

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE
KEY WEST BUREAU



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MFL-7025
9 March 1987

MEMORANDUM TO: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report--Key West Bureau--February 1987

I. GENERAL

The bureau chief visited Panama this month for background on that bureau's remote operations in Central America, in connection with our proposed monitorial project in Port au Prince.

Panama also volunteered to assist us by sending TDY monitors and teletypists to Key West until the end of the summer when we hope to get some people hired and aboard. Our first guest monitor, [redacted] arrived on 20 February and will be with us until 3 April when her relief is scheduled to arrive. Similar 6-week tours by teletypists begin 9 March.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

Television junkies became Cuba's latest casualties this month as Fidel cut some 5 hours daily from his Havana weekday programming and 2 hours on Saturday and Sunday, reportedly as part of an overall austerity program.

We tested some backstop coverage plans while also practicing our technical skills this month by satisfactorily recording phone patches placed by the peripatetic bureau chief from Panama who placed a number of calls to the bureau from various capitals throughout Central America.

B. Communications

The few remaining tangles in our new commo line directly up to the Miami switch were unraveled this month. We are now awaiting ADD's [redacted] and a Lockheed team to come in early April to install the necessary new equipment.

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Following the death this month of chief teletypist [redacted] our small staff of three part-timers-- [redacted] --showed considerable ingenuity and resourcefulness in coping with our loss and keeping the shop up

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and running. In particular, [redacted] has doubled her work hours, while [redacted] have pitched in to do many of the necessary but underrated "little chores" that [redacted] always looked after in his unassuming way.

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C. Technical

Bureau Engineer [redacted] helped take us into the remote age this month when he wired the bureau into our new Boca Chica 1,700-foot beverage antenna some 15 miles up the road from us on the Naval Air Station. Radio Broadcast Monitor [redacted] is currently cruising out this new antenna, which will soon be restrung to include two long wires. Results up to now have been encouraging but not complete, since [redacted] has not been able to make precise comparisons with our two beverage antennas that remained down this month due to construction next door to the bureau. We now hope to have these antennas back up and operating by mid-March.

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[redacted] accompanied the bureau chief on 25 February to Saddlebunch Key where Radio Marti continues to try to test its fall-back transmitter site. A consulting engineer at the site explained the operation and later visited the bureau to discuss the impact of Radio Marti's transmissions on our mission.

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D. Cruising

The thrust of an extensive survey that [redacted] completed this month revealed that Cuba has greatly expanded the use of FM broadcasts in its local domestic networks. Certain mediumwave changes also point to continued improvement and expansion of Cuban domestic operations which began in 1982.

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III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

DRD roving recruiter and deep-sea diver [redacted] spent a couple of days with us reviewing our recruitment effort. [redacted] arrived just as [redacted] a most promising candidate, finished up her testing and headed back up to the snow of the District.

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A remaining bottle of Christmas champagne was popped on 6 February to celebrate the promotions of monitor/editors [redacted] and [redacted]

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B. Buildings and Grounds







Like the proverbial bad penny, the contractor responsible for our houses returned to "finish" the project this month. The company apparently lost a long, drawn out battle with the Navy which refuses

to release a final payment until everything on a lengthy "punchlist" is redone to government satisfaction. Although many defects were corrected this month, the battle is expected to stretch out as the two sides continue to argue over what remains to be done.

Our bureau emergency generator kicked in repeatedly this month, roaring for over 11 hours as Key West suffered a rash of power outages due to equipment breakdowns at City Electric Supply. The outages pointed to the need for uninterrupted power supplies to protect our growing number of PC's as well as our video recorders which have no back-up batteries for their built-in timers.

IV. Visitors

A. To the bureau:

- 1. Fred Rathert, Bill Smiley, and Randy Tighe, Radio Marti, 3 Feb.
- 2. Robert J. Glennon, FCC Ft Lauderdale, 10 Feb.
- 3.  Spanish monitorial candidate, 10-13 Feb.
- 4.  O/Personnel, 19-20 Feb.
- 5.  ESG on person^{al} travel, 13 Feb.
- 6.  Panama monitor, 20 Feb-3 Apr.
- 7.  Spanish monitorial candidate, 24-26 Feb.
- 8.  DRD, 26 Feb-1 Mar.

