GHANA MUNTIE:

FROM STATION ZOY TO

THE GHANA BROADCASTING CORPORATION

BY

Bernard Senedzi (B. S.) Gadzekpo

THE AUTHOR

Bernard Senedzi (B. S.) Gadzekpo, the author of *Ghana Muntie* had his elementary education at the Keta Bremen Mission School, and trained at Akropong Teacher Training College from 1924 to 1926.

He taught for 16 years at the Keta Roman Catholic and Ewe (now Evangelical) Presbyterian Church Schools where he became headmaster.

He was seconded to the Information Department during the 2nd World War at the end of which he was appointed Programme Assistant in the Broadcasting Department. He was awarded a scholarship in 1949 to study radio programme production technique at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

He had successive promotion within the Broadcasting System which later became the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and retired as Controller of Programmes in 1965. He was however taken back on contract for five years to assist in the training of programme personnel at the Programme Training School, which he had helped to establish.

In Broadcasting House, he was affectionately called EFO BEN (elder brother, Ben). Before leaving the GBC finally in June 1971, he promised to set down his 28 years' experience in broadcasting in the form of a book, and *Ghana Muntie* is a fulfilment of that promise.

FOREWORD

It is a rare occurrence in the life of anyone to be asked to write a foreword to a book written by his former teacher particularly if the author happens to have taught that person in the last stages of his formative years. It is in this circumstance that I consider myself privileged to be asked to write a foreword to this book.

In a creative field such as broadcasting, it cannot be denied that no single person can claim to be able to produce any work that can go deeply into the origin, purpose, application, success and failure of the medium in one volume. 'Ghana Muntie' or 'From Station ZOY to the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation' is a herculean attempt by B. S. Gadzekpo to recount his personal experience at, and contributions – pleasant or otherwise – to GBC for the pleasure of the many who, I trust, will be privileged to read the book. He gives a vivid account of the many vicissitudes which can plague broadcasting organisations in a developing country.

Official policies are usually fluid and broadcasting officials, or particularly policy makers in broadcasting in developing countries, hardly have any past examples to fall upon. It was in that atmosphere that broadcasting was carried on in Ghana after Independence in 1957.

The book deals with the Programme Department in depth and rightly so since the author retired from GBC as Controller of Programmes. What have been produced in print on GBC up to this time are various pamphlets on the 'Story of Radio Ghana' which I was privileged to write when I was the Head of Common Services from 1962 to 1964. Such pamphlets are official documents with no personal experience of the author as has been so well done by B. S. Gadzekpo in this book. Moreover they only scratched the surface of the medium.

Mr. Gadzekpo has therefore opened the floodgates to others in broadcasting – present and past – in Engineering, News and Current Affairs and Television production to complete the story.

Eric Adjorlolo.

Accra, December 1972.

PREFACE

Events surrounding the coming into being of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation are gradually passing into history. Anyone who was an eye-witness to these events can only give a first-hand account in which references to himself cannot be avoided.

As I find myself in this situation, inseparable as it were, from the Corporation as one of its pioneers, I render apology in advance to readers of 'GHANA MUNTIE' who may perhaps be bored by the few references to myself and my colleagues. They are not deliberate, but are necessary to substantiate the accounts with which we were associated.

My thanks go to Mr. R. A. S. Buckman, Technical Co-ordinator, GBC for allowing me to use his notes on the technical aspects of broadcasting in Ghana; to the first Head of Programmes, Mr. Henry Swanzy of the BBC, for his valuable advice and suggestions, and to Miss. Helen Odamtten of the GBC Programme Training School, for her encouragement. I also thank other members of staff for reading through the typed script, checking facts and figures, and the photographic section for making some photographs available to me.

Last but not the least, I thank the British Broadcasting Corporation for sending to me, upon request, the recording of the inaugural address at the opening of the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service, on 31st July, 1935 by the then Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Arnold Wienholt Hodson, and the special message to the people of the Gold Coast by the Secretary of State for the colonies at the time, the Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm MacDonald. Sir Malcolm has kindly allowed me to use, in full or in part, the transcribed text of his message.

As the wind of change blows fast, events in Ghana and other developing countries also change fast with it. 'GHANA MUNTIE' therefore cannot be expected to contain everything about broadcasting in this country when it is published. It is however hoped that it will be found a factual and useful record by anyone who comes in contact with it; but if there is anything lacking in it I am sure its successors will be able to provide in a revised version.

B. S. Gadzekpo
House No. 448/11
Accra New Town
September, 1972.

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CHAPTER ONE

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, when compared with other statutory corporations, is fairly old, but still a young establishment as far as the Civil Service is concerned. It has been in existence for less than 40 years but the question which many listeners ask from time to time is:

"How did the magic of radio begin Ghana"? For the answer to this question we have to look to the Governor of the day. Each Governor of the Gold Coast can be remembered for a particular achievement or development initiated by him, or successfully carried out during his tenure of office.

It is true that some of them can be more easily remembered than others, depending upon the magnitude of their achievements. Thus the name of Sir Gordon Guggisberg, who was Governor of the Gold Coast from 1919 to 1927, is associated with the building of Korle Bu Hospital in Accra, Takoradi Harbour, and the strong foundation he laid in education for the country, with Achimota as the pivot on which the educational machinery turns.

Sir Alan Burns, the Governor of the Gold Coast from 1941 to 1947, is best remembered by his constitution which, in 1946, made the Gold Coast the first colony in black Africa to have an elected majority in its Legislative Council.[2]

The Governor of the Gold Coast from 1934 to 1941 was Sir Arnold Wienholt Hodson, popularly known as the 'Sunshine Governor'.[3] The achievement with which his name is best associated is the installation of radio in the country. Thus, each of these governors, among many others, had built a memorial of some sort to himself in his lifetime.

Thirty-nine years ago, that is in 1934, Sir Arnold Wienholt Hodson then Governor of Sierra Leone, completed his term of office there and was transferred to the then Gold Coast as Governor.

The speed with which Sir Arnold set about the job of starting a radio station just in the very next year, convinced many that he had probably planned a radio service for the Gold Coast even before he arrived in the country.

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[2] The Burns constitution provided for six official members for the Gold Coast Legislative Council, and 24 unofficial members, six of whom were nominated by the Governor.

[3] He earned this epithet because his approach to work as Governor, and his behaviour towards people were different from those of other Gold Coast governors before him. He was simple and approachable. His love of entertainment resulted in the building of the Accra Town Hall (now Parliament House) in which he staged the pantomime 'The Downfall of Zachariah Fee.'

Indeed, his past performance and experience in this line in Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands in 1928, and in Sierra Leone six years later, in 1934, might have encouraged him to start it immediately on his arrival in this country also. His enthusiasm for this work depended very much on the able hand he found each time in the person of Mr. F. A. W. Byron, the same man who helped him set up the radio in the Falkland Islands and later in Sierra Leone, when he was Governor in those places.

For a start, all that the Governor needed was a disused bungalow in Accra, the capital. The bungalow was made available to him, in an area referred to in the colonial days as the European Residential Area. The bungalow was quickly wired up, a relay equipment installed in it, and an 85- foot concrete serial mast was erected in the compound.

This simple device was good enough to receive and relay BBC programmes, but only in Accra. The venture could be regarded as an experiment to find out how responsive the people of the Gold Coast would be to it.

Apart from Mr. Byron, a former Post Office Engineer who was 'possessed' with radio 'juju',[4] it was not easy at first for Sir Arnold to get other staff to assist in the radio job. That 'juju' was not then known in the country. Radio staff cobbled from departments in the colonial civil service were enlisted. Kindred departments such as the Engineering Division of the General Post Office made available four junior members of staff, mostly linesmen, to assist and learn from scratch. Among them were Mr. H. A. Young and Mr. B. U. Perkins, a Nigerian who had been a steward boy to the distinguished Japanese Doctor, Hideyo Noguchi[5] who was doing research. The fifth technical hand, Mr. R.A.S. Buckman, was recruited from the Government Technical School, Accra, where he had then completed a three-year course in Motor Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. Mr. A.A. Tetteh, the first clerk of the new department was transferred from the Public Works Department Accra, and a messenger, drafted from elsewhere, completed the staff who reported for duty on 1st April, 1935. Their appointment coincided with the arrival of some overhead lines material, including copper wires, insulators, and iron ware.

It was not difficult for the clerk and the messenger to settle down quickly, their job being a routine one, but it was not so with the others who were new to the job, or rather, the job was new to them. They had no pattern to work to, and everything had to be done under the supervision of Mr. Byron.

The linesmen started running the overhead wires through the main streets of Accra. They made sure that the relay service that was soon to be was fairly distributed throughout. The work was hard and slow due to transportation difficulties. Apart from a hand-drawn truck, which was

[4] A spiritual belief system in West Africa.

[5] Dr Hideyo Noguchi came to Ghana in 1927 to carry out research in yellow fever and died a year later of yellow fever. The Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research at the University of Ghana was established in his honour in 1979.

occasionally supplied by the Public Works Department, there were no other means of transport available to the pioneer members of staff who were used more or less as labourers. In those colonial days, they had often to carry the poles, wires, digging tools and all the iron ware fittings themselves. For long distances, they carried steel poles or solid concrete poles on their shoulders or heads all over Accra, which was not of course, as extensive as it is today.

In those colonial days almost everything that the Government started to do was viewed with suspicion. Erection of radio poles on people's lands for the overhead wires was vehemently opposed by some people. It was feared that the Government was going to claim ownership of the lands on which such poles were erected. Thus in addition to the hard task of conveying heavy equipment either on their heads or shoulders all over Accra, the staff had the equally difficult task of educating the people on the benefits they would derive from the Station and in spite of explanations, no one really believed it would be possible to hear the voice of a speaker thousands of miles away in London.

It took four months of hard work for the few members of staff to erect the poles along the principal streets of Accra, wire them and install radio equipment in the private bungalow which had been converted into a small wired broadcasting station.

The 31st of July 1935 can be regarded as the birthday of Radio Ghana. This day was the day scheduled for the official opening of the first wired broadcasting station in Ghana. Before this day, 350 loudspeaker boxes had been installed in the homes of Legislative Council Members, and in the houses of a few other dignitaries. In addition to these boxes, one hundred other boxes had been installed, both inside and outside the West-End Palladium,[6] the most popular venue for public functions in those days. This spot was the centre for the inauguration.

From early afternoon, big crowds of sight-seers began to converge on the Palladium, on the precincts of the Methodist Chapel at the junction of Hansen Road and Asafoatse Nettey Road. By 5pm the gathering thickened. Music on gramophone records started to be relayed from the wired broadcasting station. All the boxes were on, and the music seemed to have been played by massed bands from the Palladium. Such a day had never been witnessed in Accra before. It was simply wonderful. Some people outside the Palladium forced their way in or peeped through, to see where the music was coming from. The talk of the town that day was the latest wonder of the world – the radio. For three-quarters of an hour the relay of the music went on from the wired broadcasting station on Ninth Road.

At exactly 5:45pm the music stopped. The silence that pervaded the atmosphere after the deafening music, was complete. One could hear a pin drop. People wondered what would be the sequel. Soon, the silence was broken by the playing of "God Save the King," the British National Anthem, from the studio on Ninth Road from where His excellency, Sir Arnold Wienholt

[6] The West-End Kinema (sic) Palladium, located in James Town, Accra was built by Ghanaian businessman Alfred Ocansey.

Hodson, the then Governor of the Gold Coast was introduced although unseen by the teeming crowd. His Excellency's voice began loud and clear:

"Ladies and Gentlemen in Accra! Good..." I have been looking forward to this occasion – that is the official opening of our Broadcast Service for a long time, with intense pleasure.

I consider, and I think you will agree with me, that the new Broadcast Service opens up a new vista of life to all of us who live in Accra. Few can realize what this new service will mean – it opens up a new horizon. It brings the latest news to our doors. It is very similar to the magic stone we read of in fairy tales – we press a button and are transported to London. Again, we press it and hear a grand opera from Berlin. In fact, nearly the whole world is at our beck and call. You can imagine what an influence this will have from a psychological point of view. Mothers, when the children have been fractious, or when they have had a trying day – cooking and washing clothes, or men who have had a hard day's work, will sit down and listen to first class music which will banish their cares and make them forget all their worries.

At present, we intend to give two receptions a day. The first will be from ten to one which, I trust, will amuse and...interest the ladies when their husbands are away at their offices. This reception is generally an excellent one, and it concludes orchestral music from London and any important speeches which are being made by Cabinet Ministers and others at official lunches in England."

