

CIA is monitoring foreign broadcasts

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NEW YORK (AP) — Americans usually can get a quick rundown on the major speeches, news reports and commentaries broadcast on foreign stations simply by reading published accounts or watching TV newscasts.

But few realize they also now can get complete or excerpted texts of the same broadcasts by subscribing to a worldwide monitoring service administered by...would you believe...the Central Intelligence Agency.

You can even charge it on your American Express card, the CIA says.

For \$1,000 a year, you can get daily translations of foreign broadcasts in eight regions, or, if you prefer, just one region for \$125.

The areas are Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, Western Europe, Sub-Sahara Africa, the People's Republic of China, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Latin America.

The foreign news texts primarily are for interested federal agencies, but they can be bought by the public from the National Technical Information Service, an arm of the U.S. Commerce Department, the CIA says.

The monitoring operation, known as the Foreign Broadcast Information Service—FBIS, publishes the material as broadcast, without background information and interpretation.

A CIA spokesman declined because of national security laws to say how many persons FBIS employs or in how many and which countries it operates.

He conceded it's logical to assume that

foreign countries know their public broadcasts are monitored for FBIS, but said that to name the countries might well jeopardize the monitoring operation there.

Until two years ago, he said, the FBIS reports were available only to U.S. agencies, although some portions of them always had been made available for scrutiny by newsmen and scholars.

He said certain portions weren't made public "because they were considered for official use only."

But now, he says, everything the governments gets from FBIS is available to subscribers of the service, whom he says are mainly news organizations, universities, libraries and members of Congress.