

# MONITORING TIMES

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## U.S. NUMBERS STATION FOUND!

MONITORING TIMES EXCLUSIVE

by Bob Grove

For more than 20 years, shortwave listeners have been puzzled by the mysterious broadcasts of numbers groups, read by a woman's echanzized voice, spoken usually in English or Danish.

The absence of reliable direction-finding equipment among the hobby community, and the reluctance of the FCC to provide bearings, has proven frustrating to the inquisitive SWL.

But over the last year considerable light has illuminated these targets, spearheaded by MT researchers who don't give up easily.

German language numbers transmissions were discovered being beamed from a gigantic espionage installation in Nauen, German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

Five-digit Spanish and English numbers transmissions have been traced to Havana, Cuba on several occasions by FCC monitoring stations.

Suspicion continues that some of the endless-loop "kilo papa alpha ro" transmissions emanate from the Yugoslavian Embassy in Ottawa, although no confirmation from Canada has come forth.

Fortunately for the monitoring community, several recent bearings taken by FCC engineers have been revealed to MT.

The target of these test inquiries was the last remaining mystery: identification of the mysterious 4-digit English/Danish transmissions reported to be broadcast from within the United States.

When the FCC bearings were examined, the implication was indisputable: the signals on 9074 and 11532 kHz, classical loggings, were coming from the Warrenton, DC area.

Speculation ran high; were they from embassy row? Pentagon? CIA?

One stalwart MT contributor was not standing still; skilled in monitoring and blessed with an analytical mind, he set out to find the transmitter.

His odyssey covered nearly one thousand miles and took dozens of hours--far from his home. But when he was through, his persistence had paid off.

Nestled in the rolling hillsides of eastern Virginia, a series of barbed-wire-enclosed military installations maintain a low profile to local residents who aren't sure just what they are.

On a hunch, our intrepid reporter, armed with an old car and equipped with a Kenwood R-1000 and short whip antenna, sat outside the gate of one of them just before the scheduled transmission of a numbers broadcast.

Tuned to 9074 kHz, a weak carrier could be heard on the receiver; was the transmitter being tuned up or was the signal too far away to sound strong? A few seconds more and he would know.

Suddenly, a paralyzing signal came on the air: "Uno, dos, tres..."--the familiar count began! This hidden installation, surrounded by dipoles and log-periodic arrays, is the source of these elusive broadcasts!

### ANOTHER SURPRISE

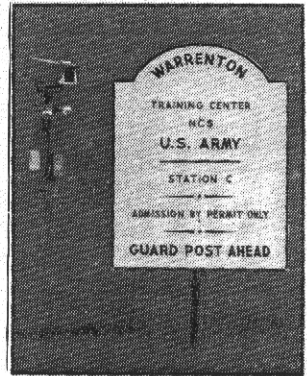
But the revelation to come was just as surprising. Off frequency, the key clicks of a powerful CW station could be heard. Carefully retuning his receiver dial, the inquisitive listener found a Morse signal tape booming in on 6925.5, 10637, 12022.5 and 15540 kHz along with the call sign: KKN50--officially assigned to the U.S. State Department, but unofficially suspected to be the Central Intelligence Agency!

But what is this installation? Who runs it? And for what purpose? The location is Remington, Virginia, just a few miles north of Culpeper on Route 651.

The sign on the gate reads, "WARRENTON TRAINING CENTER, NCS, STATION C, U.S. ARMY." If this was Station C, then where were stations A and B? Are there more? And who or what is NCS?

Continuing the auto tour of the Virginia countryside, our unflappable investigator discovered another site on Route 669 about 12 miles east of Culpeper.

The sign on this gate read, "STATION D, WARRENTON TRAINING CENTER." What sort of training? The mystery deepened. A similar halo of dipole antennas and a log-periodic antenna festooned this installation as well. A second transmission by KKN50



on 18525 kHz appeared to originate from here.

Stations A and B were discovered later to be in the same general area.

Subsequent telephone calls by MT to the U.S. Army Public Information Office, Pentagon and nearby military installations have turned up nothing. Either no one was willing to talk about it, or the personnel sincerely did not know the purpose(s) of the installations.

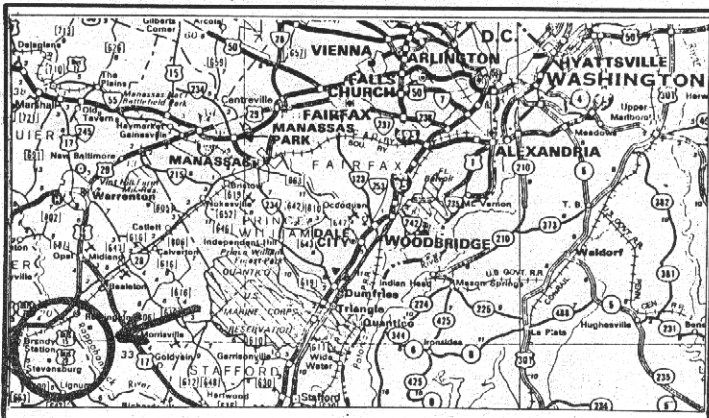
A telephone conversation to Robert Grimsland, Public Affairs Officer of the Security Division, Warrenton Training Center, was interesting but not informative.

We asked, "Who are you training?" "What agency is responsible for the KKN50 tapes?" "What is the purpose of the numbers transmissions?"

In each case, Mr. Grimsland replied, "This is a closed and classified facility; I am not at liberty to discuss this. I suggest you call the Department of Defense Public Affairs Office."