When Sir Arnold, the "Sunshine Governor" had ended his inaugural address from the Accra studio, the Right Honourable Sir Malcolm Mac Donald, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, was introduced from the BBC studio in London. Before he opened the Station officially, he said:

"This Broadcasting Service which you now possess will add in many ways, I hope, to the pleasure and interest of your life. It will for instance, enable you in the Gold Coast, to enjoy the Empire Programmes from Daventry, which the BBC are so farsightedly maintaining and developing, and also to keep in closer and more immediate touch with what is going on generally in this country and elsewhere in the world.

Perhaps, not least important, it will enable you at times to take part with us here in great and moving occasions, such as when His Majesty the King delivered his recent Jubilee Broadcast. These occasions bring home to us the real and intimate community which exists between all the peoples over whom His majesty reigns. Broadcasting has made it possible for us to get a more vivid impression of that.

I should like to see the Colonial Broadcasting Services used not only as an instrument of entertainment and recreation, though that must remain their primary use, but also as a means of giving education both generally and in such important specialized fields as Public Health and Agriculture. Like my predecessor, I have very much at heart that development to the fullest

possible extent in the colonies of this powerful and indeed miraculous instrument for increasing human knowledge, pleasure and wellbeing."

Concerning future expansion, Sir Arnold said on another occasion that the possibility of running wires overhead to link villages and towns together, was being examined and that he hoped it would not be long when even the remotest towns and villages in the African jungle would be supplied with the service.

Those were prophetic words indeed, for today towns and villages, seas and land masses, oases and deserts, have been linked together, reducing distance to nothing, not by overhead wires however, but by a later development in the electronic world – transistor sets.

The ceremony, including Sir Arnold's inaugural speech and the official opening by the Secretary of State, speaking from the BBC in London, took exactly fifteen minutes, and when it ended, expressions such as "This is wonderful", "How wonderful?", "This is marvellous", "Everything for Accra", "What about Cape Coast[7]?", "Koforidua, the Eastern Provincial Headquarters should not be neglected", were heard from among the people around.

When Big Ben struck six, followed by "This is London Calling, eighteen hundred hours Greenwich Mean Time, here is the World News read by...", their amazement knew no bounds.

That occasion – 31st July, 1935, 6pm was the first time BBC programmes were officially relayed to Ghana.

[7] A historic fishing city in the Central Region of Ghana, Cape Coast was the seat of the British colonial government until 1877 when it moved to the current capital of Accra.

CHAPTER TWO

WIRED BROADCASTING SERVICE BEFORE THE WAR

Indirect demand for wired broadcasting stations in Provincial Headquarters started on the same day the inauguration took place in Accra. Indirect verbal applications were made at informal gatherings to the hearing of influential Legislative Council members. The demands increased daily and it did not take long for His Excellency to realize that the experiment had succeeded.

The experience gained, and the difficulties overcome in the Accra experiment, made subsequent installations quite easy, and new stations sprang up like mushrooms within a short time.

From the 31st of July 1935, up to the beginning of the 2nd World War in 1939, no less than 16 wired broadcasting stations had been opened – an average of four stations a year. It is probable that the speed with which Sir Arnold carried out the setting up of these stations was dictated by the threatening war clouds at the time, and the incessant demands from the Provincial Headquarters.

Sir Arnold's labours in the opening of these stations were amply justified, for when the Second World War finally broke out, there was a ready means of hearing the news direct from London. As in Accra, all the additional fifteen wired broadcasting stations opened before the war were in private bungalows to start with, but as time went on, modern Broadcasting Houses were built and equipped with modern machines to replace the temporary ones.

It is significant to note that in the setting up of wired broadcasting stations in Ghana, the question of population was taken into consideration. It was thought that the service would benefit thickly populated areas much more than less populated ones. Thus each of the sixteen towns in which a wired broadcasting station was opened was thickly populated. Tarkwa, Prestea, Akwatia and Bibiani, mining towns easily attracted an influx of miners, labourers and petty traders. While Cape Coast is significant because of its student population, places like Kumasi and Sekondi/Takoradi attracted a large number of timber merchants, labourers and other workers. Accra, as a matter of course, had her undisputed claim as the capital of the Gold Coast, now Ghana.

Reference has already been made to the speed with which broadcasting sprang up before the 2nd World War. As many as seven wired broadcasting stations were opened in 1938, and four of these were in the mining areas which, to promote the war effort, supplied large quantities of raw material, such as bauxite during the war. These stations were Tarkwa, Prestea, Obuasi and Akwatia. In 1937 four Provincial Headquarters towns – Sekondi/Takoradi, Koforidua, Kumasi and Tamale – benefited from the wired broadcasting service. Three more stations were opened in 1939 just before the war. They were Nsawam, Oda and Swedru. During those four years 1935-1939, the total number of subscribers rose from 350, when Accra was first opened, to over 4,000 when the 16th station at Swedru was opened in April 1939; however, no number of wired

stations can suffice to cover Ghana as a whole, without private sets and transistors to supplement them. Whatever the number of wired broadcasting stations set up in the country, the demand continued. Without private sets and transistors, it was impossible for wired broadcasting alone to reach the heart of every forest. But the effortless manipulation of the loudspeaker boxes was most convenient to the indigenous listener whose only part was either to switch on or off, or to make it sound louder or fainter.

The sixteen wired broadcasting stations were independent of each other. Each could also mount its own local programme, which no other local station could pick up, for there was no central transmitting station to which they could tune to line them together.

On the Accra network, the first elaborate programme involving a large number of artistes, was the live performance of the Governor's pantomime "The Downfall of Zachariah Fee," which was broadcast from the Palladium in December, 1936. Other performances took place in the then King George V Memorial Hall, now Parliament House. The artistes included the Police Band and amateur musicians in the country, especially those at Achimota College.

Although the primary function of the wired broadcasting service was to receive and rediffuse the programmes on the BBC short wave transmission, a local news service and programmes such as broadcasts to schools in English were soon started. These, however, could not by any means be compared with broadcasts to schools as we now know them. They were called school broadcasts because they were directed to schools, and because sometimes, the participants were school children. Talks broadcast to the older pupils were on general subjects, and not meant to supplement the teacher's work in the classroom as school broadcasts do today. One of these talks, "A Journey Across the Sahara," was broadcast by Mr. C.G. Wise, a member on the staff of Achimota College, and another, "The Falkland Islands," by Mr. W.E. Conway of H.M. Customs, Accra.

Broadcasts intended for the general public took the form of appeals for funds. Typical among such appeals was that by Rev. J. Bardsley of Achimota College, on 1st April, 1939, for the Aggrey Memorial Chapel Fund.

Final rehearsals of broadcast programmes before microphones were unknown in those days. The programmes in which the children participated were mostly singing, short plays, riddles, and quizzes and, as can be expected, they lacked balance; the children invariably shouted at the top of their voices, no doubt so that (as they believed) they could be heard by their friends and relations who were far away from the studio.

The programmes in English, including the news, however, did not have their desired effect on all the listeners. It became quite obvious that they could only be understood by the literate minority of the African community. As a natural development, it became customary to broadcast important local announcements in the main local languages – Ewe, Fanti, Ga and Twi. In the initial stages, this function was usually performed by one of the District Commissioner's clerks.

The next advance in pre-war broadcasting was the introduction of a weekly children's hour. These programmes included singing and drumming. There were a few commercial gramophone records in some of the local languages but most of them were either scratchy or the words were not suitable.

The development of broadcasting before the war was hampered by two things:

Firstly, there was no assurance of continuity of purpose. In some stations, the District Commissioner or the Provincial Inspector of Schools was keenly interested in broadcasting and so made a hobby of organizing and sometimes presenting these programmes. But often he was succeeded during leave or transfer, by someone whose interest outside his official duties lay elsewhere, and so, the local programmes which were absolutely voluntary, languished.

Secondly the lack of a powerful central transmitter for the country resulted in a duplication of effort in producing local material on the air. When Sir Arnold's voice was carried into 350 homes the evening of the launch, the station could only relay the official opening ceremony to local listeners in Accra. Every receiver had to be linked by wire to the bungalow on Ninth Road.

For three years, the station with the call sign ZD4AA, was equipped with a transmitter so small that it was classified as an amateur station. But with the move into a new Broadcasting House on Dodowa Road in 1940 where a 1.3 kilowatt transmitter had been installed, the station became recognized as a professional one. It was at this time that it was rechristened "STATION ZOY", by which call sign, it is still identified in the radio world.

Although by international standards the transmissions were not strong enough, they had been heard in places as far away as India, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Scandinavia by amateur wireless enthusiasts, using specially adapted receivers. The use of this more powerful transmitter brought to an end the duplication of effort in producing local material on the air, for it became possible to transmit all broadcasts from Accra.

Today, after nearly 38 years of broadcasting in Ghana, the Corporation is 14 transmitters strong. Two of 250 kilowatts each at Ejura,[8] and 4 of 100 kilowatts each at Tema[9] serve the External Service. All the remaining 8 serve the National Service. Four of these, each 10 kilowatts are based at Ejura, whilst in Accra can be found one of 20 kilowatts, the oldest, it is now used as a standby. In the outstations the programmes were heard from the station of the Broadcasting Department's wired network, and in places outside the wired network, the programmes could be heard on commercial wireless sets in private homes, in Information Bureaux[10] and in the neighbouring West African Territories.

[8] A town in Ashanti Region of Ghana.
[9] A port city 25 kilometres east of the capital, Accra.
[10] Set up during World War II these were central locations where people could gather to listen to radio and get official information.

As already mentioned, the new Broadcasting House which was started in 1939 was completed the following year, when the 2nd World War was already raging. Was it a coincidence that a more powerful transmitter was ready for use or being used when the war broke out, or did Sir Arnold know from the war clouds that war was inevitable and therefore strove to get the new station ready for use during the war? However, the timely availability of the new Station ZOY, equipped with a more powerful transmitter, made many appreciate the wisdom and foresight of Sir Arnold.

A Radio Service is like a snow ball; once it gets started, it never diminishes but increases in size as the need arises. As demand for better equipment and more programme output grew, the 1.3 kilowatt transmitter had not been quite established before it proved too small for a country which was to fight its local battles at the microphone. A 5 kilowatt transmitter was readily put into service in 1942, with war needs being more quickly supplied than peace-time requirements. This new transmitter provided service during the second World War to the Free French Forces who were then fighting for their freedom, under General de Gaulle.

When France capitulated in June 1940, General de Gaulle declared that France had lost only a battle and not the war. He therefore set out mobilizing Free French Forces in parts of France and in the then French territories, notably in Africa to join the Allies to fight the enemy or contribute to the war effort. In order to keep up the morale of the Free French Forces, special broadcasts in French, Arabic and Moshi[11] were beamed from Accra to parts of Africa and the Middle East from a separate venue termed West African Broadcasting Unit (WABU), a wing of Station ZOY. Two teachers were sent to Accra from Navrongo[12] for the broadcasts in Moshi but they did not stay on for long. The difficulty of putting across the programme to the listener through a medium unfamiliar to him and without the necessary background and local colour made the broadcasts uninteresting. But when the programmes were afterwards improved with local jokes and idioms, the Bishop of Navrongo who supplied the teachers, complained that his teachers were being corrupted by their contacts with life in the South and therefore had them recalled.

The first five years of broadcasting in Ghana can be regarded as the formative years – the period of tests to find out whether Ghanaians would be responsive to the service of radio in their homes; tests to find out what transmitters would satisfy local needs as far as broadcast programmes were concerned, and to find out whether the service would survive.

[11] Also known as Mossi, this language is spoken mostly in Burkina Faso and closely related to the Frafra language spoken across the border in Northern Ghana.
[12] A town in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

THE BEGINNING OF THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT IN GHANA

The history of Broadcasting in Ghana cannot be written without reference to its younger sister, the Information Department, and the influence of the 2nd World War on their development.

Until the war broke out in September 1939, the worth of Station ZOY was not fully realized. Before the war, the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service only relayed BBC programmes to subscribers of its radio boxes. Except in music, much interest was not shown by the subscribers in the programmes, some of which many did not fully understand. They lacked local colour and excitement. Private radio sets owned by a few individuals could not receive the Station because its original transmitter was not strong enough to allow the station to be heard by them.

Broadcasting started in the Gold Coast in 1935 but interest was not aroused in it until the following year. This interest began with the exciting news of the death and the funeral of His Majesty King George V in 1936, and in the dramatic news of the abdication of his son, the uncrowned King, Edward VIII, from the British throne, later that year.

During the war which followed three years later, there was always some exciting news and the people of the Gold Coast never failed to listen to the radio on a single day. By then, other wired relay stations had been set up in the country and a new Broadcasting House, equipped with a stronger transmitter, had been built in Accra to which all other relay stations then tuned. The exciting news of the war relayed by the sixteen wired relay stations in existence before the war whetted listeners' appetite for listening. In fact, it could be said that it was during the war that many people formed the listening habit.