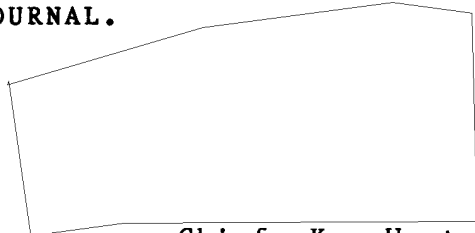
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B. From the bureau:

Bureau Chief, TDY to Panama, 11-13 Feb.

V. COMMUNITY EVENTS

The attached item about Key West appeared in the 4 March WALL STREET JOURNAL.



Chief, Key West Bureau

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Attachment:

WALL STREET JOURNAL article
Nonexpendable Property Report
Production Report

cc: C/Panama, C/Paraguay

Writers Gather on the 'Rock'

By B.A. THOMAS

Key West, Fla.

Phillip Caputo looked tanned and tough, just right for the author of "A Rumor of War," which tells about his time as a Marine in Vietnam. This Pulitzer Prize winner pulled no punches. "Our politicians are corrupt," he said. "Developers are greedy, and the tourists are running over us." He was talking about his home town, where an audience attending the Fifth Annual Key West Literary Seminar and Tour scribbled down his every word.

Mr. Caputo was obviously not speaking for the Key West Chamber of Commerce, but then this coral outpost at the southernmost end of the Florida Keys has seldom welcome Rotarians. Instead it has at-

The Mobile Guide

Key West Literary Seminar

tracted Spanish conquistadors, adventurers in sponging, rum running, cigar making and wrecking, and the U.S. Navy. The laid-back, barefoot conch-Cuban-Bahamian culture that attracted Ernest Hemingway and Tennessee Williams has of late offered up its sun-bleached bones to a newer invasion of real-estate agents, homosexuals and Yankee intellectuals, who are gentrifying the old "Rock." There are more than 55 writers now living in the Key West literary community, tramping the same docks and beaches that crop up in Hemingway's "To Have and Have Not" and Tom McGuane's "Ninety-Two in the Shade."

You could say that the island has played a respectable role in American literary history, and that was exactly what this winter's literary seminar planners had in mind when they picked the meeting's resonant theme: Key West's influence on the writer's imagination. Bill Robertson, book editor of the Miami Herald and honorary seminar chairman, said, "We might come up short in explaining the mystery and magic of the city at the end of the road, but it will be a wonderful failure."

We teachers, librarians and note takers listened to as many points of view about the city as there were writers and scholars participating in the seminar. Alison Lurie, another Pulitzer Prize winner (for her novel, "Foreign Affairs") called Key West a relaxing find in her peripatetic life. For eight years one of the 28,000 winter inhabitants, she encouraged the seminar audience to write and travel, because "real literature, like travel, is always a surprise."

The poet James Merrill, a longtime resident, read Elizabeth Bishop's memories of her 1930s home here in a voice as glorious as Ms. Bishop's poetry. When she described the shallow coves as having "the color of a gas flame turned as low as possible," those who had fished the Keys could testify to her gift at finding the perfect image.

Many confusing, even divisive opinions emerged from the mouths of our speakers. According to who was talking at the moment, Key West does have an influence on writers; it doesn't; it did once when it was more authentic and Hemingway did his most productive work here; it never did because it was always a dubious place populated by sleazes. The most dyspeptic speakers asserted that writers have come mainly to Key West to escape the grim commerce and arduous snow shoveling of the northern latitudes.

Hard-nosed Mr. Caputo and Rust Hills, fiction editor of Esquire, challenged the notion that any mere piece of real estate could be inspirational. "The writer's home is in his mind," Mr. Caputo said flatly. Mr. Hills said that people who "never earned their living as writers occasionally end up somewhere like Key West." But Richard Wilbur, poet and resident, noted that the great Connecticut Yankee poet Wallace Stevens was enchanted by the physicality and sexual steaminess of the tropics. According to Mr. Wilbur, Mr. Stevens considered Key West "venereal soil."

We fell in love with this romantic nonsense. We bought books that were autographed on the spot. Even the dead, Ms. Bishop and Mr. Stevens, sold out immediately, without signing anyone's copy. Among the living, Messrs. McGuane and Caputo sold briskly. No matter that Mr. McGuane, counterculture hero and one of our star speakers, has gone gray and moved to Montana. He was as felsty as ever, lambasting Hollywood for turning writers' dreams into nightmares. No matter that Mr. Caputo seems to have done well in local real estate. He still talks like a Marine lieutenant.

