received a well-deserved promotion to GS-5 effective 19 January.

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#### B. Building & Grounds

A contract was signed with a local landscaping company, From Earth & Sea, to resod ops building compound and improve plant beds in front of bureau. They will also provide regular maintenance thereafter, including mowing of antenna fields and controlling weeds along sides and rear of building. Work will be accomplished in mid-February.

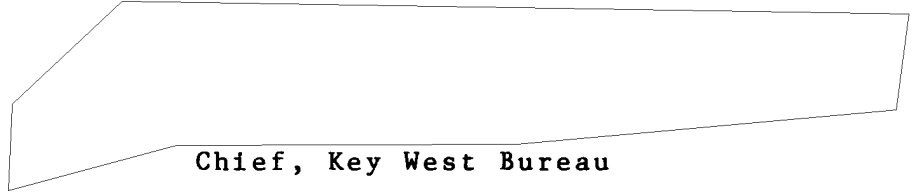
### IV. VISITS

1. Former DRD editor [redacted] and wife visited the bureau on 14 January while on private travel in Key West.

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2. A three-man team of FCC field operations specialists from Fort Lauderdale, led by Enforcement Division Engineer-in-Charge Robert C. McKinney, visited bureau on 28 January for briefing and discussion of Cuban interference with U.S. stations in south Florida.

3. Paul Schleisman, director of technical operations for VOA/Radio Marti, visited bureau 23 January for followup discussion on installation of separate equipment rack for Havana TV recordings for Radio Marti.



Chief, Key West Bureau

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**Attachment:**

Washington TIMES article  
Production Report

cc: C/Panama, C/Paraguay Bureaus

# Latin America

The Washington Times

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1986

## Castro appears to be frail in a TV film of his speech

By Roger Fontaine  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

In the 27 years since Fidel Castro came to power, Cuba's voluble, publicity-seeking leader has always performed to a live audience. But his last public appearance on television was pre-recorded and heavily edited — reviving rumors that he is seriously ill.

A film of Mr. Castro's Dec. 28 speech to Cuba's congress, made available to The Washington Times, showed him gray-faced, thin and tired. The Cuban leader slurred his words, hesitated often and appeared to suffer from memory lapses.

Those who saw the tape were struck by the contrast to Mr. Castro's previous diatribes. Unlike the geriatric Soviet leaders who subsidized his Cuban revolution, Mr. Castro had always mesmerized his people with marathon speeches marked by colorful verbiage and much arm-waving.

But the 45-minute tape monitored from Cuban TV showed less of Mr. Castro than an announcer reading lengthy extracts of his speech. It was interspersed with one- and two-minute segments of Mr. Castro giving his country's version of a State of the Union address — but it was the first time the Cuban leader had ever allowed himself to be upstaged by a studio newscaster.

Long-time observers of the Cuban leader speculated that the edited portions of the speech would have revealed an even more fragile Cuban dictator. As it was, Mr. Castro was seated — a rare event in itself — and the camera avoided close-ups.

Cuba watchers who have seen the tape caution that no hard conclusions can be drawn. There have long been rumors that Mr. Castro suffers from emphysema and lung cancer.

The lung disease theory was first advanced here when the American news media reported two months ago that Mr. Castro had given up cigar smoking — a habit of his for nearly 45 years.

Mr. Castro will be 60 next August. His December appearance, compared to a film clip of a speech he had made in Nicaragua 10 months earlier, showed that Mr. Castro had aged considerably. He was thin and hollow-cheeked. His Soviet-style military uniform seemed too big for him while his beard and hair had turned almost entirely gray.

Only at the end of the speech, when he criticized the United States and its relations with Latin America, did Mr. Castro show some of his former fire. But the moment was brief — less than 30 seconds of sustained, reasonably high-powered oratory.

Rumors of Mr. Castro's illness, particularly at the beginning of a new year, are not new in Cuba or in the exile community. But this time they were given added impetus by reports of his performance at the national assembly, and his unexplained absence from the public eye on Jan. 1, when he usually makes a speech marking the 27th anniversary of his victory over dictator Fulgencio Batista.



Cuban Premier Fidel Castro appeared hale and robust in this picture taken three years ago.

Jan. 1 is exceeded in importance in the Cuban political calendar only by July 26, the anniversary of Mr. Castro's attack on the Moncada barracks in Santiago — considered by the regime as the beginning of the Cuban revolution.

Although Mr. Castro has not made a speech in public since Dec. 28 he has met with foreign visitors. A test of his health and endurance will be the Cuban Communist Party's third congress, which is scheduled to begin in a week.

Ordinarily, he would make a speech at the final session of the congress, scheduled Feb. 7. But his absence, or an abbreviated appearance, before hundreds of reporters will increase doubts about his ability to run the country, and further fuel rumors that he may resign from one of his posts, according to some observers.

Mr. Castro is now president and prime minister as well as party leader and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. If he gives up one of these positions, it will continue a pattern of top Cuban leaders who in the past year have resigned their government posts but retained their party slots.

Old-line Castro confidantes such as the minister of the interior, Ramiro Valdes, and Minister of Health Sergio del Valle were all removed from their government jobs last year.

One State Department official pointed out that according to the Cuban constitution at least one man must hold both the presidency and the premiership. Amending the constitution, he said, should have occurred at the national assembly, but it did not, reducing the likelihood of Mr. Castro dropping one of his posts.

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It sounds like we cut out.  
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## KEY WEST BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR JANUARY 1986

## I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH: 152,110TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH : 140,260TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH : 619

	BROADCAST	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLICATIONS
II. INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:	2,575	14,700	21
(PUBLISHABLE WORDS PER WEEK	MIN	MIN	ISSUES

 III. OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:  
 (PUBLISHABLE WORDS PER MONTH)

## BAHAMAS

Nassau Domestic Service in English	<u>1,440</u>		
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Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English			<u>2,580</u>
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## BARBADOS

Bridgetown CANA in English		<u>71,650</u>	
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Bridgetown ADVOCATE in English			<u>1,420</u>
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Bridgetown SUNDAY ADVOCATE in English			<u>-0-</u>
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## BELIZE

Belize City Domestic Service in English	<u>570</u>		
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## CUBA

Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish	<u>6,740</u>		
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Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish	<u>8,650</u>		
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Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish	<u>610</u>		
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Havana Radio Periodico Del Aire in Spanish	<u>2,580</u>		
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## KEY WEST BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR JANUARY 1986

## CUBA

Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish	<u>3,790</u>
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Havana Television Cubana Network in Spanish	<u>-0-</u>
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Havana Television Service in Spanish	<u>13,900</u>
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## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Santo Domingo Cadena Brea Pena in Spanish	<u>160</u>
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Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish	<u>1,570</u>
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## JAMAICA

Kingston Domestic Service in English	<u>1,140</u>
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Kingston DAILY GLEANER in English	<u>760</u>
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Kingston SUNDAY GLEANER in English	<u>-0-</u>
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## MEXICO

Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish	<u>25,530</u>
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## NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Bonaire Trans World Radio in English	<u>4,460</u>
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## THE NETHERLANDS

Hilversum International in English	<u>670</u>
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## OTHER SOURCES:

## BELIZE

Belize City THE BELIZE TIMES in English	<u>150</u>
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## SANTO DOMINGO

Santo Domingo Radio Mil in Spanish	<u>1,600</u>
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Santo Domingo Radio Commercial in Spanish	<u>790</u>
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## SURINAME

Paramaribo International Service in English	<u>1,350</u>
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