The Information Department came into being during the war. The aim of the colonial Government in setting it up was to promote the war effort and give factual information about the war to the people of the Gold Coast so that they would not believe in rumours which naturally accompany wars. Such rumours, unchecked during wars, circulate fast, impede the war effort and delay the end of the war.

The new department was meant to be a temporary one, lasting, it was thought, only up to the end of the war. At the time of its premature birth, no one could foretell the important role it was to play in the post war reconstruction. It was staffed with personnel on secondment from other departments of Government so that the individuals could revert to their substantive posts when the war was over.

The usual sources from which its senior administrative staff were seconded were the Education and the Political departments. Through the Education Department information reached the schools from where the pupils carried the truth (though not always believed by parents) to their

homes. Through the Political Department, the District Commissioners made contact with chiefs who in turn, passed on the necessary information about the war to their subjects.

The head of the new department was designated Information Officer whose principal responsibility was to give factual information about the war to the people. To be able to do this successfully, he had at his disposal Station ZOY, Mobile Cinema vans and the "Empire at War", a weekly paper dealing with the war, which he published. This paper was distributed free to the Information Centres, schools and colleges. The Information Officer also received and distributed a number of other publications like maps, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals and pictures from the Ministry of Information, London. These pictures which showed battle-fronts, battleships, aircraft and other implements of war, were placarded at public halls, village squares, classrooms, chiefs' palaces and Information Centres in which blared wireless radio sets with news about the war.

The most effective propaganda machine employed by the colonial Government during the war was the Mobile Cinema. The vans were driven all over the country from village to village. Their mission was four-fold: to give the people a firsthand progress report of the war; to assure them that victory would be on the side of the Allies; to encourage them to contribute to the war effort; and to entertain them.

In the rural areas, the mobile cinema shows took place at village squares or in open spaces in front of chiefs' palaces, where music from the vans invariably drew large crowds of spectators. In a village, there was usually no regular entertainment in the evening, and a mobile cinema show was a welcome pastime which broke the monotony of village life.

The pictures about the war, were without sound, and it was the duty of the commentator to give a running commentary in English or in the language of the traditional area in which the pictures were being shown.

One of the earliest and youngest cinema commentators appointed during the war was Mr. J. B. Oduntun, now Principal Secretary, Ministry of Information. His duties as commentator often took him away from Accra for long periods.

The Information Department (now Ministry of Information) has creditably employed the experience gained during the war to post-war and post-independence to the reconstruction of the country. Ghanaians are now familiar with the activities of the department for instance, during elections, at the plebiscite which decided the fate of Togoland under United Nations trusteeship, the extensive publicity given the travelling Volta River Exhibition to explain what it was all about, and the activities connected with the resettlement of the flood victims displaced by the greatest man-made lake in Africa, the Volta Dam.

Before the war, Station ZOY, the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service, had no programme staff, as it was meant originally only to replay BBC Programmes. If, during the war, it should be used to

encourage the war effort and give factual information to the people, programme staff of some sort was needed. This necessitated the recruitment of some individuals based in Accra who could be spared from their jobs, for at most an hour or two each day. Some of these officials broadcast the local edition of the news in English and others in the principal languages of the Gold Coast; these formed the nucleus of the Programme staff.

Thus part-time news readers in English were rostered to read the news, and the services of four readers in Ghanaian languages – Ewe, Fanti, Ga and Twi – were also employed on part-time basis.

The Gold Coast news bulletin in English lasted 8 to 10 minutes, whilst each local language news broadcast of selected items, lasted not more than 5 minutes. Each reader concentrated on the news items which concerned his language area, and a few other items of general interested to the country as a whole.

Three of the earliest Information Officers are still remembered. They are Mr. H. Cooper, Mr. T. R. O. Mangin and Mr. Tom Farton. In course of time they were succeeded by Mr. John Wilson, a Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools. He was assisted at various times by Mr. Macauley, Mr. T. J. Lennard, son of the popular shoe merchant and founder of Lennards Ltd., and later by Mr. Archibald Campbell and Mr. John Duncan all of the Political Department.

In spite of the effort on the part of the Information Officer and his able staff – District Commissioners, newsreaders, news reporters, mobile cinema van staff and many others, rumours persisted and circulated, especially among the illiterates who also distorted facts and converted them into rumours.

Mr. Wilson believed that teachers were the best linguists to speak to the people in their languages. He was convinced that if two teachers for each of the main languages of the Gold Coast, serving full time, would devote their time to translating the news and official statements, and then put them across, the rate of rumour-mongering would be minimized, if not altogether killed or hushed.

At a briefing meeting with the new Vernacular Announcers seconded to the Information Department, he once said that from his experience as Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools, teachers were held in high esteem by the community in which they lived, especially in the rural areas. A good teacher in a village school, for example, was regarded as an adviser, a dispenser, an arbitrator, a preacher and a helper generally in times of need. When on good terms with the village folk, he was trusted and people discussed even their personal matters with him freely, and sought his advice. They never hesitated to ask him for medicine in times of illness. His sermons at the village church inspired them to live virtuous lives. In matters of arbitration, they depended on his wise counsel. He was looked upon as a leader in many ways. For his services which the teacher gave most willingly without expecting a reward, the village folk were prepared to do any

work for him free in return. Sometimes, as a mark of gratitude, they made farms for him in which they grew food crops for his family.

About the secondment of Hausa teachers all the way from Northern Nigeria, Mr. Wilson explained that although Hausa was not a Gold Coast language, there were Zongos or Hausa communities all over the country. There was also a high percentage of them in the Armed Forces where Hausa was a common language spoken among them. But he regretted that there were extremely few or no Western educated Hausas in the Gold Coast at the time to satisfy the Hausa radio listener. Besides, the Gold Coast Hausa listeners, most of whom had been away from Nigeria for quite a long time, would like to hear the news in their language as spoken in their original home in Hausaland, their Hausa having been influenced by the language of the community in which they lived in the Gold Coast.

We the Vernacular Announcers were seconded to the Information Department in 1942 and 1943 when the War was already three years old. We were ten in all and were trained and certificated teachers with wide and varied experience in both teaching and in local affairs. We put this experience at the disposal of the Information Officer. In order to link up past events of the war with fresh ones, we quickly read back copies of the "Empire at War", periodicals, pamphlets and other publications bearing on the war.

In the office, large wall maps of the battle fronts showed the advance of the Allies, the places they had captured and those about to fall to them. We the Announcers had to be up to date with the activities in all the sectors and to be able to do this, we listened to the BBC news bulletins as often as possible. Anywhere we went, we made sure that there were facilities for listening to the news.

Every morning, it was the responsibility of the announcer on duty to pin on the wall maps, small flags to indicate the advance of the Allies and of the enemies. A small plastic Union Jack represented the advancement of the Allies, whilst other flags represented the enemies in the various battle fronts. "Stars and Stripes" marked American victories against Japanese. On the Russian front, where the Soviet forces held their own against the invader, the flag was of course that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – a yellow hammer and sickle on a red background. We still remember some of the towns and cities in the Soviet battle areas: Kiev, Kursk, Kharkov, Damiansk, Smolensk and the rich Maikop oilfields in the Caucasus. We also remember Yalta on the shores of the Black Sea in the Crimea where the three war leaders – Mr. Churchill, President Roosevelt and Marshall Stalin – together with their chiefs-of-staff, met for a conference early in February 1945 to plan the final stages of the war.

All the world geography – the names of seas, capes and bays, mountain and rivers, towns and cities we learnt in our school and college days – became real and useful to us. That knowledge helped us to locate places easily on the maps.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROGRAMME CONTENT DURING THE WAR

Broadcast programmes carefully compiled and produced were unknown in those early days as we know them today. When the war broke out, the emphasis was of course on the news in English and in the local languages. Four Gold Coast languages were used – Ewe,[13] Fanti,[14] Ga[15] and Twi[16] at first, but Hausa[17] was later added and each of them had 10 minutes of news and music every afternoon, except Sundays.

The order in which the local languages should be broadcast was carefully considered after some research. Ga and Fanti were placed last to enable prospective listeners who worked in offices to get home to listen to the news after work. On the other hand, it was thought that as most Twi, Hausa and Ewe listeners did not work in offices they could afford to listen at the beginning of the local language news bulletin.

Twice a week the Vernacular Announcers broadcast talks written by themselves or translated from special scripts on the war sent from London. These scripts dealt more or less, with the general strategy of the war and the weapons which were being used against the enemy. There was a series entitled "Learning from Nature". The talks in this series were based on the co-operation among some species of animals and insects in working successfully together. For example, ants systematically build tall hills by working steadily together, not minding how long it takes them to complete the work. Each does its little bit steadily and regularly. Listeners with Biblical knowledge easily associated such talks with the Biblical passage "Thou sluggard, go to the ant, consider her ways and be wise." The co-operative spirit needed during the war could not have been better stressed.

From most of the talks in the series, it was easily realized by listeners that there was nothing new under the sun. Any knowledge acquired today is based on examples found from nature. One such script showed a typical example of how, through the use of smoke screen, soldiers render themselves unobservable by the enemy. This knowledge was leant from the octopus, which when in danger of being caught by its enemies, emits an inky substance to blacken the water around it so that it is lost to them. Similar examples of knowledge acquired from nature were contained in

[13] A language spoken in Southeastern Ghana and parts of Togo.
[14] Fanti or Fante is an Akan dialect spoken in the Central and Western regions of Ghana.
[15] A language spoken in and around Accra, Ghana.
[16] A widely-spoken Akan dialect in southern and central Ghana.
[17] A language spoken mainly in Niger and Northern Nigeria, but also in sizeable communities in Ghana, Sudan and Cameroon. The Hausa people constitute the largest ethnic group in sub-Saharan Africa.

talks on protective colouration, which is how reptiles, like the chameleon and the snake change the colour of their skins to that of their surroundings in order not to be seen by their enemies.

Another talk was on the use of tear gas in war or during riots. It was explained with the behaviour of the puff adder and some other snakes, which squirt poisonous liquid substances into the eyes of their enemies, temporarily blinding them and so enabling them to escape.

As pioneers, we performed all sorts of duties in the war time Information Department. But as our main duty was to broadcast the news in our mother tongue, we were referred to as Vernacular Announcers, or VAS for short, even though we were not announcers in the modern sense. First and foremost we were news translators and broadcasters. Had the chance been given us to suggest our designation, we would have suggested News Interpreters, as our work was mainly translating the news and putting it across colloquially.

Every morning, when the news scripts in English had been distributed to us, we discussed the items one by one. Those considered unnecessary were deleted. Foreign items needed background knowledge, which was supplied by the Information Officer or his assistant. We found these briefing conferences very educative, and they gave us a wider outlook. But when, on some occasions, the conferences took too long, we would grumble as they affected our translation for which we needed sufficient time. We were not allowed to deliver the news ex tempore as did out predecessors, however short the news item was.

Our predecessors were part-time employees who were allowed to interpret the news direct from scripts prepared in English. They were only four – one each for Ewe, Fanti, Ga and Twi.[18] Each took at most 5 minutes to give the news ex tempore in his language. Transport waited for them and they were conveyed to their homes as soon as the last man had completed his broadcast. The Hausa language was later introduced when it was learnt that there were many Hausa speakers in the army and in the Police Force, and their language was widely spoken in the military barracks. This particular Hausa was known as ‘Barracks Hausa’ which was corrupted in the barracks to ‘Bariki Hausa’.

The original Hausa language in which the news was broadcast was well understood and enjoyed by the new comers to the Gold Coast, but not properly by those Hausas who had left their homeland much earlier. From reactions collected, it was realized that a majority of the Hausa listeners in the Gold Coast would prefer broadcast in ‘Bariki Hausa’. An attempt was therefore made to satisfy them. Its effect was however worse, for the Hausa Announcers did not know ‘Bariki Hausa’ in which they attempted to broadcast. The one and only Hausa language they

[18] Rev. Christian Gonzales Baeta who became professor emeritus of the study of religions, University of Ghana was responsible for Ewe; Mr. Wilson, a teacher of the Royal School, Accra for Fanti; Ga was read by Mr, E. W. Adjei, Chief Clerk at the Secretariat at the time; and Twi by Mr. Kwame Frimpong, a teacher at Government Boys School.

knew was that which they spoke in their home in Northern Nigeria. Public reaction therefore made them revert quickly to the original Hausa language in order to retain its high standard.