And even though Hemingway and Williams are long gone, we could feel their venerated spirits hovering over us, urging us to get into the mood of the place. So, as we ate our lunch overlooking azure bights, watching the local police learn scuba diving, we took to assuming they were training to rescue sunken drug caches.

And when Jane O'Reilly, resident and author of "The Girl I Left Behind," boasted that Key West has "all of the virtues of a small town, and none of the restraints," we felt we had finally got the Key West image clearly in focus. Far from being a clone of the pretentious Hamptons, and in spite of art and gentrification, Key West hadn't lost its soul, its dark bars or its dangerous characters.

So, as soon as we were set free from note taking, we tested our fantasies further, searching, like Somerset Maugham, who found his inspiration West and East of here, for "shady characters in sunny places." We hung over picket fences, imagining swashbucklers and smugglers hiding behind palm trees and East African orchids. For the moment, we could pretend that the gingerbreaded Spanish colonial houses and conch cottages weren't being restored by Manhattan dress designers and songwriters to the tune of six figures.

We found those dark bars and icy beers. What matter if the tough shrimpers and Latino tunes once rife at Captain Tony's have been replaced by college kids and acid rock? Papa would still like the bar's comfortable frowziness. And when we goggled at the Spanish treasures brought up from nearby waters by the intrepid Mel Fisher or heard hair-raising tales of the flourishing local drug trade, we recognized fresh fodder for fiction as good as any ever written here.

On the last day of the seminar, we gathered on Mallory dock for the renowned Key West sunset. Almost banal in its stagnancy, a flaming sun slipped into a blackened sea. Nearby, a grungy relic of the '60s provided musical accompaniment, wailing off-key a song called "Cheeseburger in Paradise." Somehow, this was Key West as it was supposed to be—seedy and, as advertised, brimming with inspiration.

Ms. Thomas is a free-lance writer based in New York.

NONEXPENDABLE PROPERTY
Monthly Report, Key West Bureau
FEBRUARY 1987

PROPERTY RECEIVED: 1 EACH Oscilloscope, Dual Channel, 15 MHZ,
Hewlett-Packard, Mdl. 1220A
SN: 2233 S O 3437
Unit cost: \$897.00 from HQs.

1 EACH Teleprinter, Extel RO, Mdl. AF-11R
SN: 122820
Unit cost: \$1649.00 from Cyprus.

PROPERTY TRANSFERRED: None.

PROPERTY DISPOSED: None.

KEY WEST BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1987

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH: 96,410

TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH : 29,950

TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH : 402

II. INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE: (PUBLISHABLE WORDS PER WEEK	BROADCAST 2,575 MIN	PRESS AGENCIES 14,700 MIN	PUBLICATIONS 21 ISSUES
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III. OUTPUT FROM ALL SOURCES:
(PUBLISHABLE WORDS PER MONTH)

BAHAMAS

Nassau Domestic Service in English	<u>670</u>		
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Nassau THE TRIBUNE in English			<u>-0-</u>
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BARBADOS

Bridgetown CANA in English		<u>25,930</u>	
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Bridgetown ADVOCATE in English			<u>-0-</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>860</u>		
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Belize Times in English			<u>-0-</u>
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CUBA

Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish	<u>5,180</u>		
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Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish	<u>11,450</u>		
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Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish	<u>3,000</u>		
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Havana Radio Periodico Del Aire in Spanish	<u>970</u>		
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KEY WEST BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1987

CUBA

Havana Domestic Service in Spanish	<u>-0-</u>
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Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish	<u>16,230</u>
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Havana Television Cubana Network in Spanish	<u>580</u>
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Havana Television Service in Spanish	<u>9,170</u>
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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Santo Domingo Cadena Brea Pena in Spanish	<u>1,640</u>
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Santo Domingo Radio Antillas Network in Spanish	<u>-0-</u>
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Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish	<u>-0-</u>
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JAMAICA

Kingston Domestic Service in English	<u>350</u>
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Kingston DAILY GLEANER in English	<u>-0-</u>
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Kingston SUNDAY GLEANER in English	<u>-0-</u>
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MEXICO

Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish	<u>8,160</u>
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NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Bonaire Trans World Radio in English	<u>3,030</u>
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THE NETHERLANDS

Hilversum International in English	<u>100</u>
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SURINAME

Paramaribo International Service in English	<u>9,090</u>
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OTHER SOURCES: NONE