But a recent publication finally came to the rescue: an article by James Bamford (author of "The Puzzle Palace," subtitled "Inside the National Security Agency, America's most secret intelligence organization") in the December 4, 1983 issue of the Washington Post Magazine.

NCS apparently stands for the "National Communications System."



The Warrenton Training Center complex

IS THIS THE END OF THE LINE?  
(Continued on back page)

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## PERSONAL

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\*\*\*\*\*

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# INFORMATION PLEASE

MONITORING TIMES WILL PRINT AT NO CHARGE (AS SPACE PERMITS) ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS OF A NON-COMMERCIAL SERVICE NATURE.

WANTED - Any information on the Radio Swan operation, especially as it related to the Bay of Pigs invasion. All information will be greatly appreciated. I am doing research for an article on this station. Please sent it to: Mark W. Johnson, P.O. Box 251, Fairfield, ID 83327.

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Can anyone tell me who owns the antenna farm just west of Miami on the east side of Route 27, just north of the intersection of Route 41? And how about the one west of the Miami bypass tollroad at Interchange S.W. 152? Are they for WOM? Zel Eaton, 904 E. Wall, Kirksville, MO 63501.

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Aren't there any YL's out there who are into shortwave listening? I have swapped a number of photos and letters from male CB'ers and hams, but no young ladies (of any age!). I would appreciate any operating position photos from YL's and will be happy to exchange same. Arnold Feldman, P.O. Box 700, Jessup, MD 20794.

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Would the person I traded radios with and who called one evening I was out please either call me back or write. I misplaced your address when I moved. Jim Broadbent, 127 Birchbrow Ave., North Weymouth, MA 02191.(617)335-4441.

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Info wanted: Would like to hear from anyone who has researched the sensitivity ratings of various portable

FM broadcast receivers for best DX reception--including walkmans and car radios. Steve Sorman, P.O. Box 30363, St. Paul, MN 55175.

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Would like to correspond with anyone having any information on the Hell-schreiber transmissions or printers. I understand that one or two are in operation in the U.S. Also does anyone have any practical conversion information on transistoring a BC 453 Command receiver? All letters will be answered. Richard Hope, VK3DLJ, 53 Seymour Road, Elsternwick, Victoria, 3185, Australia.

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Can a Xerox 4001 Telecopier be converted to FAX? I need a schematic for it (4001). Can your readers help? Frank Young, 725 Booker, Little Rock, AR 72205.

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Anyone having knowledge of any correctional institution that allows their inmates to use shortwave receivers please contact Robert Leary at 696 Fouse Ave., Akron, OH 44310.

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Would like to contact readers in state of Maine for frequency check and others for frequency exchange in Canada and USA. Gilles Thibodeau, 3653 Montcalm, Lac-Megantic, Quebec, G6B 2H8, Canada

\*\*\*\*\*

Would like to correspond with military hams, SWL's. I'm going to Vicenza, Italy in May. Would like to buy a novice transmitter. Can I operate from Italy with a Novice license? Ed Hutton, 1300 Pettus St., Dothan, AL 36301.

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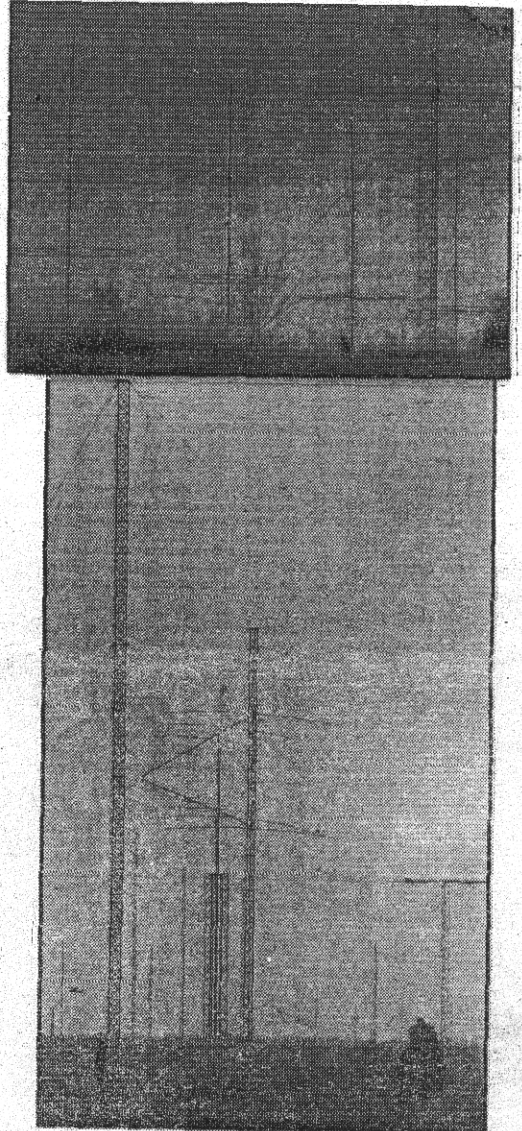
## NUMBERS STATION from p.1

Now that the origin of the U.S. numbers stations has been determined, that part of the mystery has been solved. Yet questions continue to linger: are these transmissions merely routine quizzes ("Agents, pick up your pencils") or do they constitute actual communications to distant points?

What is the connection between the four-digit U.S. transmissions and the five-digit broadcasts ostensibly from Havana? Or could it be Guantanamo Bay?

Is our curiosity a harmless pursuit of inspired hobbyists, or are we intruding into an area where we should not tread?

Perhaps someone else will come in out of the cold and tell us.



(All photos courtesy The Washington Post Magazine)

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