The practice of reading the news from a translation script was later to serve as a check and proof against any false news which a careless listener might claim he had heard broadcast. That experience came soon: One day, a policeman called at our office. He had been sent to arrest my Ewe colleague for broadcasting a false news item. He was reported to have broadcast that a warship was steaming to Accra to bombard the city. This piece of news was said to have been heard by a Nigerian steward boy who thought he understood Ewe. When he reported this news to his master, he created more panic among some Europeans than among the Africans. It was the practice with some Europeans during the war to instruct their stewards, cooks, washermen or garden boys to monitor the news broadcast in their languages and tell their masters who were too busy to listen to the news in their offices.

On this particular day, we translated and broadcast a local announcement that a British warship on a routine visit to West Africa would be in the Accra waters by a certain time, and that the presence of the warship should cause no alarm. It was this piece of news the steward boy misinterpreted to his master.

Our proof that the news was not presented as alleged lay in the Ewe version of the script and with Ewe listeners as a whole. My colleague Kobla Senayah collected the Ewe script as broadcast quickly and accompanied the policeman to our Head Office from where it was sent to an independent Ewe to translate into English. Of course, no other listener to the Ewe broadcast that day heard the steward's version of the news on the air, and as the report from the independent Ewe was in our favour, we were exonerated. If there had been no script for the Ewe version, there would have been no proof. Such were some of the difficulties sometimes created by careless listening.

From that time onward, we took meticulous care in our translations which we read aloud to each other to ensure correct interpretation before going on air. One limitation sometimes was the lack or the absence of vocabulary for some of the words, i.e. new concepts. No translation is easy if the concepts involved are foreign. This was particularly so in the name of some weapons of war which neither we nor our listeners knew. In most cases we explained the function of the weapon instead of attempting to translate its name. In some cases the explanation took the form of giving background knowledge before it could be effectively put across. But where neither translation nor explanation was possible we used the original English word. For example no better word can translate "bomb" than using the word itself. When the atomic bomb was first used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki we used the original words "atomic bomb" which we explained as "a new big bomb." Our Twi colleagues referred to it as "Bomb gyirapaa."

We regarded ourselves as experts in our own fields and for every difficulty we surmounted in this way, we knew that we were contributing directly or indirectly to the development of our

languages. Some of us therefore kept note books in which we entered newly-coined words. When the new words were not so harnessed, they quickly disappeared and the process of coining them had to start all over again when their originals occurred again.

In retaining the original form of the word in our broadcast, we sometimes justified our decisions with the translation of such Biblical expressions as "though your sins be scarlet they will be white as snow." The translators of the Bible had not choice than to retain the word "snow" in the Ewe and Ga Bibles, for "snow" is unknown to us in Ghana, and no comparison can adequately convey what it is in our languages.

Apart from misunderstanding the broadcast language which may lead to misinterpretation of the broadcast, there are other causes which can also lead to careless listening. One of these causes, sometimes, is excitement or fright. During the 1948 disturbances after the Christianborg crossroad shooting incident,[19] the relationship between the expatriates, especially those in the colonial service, and the Africans became strained and each distrusted the other. The factors that fanned the incident were mainly the return home of our soldiers without any employment prospects for them after demobilization; the high cost of European goods and the campaign to boycott them, which was led by Nii Kwabena Bonne III, Osu Alata Mantse,[20] popularly known as Boycotthene (Boycott chief). It was the time the talk of self-government was on every lip in the country, and it was the time when expatriates felt most insecure and they all sought shelter at Giffard (now Burma Camp).[21] It was in this sort of tension that a listeners' choice programme was being relayed one evening from London in the General Overseas Service of the BBC. The record, which came midway in the programme, introduced the charming voice of Gracie Fields[22] who broke in with "Now is the hour we must say goodbye." Never did so popular a record create such a different impression among some of the expatriate listeners. They believed the programme was a local one deliberately prepared to inform them it was time they went away. Within a short time, policemen were at Broadcasting House to arrest one of the announcers, Gilbert Addy, who they thought, was presenting the programme, but in the end they were disappointed.

[19] The shooting incidence occurred on 28 February 1948 when a group of World War II veterans of the Gold Coast Regiment marched peacefully towards the residence (Christianborg Castle) of the Governor of the Gold Coast to deliver a petition demanding pensions and jobs promised them after the war be honoured. Police shot at protesters, killing three ex-servicemen and wounding many people. The incidence sparked widespread riots in the streets of Accra.

[20] Nii Kwabena Bonne III, a Ga chief of the people of Osu in Accra, started an anti-inflation campaign in 1947 and in 1948 organized a boycott of European imports in protest against inflated prices by foreign trading companies.

[21] Headquarters of the Ghana Armed Forces.

[22] English singer, actress and comedian, known for entertaining troops during World War II and supporting the war effort.

CHAPTER FIVE

BATTLES AT THE MICROPHONE

We made our work as light and as cheerful as possible with jokes of all kinds when there was nothing pressing to be done. We regarded one another as equals among whom there was keen competition, and each did his best to satisfy his listeners. Although there was to be no promotion for us in the Information Department, we worked conscientiously to the satisfaction of our bosses. We were aware that promotion, if there was to be any at all, must be made by or through the Educational Units from which we came. Our secondment to the Information Department did not automatically qualify us for any preferential treatment over our fellow teachers in the classroom.

When the Information Officer was otherwise engaged and could not be with us for the usual discussion and the necessary briefing for the day, we would appoint a "primus inter pares" among us to lead the discussion. We did this in turn. The following is one of such a morning, and one of the Hausas, Mallam Belo, was in the chair. The extract was taken from my diary:

(It's 8:30am the Announcers start to come in. They exchange greetings).

Belo : Good morning, gentlemen.

All : Good morning, Mallam.

Belo : Have the news item been marked to show which we should broadcast?

Gadzekpo : Not yet. You, the chairman for this morning will have to do that. There is a press conference going on now at our Head Office and the Information Officer or his assistant cannot be with us this morning.

Belo : All right, let's go through quickly. I suggest we delete item 3; tick item 4 which I suggest should be done by only the Fantis and the Ewes,[23] as it will be of interest to them as fishermen.

Ankrah[24] : I think it's an important item. I suggest we all do it.

Gadzekpo : This news happened some time ago, when I was teaching at Keta;[25] I can tell you the full story, as I heard it.

Yeboah[26] : Let's hear it then.

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[23] Many Fantis and Ewes lived on the coast and earned their livelihoods from fishing.
[24] A Ga vernacular announcer.
[25] A coastal town in the Volta Region of Ghana.
[26] A Twi vernacular announcer.

Bruce-Tagoe[27] : Come out with it.

Frimpong : Were you present at the incident?

Gadzekpo : Some Fanti fishermen went to fish in the sea at Keta. They were far away from the shore; when they were on their way back to the shore, a German submarine surfaced near them. The bearded crew brandished their swords saying "you people sing Britannia rules the waves! Britannia rules the waves! Where are the British now? We Germans now command the seas." When the terrified fishermen started to row away, the Germans shelled the fishing boat and it was badly damaged. Some of the fishermen were also injured.

Yeboah : So you mean to say that the Germans came all the way to Keta?

Gadzekpo : This was what the fishermen said and I am giving it to you only as background. I suggest we all follow strictly the text of the news item, without adding or leaving anything.

Quansah[28] : I think I read something like that in the "Empire at War".

Frimpong[29] : Yes, it is true, I also read it.

Belo : But what about the item dealing with monkeys on the Ningo Road?

Issa : Monkeys also in the news (laughter)

Ankrah : Mallam, on with the next item, and leave the monkeys alone; we are wasting time.

Belo : (Reads on) ...the enemies were attempting to...

Issa[30] : Please read that again. Did you say attempting? I heard "speeding up".

Quansah : I heard "attempting", I bet my life, I heard "attempting".

Belo : Quansah, you have only one life, what will become of you if you have been proven wrong? What will happen to your life?

Bruce-Tagoe : Then of course, we shall announce: "The death is reported of Mr. Quansah, Fanti announcer who died on active service fighting in the home front.

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[27] A Ga vernacular announcer.
[28] A Fanti vernacular announcer.
[29] A Twi vernacular announcer.
[30] A Hausa vernacular announcer.

There will be a wake-keeping in the Town Hall where the body will be laid in state tomorrow". (laughter)

Yeboah : Mallam, carry on, we are wasting time. Anyway, that death will not occur in our time, here.

Belo : Did anybody hear anything else?

Gadzekpo : In fact I heard both "attempting" and "speeding up"; "attempting" came at 9 o'clock last night, whilst "speeding up" came this morning at 6 o'clock; either will do for our broadcast, we have only to decide which to take. But I suggest, in order to clear all doubt, we check up on the BBC news broadcast at 9 'clock; it is almost 9.

Local news items dealt specifically with the war effort, and in this, we the Announcers were proud that we fought out battles at the microphones. We kept on encouraging the farmers to grow sufficient food, as imported food was no longer available due to the war. We did succeed in this, for there was no serious food shortage in the country during the war.

It was only after the war that the general effects of scarcity of goods, resulting in inflation was felt. Raw materials such as bauxite and palm kernel were in demand during the war, and it was our duty to stress their importance in the manufacture of ammunition to strengthen their production.

Our announcements encouraged people in the big towns to contribute to the Spitfires Fund,[31] which was ably organized by Mr. F. A. B. Johnson, Spitfirehene,[32] who did not live long to see the effect of the Spitfires on the enemy. Through his enthusiasm, concerts, dances and other activities were organized to raise funds to purchase the aircraft. This is an extract from what he wrote in the "Empire at War" No. 43 of 19th July 1940:

"While our troops arrive on the battle front, the home front is doing its duty no less eagerly. The double effort required by our Spitfires Fund and War Charities Fund has far from exhausted our resources. To the War Charities Fund generous subscriptions continue to come in. Two firms and their employees have recently sent cheques for over £800. Pensioners continue to write in, asking that generous monthly sums be deducted from their pensions for war charities. "Last week the Accra War Charities Committee, having already made generous remittances, gave £1,100 to those brave civilians who were disabled or to the dependants of those who were killed when they took part with their small boats in rescuing our troops from the hell at Dunkerque Beach[33]…The

[31] A fund set up in 1940 to raise funds for the purchase of Spitfire fighter aircrafts used during World War II.
[32] A Twi coinage indicating his leadership in spitfire fundraising. "Hene" is derived from the word "Ohene" meaning chief.
[33] Reference to the Battle of Dunkirk (Dunkerque) in France where British and French forces sustained heavy casualties.

work of mercy goes on but remembering Cromwell's famous 'Out all you can', people of every work in life are giving to the Spitfires Fund". Some boys and girls of Effiduase Methodist School near Koforidua[34] sent £1.1s. 6d. with a letter saying 'we have some responsibility in the present war, but we are so young to hold a gun and fight, and we think our pennies collected can help in buying the Spitfires!'"

To keep the morale of the soldiers in the battlefields, messages were recorded by their wives and relatives. These were flown and played to them. The soldiers also recorded messages which were played from Station ZOY to their wives and relatives. When such recordings were received, it was our duty to play them and make sure that the language of the message was suitable for broadcasting and that the quality of the recordings on soft disc was good. Advance notice over the radio was also given to those for whom the messages were intended, to listen on the day of broadcasting.

On one occasion, one of us, without first listening to the message, assumed that the recording was a good one and so put it on the air. After the record had played for about a minute telephone calls from several parts of Accra were received at Broadcasting House complaining of the indecent language the message contained. The offender was accordingly disciplined.

Sometimes, upon request, we gave our individual opinion in writing. This was particularly so in the case of newspaper articles on which the Information Officer wanted to have our individual comments. An article titled, "Infiltrative Propaganda," appeared in a British paper. Among other things the writer referred to the failure of propaganda in the medical field in Africa, and each of the ten of us (Announcers) was asked to give his individual comment in writing. Below is part of one of such comments:

> Propaganda is a total failure when the African is not first made to know the reason for doing a certain thing before he is asked to do it. The African, and the Gold Coast African for that matter, is a strong believer in quick results, and since European medical treatment is a slow process, it is no wonder that propaganda in the Medical field should fail in Africa. To majority of illiterates and some literates disease and sickness owe their origin to evil persons, usually enemies, and they are unconvinced that diseases are caused by any other factor. They even believe that an evil person has power over European medicine, and therefore when some of them are receiving European medical treatment, they find it necessary to appease the evil ones by offering sacrifices to enable them loosen their power over the European medical treatment.
>
> In the greater part of the Gold Coast the inspection of houses for larvae and filth is not understood by the indigenous people. The reason is that Sanitary Inspectors who carry out the inspection, instead of acting as instructors and advisers giving practical examples showing the evil in harbouring larvae and filth in houses, only act as bullies. When a

[34] A town in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

person has understood the reason for doing something, he does not need to be punished before he does it. No amount of punishment can stop the larvae from breeding in the pots and pools if the reasons for their breeding are not understood by those in whose pots they are found.

