

CLANDESTINE CORNEROF SHIPS AND SHOES AND SEALING WAX

This month we have a few unrelated clandestine matters to deal with.

*** According to NASWA member C.M. Stanbury II, who credits Eric Floden of IRCA for the data, until very recently a quasi-legal broadcasting station operated at Pond Inlet, Northwest Territories, Canada.

The station was called "Inuit Neepingit," or in English, variously, "The Voice of the Arctic," or "The Voice of the Eskimo." It transmitted, likely with amateur radio gear, with 100 watts on 3,750 kc/s. Using a center-fed dipole, it transmitted four hours a day, 0000-0400 GMT, with three hours in Eskimo and an hour of English. The de facto service sometimes taped and rebroadcast the CBC's transmissions to the Arctic. The latest word received by Stanbury is that this service is now off the air.

The station's manager was Joop Sanders, who was interested in receiving reports, which were to be addressed to him at P.O. Box 1, Pond Inlet, NWT. At the moment it is not clear whether the station will return to the air later.

Also not known is the status of other impromptu Eskimo services which reportedly operated from Cape Dorset, Clyde River and Pangnirtung. Together with the Pond Inlet station, these reportedly came on the air in mid or late November.

*** The current issue of the Communications Handbook 1968 states, regarding the Basque clandestine station Radio Euzkadi, that it is "probably in Spain." On the face of things this would be most unlikely, considering the regularity of its anti-Franco broadcasts and the efficiency of the Spanish authorities in suppressing activities considered by them to be subversive. A European listener, in another publication, states his belief that Radio Euzkadi broadcasts from Andorra. As mentioned previously in FrenDX, direction finding experiments from both North America and Europe, in which we have much faith, clearly point to a western hemisphere location for the transmitters, and suggest the northern coast of South America as the specific site.

*** In the December FrenDX, we commented on a supposition by C.M. Stanbury II that the Voice of America's air-transportable station, which has operated on MW from Marathon, Fla., in recent years, was sent to Botswana for use as the BBC's relay station there. We said that a recent visit to the Florida station by an NRC club member proved that the portable station of the VOA is still there. Photos taken establish this to be a fact, and Stanbury admits this to be true.

Stanbury adds, however, "...on one point there can be no dispute. The two-masted portable antenna (at Marathon) has been replaced with three permanent towers." Based on his information, it appears, in fact, that sometime between November 1962, when the portable in Florida went on the air, and early 1963, there was a change from a two to a three antenna tower system. Stanbury also has information that the Botswana station was put on the air "with the aid of U.S. government-owned gear."

We are in no position now to dispute this latter point. But even if U.S. equipment does or did comprise part of the BBC's Botswana station, there is nothing to point to a conclusion that the two towers removed from Marathon were sent to Africa. The two-tower system originally at Marathon was removed apparently long before the Rhodesian incidents were even dreamed of. The most logical conclusion for the removal of the two-tower system is that it was not as directional as the three-tower replacement. Perhaps the original antenna system no longer exists; perhaps it does. If so it could be in use, or in storage, almost anywhere in the world.

With that, we trust that this discussion, clearly something of a tempest in a teapot, is ended. We don't know where the VOA's original Marathon antennas are now, but does it really matter very much? The heart of the Marathon portable system, the special trailer enclosures, the transmitters, the relay receiving gear, portable power generator, etc., is still in Florida.