A successful propaganda largely depends upon the approach. Once the propagandist has failed at the outset to convince his audience, it would be hard for him to convince them afterwards. For this reason the propagandist should direct his propaganda at the flank, as suspicion may surround propaganda by frontal attack.

After a censorship of films which we attended at the Rex Cinema from time to time as part of our duty, we also had to give our opinion. Some people would enjoy seeing films for which they did not have to pay anything. But ours was not so. Having been occupied the whole day we usually felt tired and liked to go home immediately after broadcasting, to rest.

We therefore grumbled each time there was a censorship of films to attend. On one such occasion we saw to our shame a film on nudity in Mamprusi.[35] On the following morning, the Information Officer or his representative as usual, called at the office for our reaction. The discussion which followed was rather bitter, to the disappointment of the Information Officer. Among other things, we said bluntly that such a film was not a subject about which the British should be proud. If British rule for such a long time could not eradicate nudity in the country then it would only mean that they, the British, were not interested in the progress of the people. They were only interested in exploiting the country and not in the improvement of the standard of living of its people. The Information Officer argued that it was the custom of the Mamprusi people to be nude and that it was not the policy of the Government to interfere with the custom of the people. We disagreed with this explanation arguing that in the Gold Coast it was the result of poverty and lack of civilization. We tried to convince him that it was possible for the enemy to use the nudity of Mamprusi people against them that they the British brought no civilization to the country as a whole and that they, the enemies would do better if the country belonged to them. Whether the Information Officer was convinced or not, he appeared to agree with us that nudity in any part of the country was nothing to be proud of.

Our collection of reactions was not confined to censorship of films alone. It extended to the radio also. In a class of 40 pupils under a teacher's care, he is able to see from the very look on their faces whether the lesson is understood or not. But a broadcaster talking to the whole world is not able to find out at once the impact of his broadcast on his listeners. The best he can do is to make contact with some of his listeners afterwards and ask them what they thought of his particular broadcasts.

For this reason, treks were arranged periodically to enable contact with some of the listeners. Many listeners were pleased to see us for the first time. Before then, they used to have quite a

[35] The Mamprusi are an ethnic group in Northern Ghana and Togo.

different impression of each of the Announcers. On seeing us for the first time they expressed surprise when the look of a particular Announcer was different from what they had expected. Some of them would say: “From your voice on the air we thought you were a stout fellow, it never occurred to us that you were so thin.”

Others on seeing us for the first time would burst into laughter, remembering some broadcast which had amused them some time ago, but which we had forgotten ourselves.

On such occasions we discussed with the listeners at the Information Bureau what programmes they enjoyed listening to, and those they did not like. We also answered questions the listeners asked. Those were the formative years of listening habit and no serious criticism of broadcast was expected from the listeners. Besides, in the colonial days, many did not like to interfere with anything done by the Government and so they did not criticize Government’s actions.

It was generally true that listeners kept silent over anything which pleased them but their reactions to anything they did not like reached the Information Department indirectly or through anonymous letters, but face to face with the announcers, they could only say all the broadcasts they heard were good.

The broadcast which they enjoyed most and which they did not hesitate to comment on, was music – indigenous music. In this case, it was not necessarily the music that pleased them, but the fact that the words of the music played was in their particular language. In the early stages, listeners were not sure whether music came from gramophone records or from live broadcasts. This they always wished to know when they met us.

Teachers were however outspoken in their criticism when we called on them at their schools. Where they did not believe us they never hesitated to say so. Their criticisms were fair and constructive. They were definitely better informed about the war than most of those who visited the Information Bureaux which were opened during the war to give factual information.

An incident occurred at Keta which proved the veracity of our news broadcasts. In a report after a trek to the Trans Volta Togoland (now the Volta Region), I had written: “In one of our treks to the TVT Region we arrived at Keta when the news broadcast was about to start. At each station we arrived at, my partner Kobla Senayah in Accra who had a copy of our itinerary, sent us special greetings at news broadcast time. On that particular day there was to be an eclipse of the moon during the Ewe news broadcast time. Before starting the news, he sent special greetings to us (Mr. T .J. Lennard and me) and to the listeners, telling them that we had come to find out what they thought of our broadcasts, and he hoped they would co-operate with us in speaking their minds. Then he started the news and at the end, he said if they, the listeners, would look westward after his broadcast, they would realize that “the sun has caught the moon” according to local parlance, meaning there was an eclipse. At once, all eyes, including mine, turned westward. The sun did catch the moon; there was the eclipse indeed.

There followed a loud applause and praises to the Announcers, who they said, always broadcast nothing but the truth. From that day the veracity of our news broadcast was established. Soon, whenever someone was in doubt and wanted assurance that what he was being told was true, it became a saying at Keta: “Did you hear it from the Radio.”

Another trek we the Announcers undertook worthy of mention was to the West African Cocoa Research Institute (WACRI) at Tafo. This was undertaken to acquaint ourselves with the ravages of the Swollen Shoot Disease which was killing cocoa trees in the country and what was being done at the Institute to control it. Such treks were really useful as they gave us practical knowledge of the problems involved. These naturally improved our broadcasts on the subject, for they gave the necessary background which made our broadcasts authentic. We were taken round cocoa farms infected with the disease and were shown affected trees which were compared with non-affected ones. Other cocoa diseases were also shown to us on the farms. We were shown where trees were being cut down and new areas being re-planted with new species of cocoa seedlings. We learnt that there were over 100 species of cocoa.

Collection of reactions was not confined to local broadcast alone; it went farther afield to the General Overseas Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation. During our discussion in the morning, the Information Officer or his representative would ask what we thought about certain programmes broadcast the previous evening, especially to West Africa. Some of these broadcasts went under the general title “Calling West Africa” which comprised special talks, discussions or music which would interest the West African. In the talks on “Experiment in Freedom” there were suggestions as to how to prepare the then British African Colonies for independence. Here also we gave our reactions bluntly. We told our bosses that it was one thing telling someone what to do, and another, how to help the person to do what he ought to do.

Other broadcasts on the General Overseas Service were not enjoyed by many in West Africa; such broadcasts required background knowledge which the majority of African listeners did not have. One of the popular entertainment programmes during the war was “Tommy Handley in Itma,” ‘Itma’ being short for ‘It’s that man again.’ West African listeners, without the necessary background, enjoyed part of it but the jokes at which other listeners laughed had no effect on them.

CHAPTER SIX

END OF THE WAR AND RETURN TO CIVILIAN LIFE

The last wired Broadcasting Station to be opened before the war was at Swedru in April, 1939. Four months later, World War II broke out bringing to a halt the setting up of further stations for ten good years. When the War was over in 1945 and with the return to civilian life and its accompanying problems, there was no thought of building any more wired broadcasting stations or adapting an old house for that purpose.

While the war lasted and the prospects of our promotion were nil, we the Announcers became disgruntled. By then all of us had reached the maximum salary of £208 per annum for the Government teachers of three years' training – a great disparity indeed between the salaries of teachers trained in the same colleges from where they had the same qualifications. No wonder Mission School teachers at the time often resigned from teaching to look for better paid jobs.

We broadcast awards of scholarships which our fellow teachers took advantage of leading to Diplomas in Education in London. Under our very eyes we saw them go, and saw them come back. No one thought of a scholarship award for any Announcer. Although both Government and the Mission had promised to consider us alongside our fellow teachers if there was any offer of scholarships, it never occurred to the authorities at least to suggest our names to the Education Department. Perhaps it was because they thought it would be difficult to get replacements for us if we were to go away. As long as the Government was satisfied with our work, it appeared there was no consideration for us.

With the continual successes of the Allies the war drew to an end, and the future for us who fought our battles at the microphone, could not be determined. We were worried about our return to the schools from which we came and to serve under some of our junior members of the teaching staff who had obtained the Diploma in Education in the United Kingdom and had become "been to's".[36] What prospects for promotion in the schools awaited us who had reached the maximum of our salaries?

Thoughts like these worried all of us. Some of us who thought little of going back to the classroom, decided to seek advice from a Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools. We told him that as no offer of scholarship was being made to us we would like to return to the classroom so as not to escape notice of the school authorities.

The Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools was an unassuming gentleman who spoke softly and unconvincingly to us. He told us that the Information Department was a young one, and we were the first Announcers seconded to it. He was sure that the Department would remain at the end of the war and that if permanent staff was required, he thought we would not be neglected. He did

[36] A beento is someone who has lived in the United Kingdom or a Western country.

not press it upon us to take his advice but he left it to us to think over. His unemphatic advice worried us the more, and we returned to the office more confused than before.

From time to time the return home of batches of soldiers brought some interest to listening to the radio but these arrivals took place after long intervals. The country's return to civilian life meant also the return of its radio to civilian life. Programmes to be broadcast were no longer to be geared to the war but to requirements in civilian life. Would we the Announcers be able to satisfy the listener in peace-time as we did in time of war?

The end of the war brought many problems to the whole world, and the Gold Coast was no exception. The return to civilian life posed several questions which could only be answered with time. Among these was the Information Department to which we the Announcers belonged. Was this department which came into being during the war to be dissolved with the end of the war or must it remain? If it remained, were the Announcers to return to their schools as was understood when they were seconded?

When the war ended interest in listening to the radio waned sharply for the news was no longer exciting. To the Colonial Government, there were no important and pressing problems which required immediate attention than what was to be done with the Announcers who were originally teachers. In order to dispense with the little problems posed by what to do with them, it was decided to transfer all the Announcers to the Broadcasting Department. Mr. B. B. Quist was then the Chief Clerk. It is to be remembered that the Broadcasting and Information Departments were separate departments. The Broadcasting Department was the older department started on the 31st July, 1935 in Accra, whilst Information, the sister Department, came into being during the war – 4 years later, in 1939. The Broadcasting Department provided the machinery for relaying programmes to the relay stations set up before the war. It was not staffed with programme personnel but only with engineers and technicians who were ready to make their equipment available for broadcasts which were arranged by the staff of the Information Department.

The decision taken to transfer the Announcers to the Broadcasting Department meant that the engineers and the technicians of the Broadcasting Department were to be responsible for the programmes which listeners wanted after the war – a responsibility they could not handle. The transfer to the Broadcasting Department was therefore short lived for the engineers could not spare time from their equipment to produce programmes they had never thought of handling; the best they could do was to request the Announcers to prepare entertainment and other programmes to be enjoyed by the peace-time listener. In the circumstances, the best we ourselves could do was to book local Guitar Bands,[37] rehearse them somehow outside the studio for a few minutes and put them on the air. In most cases there was no question of live or proper rehearsals, neither were there the facilities for doing so.

[37] Musical groups that played a distinct type of high-life music in Ghana.

Most of the bands in those days were not refined as they are today. Their limited repertoires were not originally meant to be aired. They were favourites in palm wine bars and at village dances where loud playing and shouting by tipsy vocalists drew applauses and encores from spectators. Such was the quality of some of the earlier bands introduced to broadcasting. Most of the listeners, of course, enjoyed this sort of entertainment already known to them on street corners. However, from practical experience, we the announcers knew that shouting at the microphone was not the best way of broadcasting, and in the few minutes of dead rehearsals before live broadcasts we advised the bandsmen to perform softly on transmission. It was usual for their friends to listen to their performance from the palm-wine bars from which they came, and to which they returned, to continue to drink and receive reactions to their performances.

Praise must, however, be given to the few better and regular Guitar Bands on whom listeners depended for music on Station ZOY. Foremost among those which satisfied listeners at the time was the Hawaiian Guitar Band with vocals in Ga formed by Fifi Hammond, with him as the principal player and leader. This band was in a class by itself and its performance was a novelty in the radio musical output in those early days. Its standard of performance was worthy of emulation by other Guitar Bands.

Other amateur bands (there were no professional ones) which readily come to mind are Appiah Agyekum's Guitar Band, complemented Fanti songs and Domingo's and Kwasi Gatse's Guitar Bands which accompanied the songs in Ewe. All these bands were based in Accra where their players earned their living as traders, tailors and other artisans. There were no mobile recording facilities outside the studio in Accra at the time. As all the bands had a limited repertoire, they often needed replacement. For this, we had to reconnoiter in the precincts of palm-wine bars to find substitutes.

Occasionally we took advantage of a group with a single instrument – a guitar or a concertina player who had arrived in Accra or was passing through for outdooring or other ceremonies. Goge[38] players from the north with their professional praise reciters or singers were discovered at Muslim ceremonies such as marriages, funerals or outdooring functions. These bands, in which the same instrumentalist was also the singer, were usually difficult to balance. The instrument tended to drown the voice and the singer was tempted to shout at the top of his voice in order to be heard.

With our transfer to the Broadcasting Department it was easily observed that the same Broadcasting Engineers could not handle broadcasting programmes. It is one thing to be a broadcast engineer and another, a broadcast programme producer. The Nigerian Government had recalled the Hausa teachers, and thus Hausa went off the air. The engineers thought they would solve the problem of satisfying the peace-time listener by replacing the Gold Coast teachers with inexperienced lads fresh from secondary schools on the new salary scale of £48 per annum. They

[38] Also known as Goje, Goge is a two-string musical instrument mostly played by Hausa people.

complained that they would be unable to pay what they termed the heavy 'maximum' salary of £208 per annum, which the Government teachers had reached. In fact they thought that six new young and inexperienced blood would be more desirable than teachers who were worried about their future. Shortly thereafter six Government teachers, accordingly, returned to the schools from which they came. It now remained, Kobla Senayah and myself – the two Ewe Announcers. Mr. Senayah had already resigned from the Roman Catholic Mission at Bla near Hohoe, in the Trans Volta Togoland (now part of the Volta) Region and had been teaching in the army before he came to do broadcasting. There was therefore no question of his return to his Mission, neither could he go back to teaching in the army as the war was over. I was therefore the only remaining teacher to be returned to the educational unit from which I came. However, my Mission did not write to recall me, and I therefore wrote to the Colonial Secretary, who had special responsibility for the Broadcasting and Information Departments during the war and who was responsible for all appointments to the Civil Service, to retain me. Before doing so however, I had obtained the consent of my Mission, the Ewe Presbyterian Church, to stay if I chose to. After some time, a reply assured me that the application would to be considered with others after the newly created posts of Programme Assistants had been approved. That appointment came in October, 1946. How prophetic was the Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools who had advised us to stay!

The Programme Assistants realized that the music of the Guitar Bands alone they were putting on the air could not satisfy listeners. They wanted also speech programmes with jokes and witty expressions in their languages – an organized variety entertainment to sustain interest for half an hour or more. With our new appointments, we the two Ewe Programme Assistants had automatically become seniors to the other new appointees by virtue of our having been serving up to the end of the war. We managed to produce variety programmes of some sort in Ewe, which listeners appreciated for such programmes were better than no variety programmes at all. Rather than let the small programme staff grope in the dark in producing local programmes, the programme staff, most of whom were new and inexperienced, were sent back to the Information Department, which, after the war, was re-designated as the Public Relations Department.

It was not only the Hausas and the teachers of the Government schools seconded to the Information Department who returned to their schools but also the Information Officer and his assistants ceased to be so seconded and they also returned to their former fields of work. So, on the transfer of the Programme Assistants to the now Public Relations Department early in 1947, we met a new head of department in the person of Mr. John Dixon as the Public Relations Officer assisted by an officer from the Secretariat, Miss Mary Rowlatt, now Mrs. Lintott-Newton. The old clerical staff however remained unchanged, with Mr. Tawia Adamafio, who as a strict and honest chief clerk, recommended for promotion only those who really merited it. Mr. Dixon however did not last in his seat. He was soon replaced by Major Lillie Costelo who had then retired from the army. He was assisted by R. James Moxon, then Senior District Commissioner, who later took over from him.

Temporary wooden structures were constructed in the area now occupied by Ghana Film Unit to accommodate the Public Relations Department. The new bosses realized that the peace-time programmes which would satisfy the demand of listeners must be based on African culture and background. Accordingly, a short story writing competition was advertised on the air. It was thought that the competition would yield a good harvest in scripts to form the basis for talks and radio plays. Though there were many entries, it was surprising that they were very poor. The contributors were mostly school boys and girls who either re-wrote old stories or copied them from books. However the theme of a few could be developed into interesting radio plays or instructive talks.

One such short story I developed into a play, was on the origin of the Akan word "KONKONSA[39] – KONKON'S HAND". This play could claim to be the first post-war radio play on Station ZOY, written in English and produced by a Programme Assistant under the guidance of Miss Mary Rowlatt, the officer transferred from the Secretariat. As the short stories were disappointing, a number of BBC play scripts collected by Miss Rowlatt when she was on leave in England was made available to the Programme Assistants to adapt if they were found suitable. Here also, out of about twenty, only one was found adaptable to suit the taste of listeners. This was "Many Moons" a children's story.

Public appetite having thus been whetted by the adaptation and production of "Konkonsa" and "Many Moons" the demand of the listeners increased, and, like Oliver Twist, they asked for more.

[39] Meaning gossip in Akan.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TRAINING AT THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

The Government, it was evident, appreciated the humble effort we the Programme Assistants were making in trying to satisfy the peace-time listeners by the adaptation and production of plays. As time went on it was decided to give scholarships to some of us to proceed to the British Broadcasting Corporation in the United Kingdom for training in production techniques in order to improve the standard of broadcasting in peace-time Gold Coast.

In 1947 two senior members of the programme staff were recommended after an interview, to be sent to BBC. But owing to the Christianborg Cross Road shooting incident in 1948 which accelerated the political tempo in the country, the first scholarship to the BBC did not materialize until after a year. When World War II had ended, Gold Coast soldiers, like other soldiers who fought in the war, returned home. The usual aftermath of war began to be felt – lack of employment and high cost of living due to scarcity of goods in the shops. The ex-servicemen thought a petition to Governor Sir Gerald Creasy at Christianborg Castle, his residence, would have a sympathetic hearing, but the petition never reached its destination. The ex-servicemen were not allowed to see the Governor to hand him the petition. They insisted on going there peacefully, as they were unarmed, but three of them, Sergeant Adjeitey, Corporal Attipoe and Private Odartey were shot by an expatriate police officer. In revenge, there were spontaneous riots which caused European stores in Accra to be broken into and looted. The Europeans had to leave their residential area to find temporary shelter at Burma Camp, then Giffard Camp. The music studio at old Broadcasting House became a depot in which provisions were stored and rationed to the Europeans for a few days until conditions came back to normal.

Mr. Joseph Ghartey, the other recipient of the scholarship to the BBC, was a first division clerk in the Secretariat who had staged in Accra one or two plays in Fanti. As peace-time radio programmes needed local talent, Ghartey was transferred to the Public Relations Department to develop his talent and satisfy some listeners, if not all. Ghartey and I flew to London on the 6th of June 1949 to train with the British Broadcasting Corporation. There were other participants at the course from Western Germany, South Africa, Australia and many more from BBC's own regional centres. We happened to be the only two from black Africa among the participants, who asked us many questions about the Gold Coast of which they heard so much as she was then on the verge of attaining independence.

The course, a general level one, took six weeks to run. Having already been on the radio job we enjoyed every bit of it. Our going to the BBC was more or less an experiment which, if successful, would open the way for more programme staff to pursue the same course. For this reason we did everything we could to leave a pattern to be followed by our successors. The course comprised all aspects of programme production techniques, both theoretical and practical.

The six weeks passed quickly, and the BBC regional staff returned to their jobs but the two of us spent the succeeding two months travelling to the regions where we attended rehearsals, variety shows and interviews.

Our visit to Scotland took us to the BBC in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Our next attachment was Wales where both of us agreed that "all Wales is a sea of song."[40] After Manchester and Liverpool, our visit to the regions ended in Bristol. We returned to London just in time to enroll at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, for special courses in linguistics and the principles of translation. It was rightly thought that these courses would benefit us in rehearsing artistes and supervising translation of material from English into our local languages and vice versa.

We returned home after the academic year in 1950 when two senior posts were vacant in the Public Relations Department establishment, but they were not meant to be filled automatically. The fact that we were asked to prove our worthiness for them by producing programmes made us believe that they were intended for the two of us. We each had to produce a radio play – a sort of final examination to test our ability as producers, even though the BBC had written a good report on us. Now things have changed in the Corporation and people step into the next post as of right.

At our final rehearsals, pressmen were invited to Broadcasting House to observe and publicise the programmes as much as possible to enable listeners to judge the standard of production. I was the first to be put to the test and my original work, the play "KONKONSA" was widely advertised in the local press. In the *Daily Echo* of September 20, 1951, Mr. Evans Ntow, a staff writer wrote:

"A play that goes by the word "KONKONSA" will be heard from the Accra Broadcasting Station on Saturday, September 23, between 5:35 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Local newspaper editors in Accra had the opportunity to see and hear a rehearsal of the play last Wednesday. The play is based on the well-known story of Konkonsa was adapted for broadcasting by B. S. Gadzekpo, Mr. Gadzekpo, on his return from a course at the BBC, in the United Kingdom found out that local listeners would be delighted to hear plays of African origin from the local studio and this play is the first of the kind he has endeavoured to put on the air.

The gist of the story is that of a desperate hunter called Konkon, who had been hard hit by the adversities of the world, and had resolved to find his fortune or lose his life in the forest. In the midst of a dense forest, he came to the cottage of an old wrinkled woman and her daughter Amma.

After he had stayed with them for some time and killed a ferocious tiger that used to haunt their dwelling, the old woman gave him some gold palm nuts from a palm tree that stood at the cottage.

[40] Reference to the popular image of Wales as the "land of song."

Konkon became fabulously rich. He betrayed the old woman and her palm tree that bore gold nuts, to the chief of his town. The chief sent messengers to go and cut the bunch of gold palm nuts but the woman told the messengers they could not cut the bunch until the arm (*nsa*) of Konkon was cut and placed on it. They did so and brought the bunch to the chief.

People who saw the gold palm bunch wondered and asked: "But what is this on the bunch?" And they were told "that is the arm of Konkon the tale bearer." Thus the word konkonsa, meaning konkon's hand, became synonymous with a tale bearer or a betrayer.

In the play, Mr. Lovelace Addy plays the part of the Konkon, Mrs Susana Laryea plays the old woman, Miss Doris Tamakloe, the part of the old Woman's daughter Amma and John Tetteh, the part of the chief."

When I read the high praises of the rehearsal of the play in the press, I realized that my promotion was at stake. If the broadcast failed to give its desired effect, then of course the press would not hesitate to publish. There were no tape recording facilities at the time or I would have felt more confident had the final rehearsal with which I was satisfied, been pre-recorded. I could not sleep the previous night – I was thinking about my artistes all the time. I thought that if anything happened to any of them and he failed to turn up for the broadcasting the next day, then I was done for. In fact I prayed all night for the health of the artistes and the success of the broadcast.

After spending all night thinking about my fate, the day broke at last – the day that was to decide whether we had benefitted from the scholarship or not. As luck would have it, all went well; the artistes were in top form. As soon as the programme was signed off and the last word… "the programme was written and produced by Ben Gadzekpo" were heard, telephone calls came from several well-wishers, including the P.R.O himself congratulating me.

A week or a fortnight later, my colleague's production of "Father knows best," a play about a father's advice on her daughter's choice of a husband, received similar press coverage and later, telephone congrats.

It would be interesting to quote at least one of the press reports after our broadcasts. In the "Daily Echo" of May 2, 1951 Guy Warren,[41] then a columnist wrote:

"I have never heard the ZOY radio play "KONKONSA" until early this week, and I must confess I was very pleased with it… at the end of the play it was announced that it was produced by Mr. Gadzekpo who, not long ago studied broadcasting at BBC. I was pleased and I told myself that the taxpayers' money had been well spent on Mr. Gadzekpo's scholarship to England. Although I missed the early part of the play, yet the little that I heard satisfied me greatly. The story was very authentic and the sound effects were not bad at all. Everything fitted like a glove. I will suggest with all seriousness that Mr. Gadzekpo should produce more of such plays which must be given more "space" in the ZOY programmes. I will end by congratulating the actors, especially Nkonkonsa whose portrayal of a man drunken with wealth, was excellent."

[41] Warren, who later changed his name to Kofi Ghanaba, became a renowned musician, credited with inventing Afro-jazz.

In a comment on Guy Warren's article under the P.R.O to NOTE, "Talking Drums" of May 11, 1951 wrote among other things.

"The work of Mr. Gadzekpo who trained with BBC on government scholarship has been praised and rightly Guy Warren says the taxpayers' money has not been wasted vide "Daily Echo" on 2nd May. We understand Mr. Ghartey who also trained with the BBC is doing very well. It is very encouraging to read or hear news like this, and the P.R.O. is to be congratulated for these progressive steps. He deserves congratulations because he has placed these gentlemen at their correct posts, because it is only when a scholar returning from the United Kingdom is placed in his correct place or given the opportunity that he can make the taxpayer feel that he has not wasted his money."

When I read the high praises of the rehearsal of the play in the press, I realized that my promotion was at stake. If the broadcast failed to give its desired effect, then of course the press would not hesitate to publish the fact. There were no tape-recording facilities at the time in the Gold Coast, or I would have felt more confident had the final rehearsal, with which I was satisfied, been pre-recorded. I could not sleep the previous night – I was thinking about my artistes all the time. I thought that if anything happened to any of them and he failed to turn up for the broadcast the next day, then I have had it. In fact I prayed all night for the health of the artistes and the success of the broadcast. After spending all night thinking about my fate, the day broke at last – the day that was to decide whether we had benefitted from the scholarship or not. As luck would have it, all went well; the artistes were in top form. As soon as the programme was signed off and the last words 'the programme was written and produced by Ben Gadzekpo' were heard, telephone calls came from several well-wishers, including the P.R.O. himself congratulating me. I felt happy that I had passed my exam

CHAPTER EIGHT

MUSIC TALENT HUNT

Having thus earned our promotion as mentioned in the previous chapter, we were not surprised to be promoted Programme Officers a few months later. I was put in charge of music generally, but entrusted with the particular duty of musical talent hunting all over the country. My colleague was put in charge of all speech programmes such as talks and features. By virtue of my post as Programme Officer in charge of music I could trek to any part of the country to look for suitable music to record on soft discs, there being no tape recording facilities in the country at the time. I usually rehearsed the choirs or bands in advance and when I was satisfied with their performances, the recording van was sent to meet me at the venue for recording.

My most fruitful areas of discovery were in Peki, Kpandu and Amedzofe[42] for Ewe music. Hausa and Dagbani music took me to Kumasi[43] and Tamale.[44]

In Eweland, there was music galore but like the desert flower, which wastes its sweetness in the desert air,[45] the music of Eweland wasted its sweetness upon the mountain air, as it was not made available to the outside world. The music was generally choral, but it was choral music with a difference – neither western nor indigenous. The musicians steered a middle course in their composition which for lack of a better term we can refer to as African Church music. The pioneer in this field is Dr. Ephraim Amu followed by others like Dr. Otto Boateng, Frank Nyaku and Emmanuel Agor, both students of Dr. Amu. We started recording this type of music for broadcast purposes as early as 1951 but how much of it remains today? It is regretted that the soft recordings have deteriorated in quality as they were not processed or reproduced on more lasting discs.

In the initial stages of our recordings for the radio, because of its novelty, some choirs and singing bands travelled uninvited to meet us in villages where we camped. There was little or no payment for such bands whose music we recorded without prior rehearsal; but payment or no payment, they were willing to perform. The novelty of hearing their voices on disc satisfied them. With increased fees for good performance some of the music group quickly disintegrated. Often this was brought about by the disparity in sharing the recording fee. The choir or band leader would claim that the group was formed by him; the instruments belonged to him; and he paid for the transport which brought them to the recording venue, and therefore he was entitled to the lion's share. Dissatisfaction then crept in among the members of the choir or band and the next practice left only the leader and a few loyal followers.

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[42] Towns in the Volta Region of Ghana.

[43] Ghana's second largest city and seat of the Ashanti Kingdom.

[44] Now capital of the Northern Region of Ghana.

[45] Probably a co-optation of Thomas Gray's, 'An Elegy Written In A Country Churchyard.'

Church choirs or singing bands in the urban areas, like all human activities, can never be permanent; they are often disrupted by transfers of their members. The only choir which has kept its high standard of performance and does not seem to have been greatly disrupted by the movement of its members is the DAMAS Choir in Accra. This all-purpose choir, whose name is made up of initial letters of the names of the four foundation members, is as lively today as it was over 25 years ago. The names of the four foundation members are Duodu, Attoh, Mallet and Amartey. They first started as a benevolent society, but then Ishmael Adams joined them two years later in 1945, when they became a choir. The choir has a varied repertoire – sacred and secular – replenished from time to time with modern numbers.

I do not intend to make a list of all choirs or bands which contributed to the music programmes on Station ZOY, but mention must be made of Adwonto Kuw, a Fante singing group which enlivened the Fante musical programmes in the fifties. Unlike the DAMAS Choir, little is heard of them these days. But for a few of their recordings still available they would have been unheard of today. This singing group was originally led by Mr. Entsua-Mensah, who composed most of their songs and who later handed over to Mr. Fred Therson-Cofie. Now that facilities exist for commercial recordings, it is high time we preserved albums of records by composers.

Trekking for mobile recording in the early days of broadcasting was difficult. The roads were bad. Those which were usable were bumpy, dusty or overgrown with weeds. Others had narrow and dangerous wooden bridges over which only the courageous could drive. A trekker in those days was lucky when the car did not fail him on a disused road and had to be towed a long distance for repairs. On rainy days the roads were muddy and slippery and cars with worn-out tyres easily skidded and landed in ditches.

Rest houses were often not available for occupation or they were so remote from the town that it was only those who had the courage to live isolated lives cared to occupy them. Sometimes application for the use of a rest house, made far in advance to the head office, was not communicated to the caretaker in the village where it was situated. When this happened, nothing could move the usually strict caretaker to open the doors, unless he heard from the District Commissioner or his clerk. On account of the inconveniences connected with rest houses and the difficulties we met in booking them, we always put up with teacher-friends in Mission School grounds. In the absence of a friend or an acquaintance, we were satisfied with putting up in a classroom made available to us by the headmaster or the station pastor. We would fix our camp beds in the classroom and pack off early, before the morning session began. On such a recording trip, it was easy to be committed to record some musical items below standard provided by a hospitable choirmaster. In order to avoid this sort of embarrassment, I always made sure that the recording team did not seek hospitality from any of those to be recorded. My recording team consisted of a technician – Mr. C. L. Tetteh or Mr. A. K. Ablordepey, the driver of the recording van and my assistant, usually a Programme Assistant.

The treks became interesting only when one unexpectedly met an old friend or colleague one has not seen for many years. On such rare occasions the conversation was about the good old days and about the teachers who helped to shape our destiny. It was a joy when, after experiencing the inconveniences of trekking, one returned to Accra with a good harvest of new recordings.

Other treks occasionally took me to Ashanti, North and other regions, but the distance between towns and villages in the north, scared me. I was greatly relieved when our areas of activity were re-divided between us to enable my colleague to be responsible for both music and speech programmes in Akan. This meant that he could travel all over the country, especially in Akanland, to record music and other programmes.

New programmes on the air and new songs here and there brought a sharp noticeable improvement in our broadcasts, and many did not like to miss listening to certain programmes. We built most of the programmes ourselves. It was our job to write and produce some of the programmes, especially plays and features as there were no radio script writers and artistes known to us at the time. However, as time went on, script writers became available.

One of the most successful productions which Ewe listeners never tired of was an adaptation I did of the 15th century morality play "Everyman." The human element in the story could suit any language. The inspiration to produce it in Ewe came to me when I was privileged to produce it in English after the play was staged at the Community Centre, Accra, by the students of the University College,[46] then housed at Achimota. We repeated it several times, but the listeners asked for more repeats. It is however unfortunate that though the script as broadcast exists, no recording of the programmes was preserved to show the high standard of production Radio Ghana attained from the early days.

Radio indeed is one of the most effective means of mass communication. This is proved by the fact that some of the broadcasts we did years ago still ring in the ears of some of those who heard them. It was therefore no surprise to me when, one day, some old listeners of mine, on seeing me, started to laugh heartily, when they remembered one of the amusing talks I had given some time ago. In those early days, one man did everything that came his way. We were in our own way journalists, playwrights, producers at one time, and artistes at another. The English title of the talk, a light hearted one I gave in Ewe, was titled "Pretending to be young." Though it was broadcast about 25 years ago, it is interesting today as it was at the time.

Here it is briefly:

Two old men boarded a bus. From their looks one appeared much older than the other. The older of the two had dyed his hair and thus pretended to be the younger. All the seats on the bus were

[46] Now the University of Ghana, Legon.

occupied when they got on. It appeared to be a peak period and people were rushing to or returning from their places of work.

Respect for age made a school boy on the bus rise up instantly to offer his seat to the man who had not dyed his hair but kept it naturally grey, thus appearing that he was much older than his friend. There was no other offer of a seat to the black-haired man who was pretending to be young, and he had to stand up all through the drive.

As ill-luck would have it, a little boy suddenly crossed the road and the experienced bus driver, in his attempt to save the life of the boy, suddenly applied the brakes. You can imagine what followed. The pretender or the older man whose wrinkled face did not match his dark hair, found himself on the floor of the bus. His fall caused laughter rather than sympathy for him. His colleague rose up smartly from his seat to lift him up, saying, “i.t does not pay to pretend to be young” From that day up to now some of my listeners who were amused by the talk still address me by the title of the talk “Pretending to be young,” when they see me.

A successful broadcast is one which keeps listeners discussing important issues raised in the programme. Though my light-hearted talk was short, it kept listeners discussing whether or not the expression “it does not pay to pretend to be young,” was true. There were various views expressed in agreement with it, but others disagreed with it.

Our performances encouraged our bosses to send other members of staff in small batches at intervals to the BBC, but for shorter periods. The Government left no stone unturned as far as improvement of the radio station was concerned. Although the Government was satisfied with the humble role we were playing, it wanted to be sure that it did everything towards the achievement of progress and perfection in broadcasting in the Gold Coast.

CHAPTER NINE

BROADCASTING COMMISSION

One sparrow does not make a summer, neither could just the two of us[47] initiate all the improvement policy which a vast and rapidly developing radio station required; we needed other members of staff to sing the same tune that we were singing. And although, from our recommendation in a report we submitted on our return from London, other members of the Programme staff were also sent to the BBC, the batches were few and far between.

It became obvious that a more comprehensive approach was required on all aspects of Broadcasting in Ghana. Although Ghana Broadcasting Corporation was modelled on the BBC, it was not meant to be a carbon copy of it. It was realized that it should develop on its own, in order to satisfy its indigenous listeners. A Broadcasting Commission was therefore thought to be the answer. Accordingly in 1952 a Broadcasting Commission was appointed with Mr. J. Grenfell-Williams, a South African Lawyer who was then the head of the African Service of the BBC, as its leader.

The other expatriate members of the Commission, also members of the BBC staff, were Mr. W. A. Roberts, Senior member of the Engineering Division and Mr. James B. Millar, Senior Administrative Assistant, External Services. The Government nominated two Ghanaians to serve on this Commission. They were Mr. Robert P. Baffour, then a Mechanical Engineer of the Accra Town Council (now Dr Baffour, a former Vice-Chancellor, University of Science and Technology Kumasi), and Major Seth Anthony, a career diplomat.

The Commission's terms of reference were broadly: "To advise the Government on ways and means of improving and developing broadcasting and on the measures required with an estimate of their cost, to establish and maintain a statutory corporation to assume direction and control of broadcasting service."

When the BBC members of the Commission arrived in the country on the 5th of January 1953, specific details of the terms of reference were handed to them. As a pre-requisite, members of the Commission first travelled to acquaint themselves with the country and its people whom they found to be energetic and eager to learn. After finding out all they wanted to know, they prepared and submitted a report to the Government. In the introduction to their report, the Commission among other things, referred to the benefits that a developed broadcasting service would bring:

"We believe that all the plans for the advancement of the Gold Coast would gain enormously from the proper use of a broadcasting system which could reach in a flash into the remotest areas of the country. It may, at first glance, seem far-fetched to say that broadcasting could make a

[47] The second person being referred to was Joseph Ghartey.

positive contribution to the economy of the country. And, although the financial benefits to be derived from broadcasting would always be impossible to assess, we have no doubt that they would be substantial. It is only necessary to point to the help broadcasting could give in educating the people in the prevention of disease to realize that the amount of money saved using broadcasting could help in the eradication of ignorance, in conquering as well as preventing diseases; in improving methods of agriculture. It could play a part in the solution of labour problems, it could be an important factor in the cultivation of a spirit of national unity and political awareness and perhaps, above all, it could bring a new richness and new experience to millions of people whose lives have been limited by their environment."

The Government accepted the recommendations in the report and set out to appoint a Director of Broadcasting by advertising the post. Response to the advertisement was nil, for it did not attract those qualified for it. Rather than leave the advertisement to linger on indefinitely, one of the BBC members on the Commission, Mr. James Millar, offered himself for the post. Mr. Millar was accordingly appointed as Director of Broadcasting in Ghana on secondment from the BBC in August 1954, to assume this very important office and to implement the plan he and other members of the Commission had laid down. The appointment of the first Director of Broadcasting meant the separation of the department from the Public Relations Department, which was its administrative head. Two years earlier, Mr. A.W. Busby had been seconded to the department as Chief Engineer.

From this time onward, the development of Radio Ghana became very rapid. A new extensive Broadcasting House, better called Broadcasting Village, was started and completed and put into use in 1957. The buildings were equipped with first class technical facilities. There were six studios – a large music studio, a drama studio, three talks studios, and a continuity suite. There were also five static recording channels, a gramophone library which today, has about 52,000 records and nearly 5,000 tape recordings, now kept in a separate air-conditioned room. A spacious newsroom for programme and news staff, offices for recording and studio engineers and administrative staff were also made available in due course.

Before the new buildings were started, a number of BBC staff was seconded to the department. Among them was Mr. Henry Swanzy, the first expatriate Head of Programmes. His predecessor was Mr. Leonard Pearce, acting Senior Programme Officer from whom he took over. It was an obvious coincidence that James Millar, a Scot, and Henry Swanzy, an Irishman should serve in Radio Ghana together, for the two names Millar and Swanzy were very familiar in the commercial field all through the country. Indeed, in the nineteenth century two mercantile companies figured prominently in the economic life of the Gold Coast, first F & A Swanzy Ltd., and later, Millers Ltd. Whether Henry and James were descendants of the originators of these two firms or not, it is significant that the two names had come together again, this time not for any commercial exploitation but to assist in the spiritual and cultural development of the country. In fact they continued a development which, after taking root in a private bungalow, later grew, and today, has developed on all fronts, serving the nation and other parts of Africa, boasting of

trained all Ghanaian staff of engineers, technicians, programmes men and women, and administrators who number over 3,200.

The appointment of a Director of Broadcasting and the secondment of other expatriates to the Engineering and Programme Division of Radio Ghana, opened a new phase in broadcasting in this country. Technically, a great deal was accomplished by way of improvement to existing buildings, studios and equipment. The time had come to train the necessary engineering and technical staff, as the complexity of modern equipment made constant demands on greater technical skill. This was the time in which those who were engaged in the field of Radio Engineering had to go through prolonged courses of training. Accordingly, an Engineering Training School was started in November 1955. Its object was to train new entrants to the engineering section and to offer special courses arranged for GBC technicians to qualify them for promotion to higher grades. This local training by no means put an end to training at the BBC. At the time the first two programmes men and women went to train in broadcasting techniques in the UK, Mr. C. L. Tetteh and other technicians from Station ZOY were gaining practical experience in BBC studios. But long before then, some individuals like Mr. W. F. Coleman, until recently the first Director-General of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) were, after graduation in the Gold Coast, doing Radio Engineering on their own in England.

The new Broadcasting House officially opened on March 3rd 1958. In order to differentiate it from the two earlier Broadcasting Houses, it is domestically referred to among GBC staff as BH 3. With the move to BH 3 in 1958, the old house, i.e. BH 2, became the national transmitting station. It is also used as offices for planning and installation, stores for wired relay equipment, and a workshop and garages for the Corporation's fleet of vehicles.

CHAPTER TEN

EXTERNAL SERVICE AND TELEVISION COMMISSIONS

The early part of 1957 saw the completion of the new Broadcasting House and the independence of Ghana. No man is an island. Similarly, no country after being independent wishes to remain an island or isolated. The voice of Ghana must therefore, it was felt, be heard beyond her borders so that she does not remain isolated from the outside world. This desire for Ghana to project herself internationally gave rise to another Commission in 1958, which was the prelude to the establishment of an External Service for Radio Ghana. There were two members on this Commission: Messrs J. L. Marshall and A. L. Pidgeon from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Government accepted the recommendations contained in their report to set up an International Service, to be run by Ghanaians and to originate programmes which should be Ghanaian in character and African in content.

Funds having been made available almost immediately, the necessary buildings to contain offices and studios were started in Accra, and those for transmitters, at Tema. The buildings were completed within a short space of time and the international service was inaugurated in September 1961. But before this time, Mr. Frank Squire of the BBC French Service had been seconded to Radio Ghana to set up the French Section to start the External Service that was to be. Under his guidance experimental broadcast in French was started towards the end of 1959. There was a daily 5-minute news bulletin in French and a weekly programme entitled "Magazine de la Semaine" beamed to West Africa, and broadcast by the initial staff of three persons appointed on contract. They were two Dahomeans[48] – Guy Hazoume and Virgile Tevoedjre – and a Senegalese, Cheick Dia. After their first tour, Tevoedjre and Cheich Dia left Radio Ghana for appointment with the United Nations as Information Officers, serving in Ghana and in the Congo-Kinshasa (now Zaire) respectively. Guy Hazoume remained much longer. The External Service provides a radio network first and foremost, to all parts of Africa and secondly to other parts of the world. Broadcasts in English, Portuguese, Arabic, Swahili, Hausa and later Bambara,[49] (now discontinued) were beamed to parts of Africa where these languages were predominantly spoken. Outside Africa, the broadcasts were directed to North America, the Caribbean, Europe and the Middle East.

The specific target areas in Africa were:

a. Westward: the Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Gambia, Guinea, Senegal, Mali and Mauritania.
b. North and Northwestward: Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

[48] People from Dahomey, the country now known as Benin.
[49] The national language of Mali.

c. North-East, East and South Africa: Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Rwanda, Burundi, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa.
d. On the immediate east of Ghana, the target areas were, of course, Togo, Dahomey (now Benin), Nigeria and Cameroun. Farther east were: Angola, Gabon, Central African Republic, Mozambique and the Congos i.e. Brazzaville and Congo Kinshasa, (now the Republic of Zaire).

The broadcasts to these target areas covered news bulletins, talks, and features on development in Ghana, cultural programmes and special programmes to encourage African countries still under foreign domination, to do all they could to achieve independence.

At the opening of the transmitter station of the External Service at Tema in October 1961, the President of the first Republic of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, said, among other things: "From this station we shall continue to fight for our complete emancipation, assisting in the struggle for the total liberation of the African States".

Reception conditions are not always favourable in all the target areas, and programmes directed to them are not always clearly received. For this reason there was set up in the External Service, a sort of give-and-take service. This section records on tape, feature programmes, talks or music, which it sends to some countries in the target areas to re-broadcast at a time convenient for them. There are special recording machines for the purpose, which reproduce the programmes in large quantities at a time. Under this 'give-and-take' system, the Corporation in turn receives actual programmes, including music of some countries. These are put on the air at the convenience of the Corporation.

No international radio organisation is effective without monitoring service. While the voice of Ghana is being heard beyond her borders, it is only fair that Ghana should also hear what other countries say about her. So two years after the inauguration of the International Service, a monitoring station was built at Weija, eleven miles west of Accra. It was equipped with the necessary facilities for the monitoring of the news and for recording programmes and opinions expressed on important issues from radio stations from all over the world. Thus, Radio Ghana continues to expand, as one achievement leads on to another.

In order to strengthen the National transmitters at BH 2, and the External Service transmitters at Tema, a powerful supplementary station was built at Ejura in the Ashanti Region. There are six transmitters at this station, out of which four, each 10 kilowatts strong, serve the national broadcasting service, and the remaining two, each 250 kilowatts in strength, serve the External Service. The role of the six transmitters is to bounce off programmes on the National and External Services so that reception will not be marred at distant listening ends.

Altogether, the past quarter of a century after World War II can be referred to as the golden age of broadcasting in Ghana. It was the period of expansion, construction, staff training and

improvement in general. With the building of modern studios equipped with modern gadgets, there was much improvement in the quality and quantity of programme output. As a result, the number of listeners increased. On the national service, programmes are put out in English and six Ghanaian Languages – Akan, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga, Hausa and Nzema.

In 1968, the audience size within Ghana reached the four million mark, which was the equivalent to about 50 percent of the total population of the whole country. This was made possible through private wireless sets, transistors and the Government loudspeaker boxes, for which a monthly rental fee of ₵0.50 is paid by those who rent them, in areas where wired service is available.

Today, with the increase in the number of wired broadcasting stations in the country there are 57,014 subscribers to the Government radio boxes and with the availability of cheap wireless and transistor sets on the Ghana market, audience size is estimated to be 6,500,000. Government radio boxes now number 56,065, and wired sets 750,000.

The Government radio boxes are very popular with listeners since they are easy to manipulate. They do not require any tuning-in or fumbling for stations. Instead the listener is always tuned to Accra, the central transmission station. The individual stations can also tune their listeners to local programmes including local announcements. Reception in most cases is good in the urban areas but not too good in some of the rural areas at certain times of the day. Most of these boxes are kept on all the time and they cease to sound only when transmission is over. All important announcements and statements on important issues, such as a coup d'état can be heard as soon as the events have occurred.

To the Government of course, it is extremely expensive to build wired broadcasting stations and equip and maintain them, apart from training the staff to man them. So the Broadcasting Commission, led by Mr. Grenfell-Williams, did not encourage the building of more stations, unless they could be expected to pay their way. However, the popularity of the relay stations has increased their demand to such an extent that is seems Government at times is committed, for political or other reasons, to set them up.

With the implementation of the report of the Broadcasting Commission, the importation of cheap dry cell battery sets by commercial firms was encouraged by the Government for sale in the rural areas. The dry cell battery sets system worked for some time, but later, due to the difficulty of maintenance, and shortage of spare parts, the system could not continue. Just at that time transistor sets started to make their appearance on the Ghana market. They were hailed as a welcome supplement and substitute to wireless sets and loudspeaker boxes. Accordingly, Radio Ghana encouraged their assemblage by a local firm into what is now known as "Akasanoma" – talking bird – transistor sets for sale especially in areas where there are no wired broadcasting stations.

At present the market is flooded with various kinds of transistor sets, but are they substitutes for loudspeaker boxes especially in the rural areas? They hardly seem so, since the demand for wired

stations with their accompanying loudspeaker boxes, still exists. It is not known how far Government is committed to accede to the demands for more wired stations. Although wired broadcasting stations are a ready means by which Government has easy access to the people, I do not think they are worth encouraging at this stage of Ghana's development. Rather, they should be regarded as belonging to the colonial past, and efforts should be made to encourage the manufacture of cheaper transistor sets for sale, especially in the rural areas.

While we are on the question of more relay stations in Ghana, it might be useful to trace their rapid increase up to today. The 16th wired pre-war broadcasting station opened at Swedru in April 1939. It took ten years from that time before the building of similar stations was resumed. Within the twelve years from the end of 1948, only twenty-three new stations were set up, and officially put into service. They included a newly built wired broadcasting station at Keta, the opening of which I had the privilege of broadcasting a special congratulatory message in Ewe from London in June 1949.

As compared with the opening of pre-war stations, the opening of the post-war ones was not very rapid. Whereas in 1938 alone seven stations were opened, the post-war wired broadcasting stations only went up at the rate of about one every year. Of course, this is understandable because of the scarcity of materials after the war. Factories manufacturing implements of war took some time to be converted to the manufacturing of materials needed in civilian life.

As already mentioned, the External Broadcasting Service was established after independence, to make Ghana's views on international issues known to the outside world. Hardly had the recommendations in the Commission's report been accepted than another commission was appointed in the following year to advise the Government on the setting up of a Television service. The Government had already decided on the necessity of such a service in the country and so the Commission was appointed only to advise Government on the best means of setting it up and to examine and evaluate the various proposals already submitted by commercial programme companies and equipment manufacturers. Here again two Canadians were appointed, Messrs, R. D. Kahoon and S. R. Kennedy came to find out the possibilities in Ghana.

The Commission started work on the 6th of November 1959 and submitted its report after 5 weeks on the 11th of December. The Government accepted the recommendation that television services should be started with the construction of three transmitter stations: one at Ajankote near Accra, another at Kissi between Cape Coast and Sekondi, and the third at Jamasi, near Kumasi. The three transmitters operating together, each within a sixty mile range, were to cover most parts of the country, except the Northern and Upper Regions.

Funds were made available and work started quickly. Equipment was ordered and the training of staff began locally and later in Canada. By the time the buildings were completed and equipped, trained staff was ready. At the peak of the development, the contract of the first expatriate Director of Broadcasting came to an end, and Mr. James Millar left Ghana in August 1960. He

was succeeded by a Ghanaian, Mr. W. F. Coleman, who had been Deputy Director and Engineer-in-chief in the Ghana Broadcasting System and had also been the head of the Engineering Training School. Mr. Millar, however, was able to take part in the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of Broadcasting in Ghana on the 31st of July, shortly before he left.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

GHANA RADIO AND TELEVISION TIMES

The celebration of the silver jubilee saw the birth of the *Ghana Radio Review and T.V. Times*, even though there was no television service at the time. The publication of this journal was in fact, the culmination of a long process, starting with a radio programme sheet in the form of a weekly pamphlet in 1946. The first issue was a single sheet of paper folded into 4 columns of 8 pages with the title page, "Your Programme," on the first side. The seven remaining pages showed the various programmes to be broadcast every day, starting from Sunday. Copies of "Your Programme" were distributed free to subscribers of radio boxes. As with all free gifts, there was a great demand for them, from both radio box subscribers and non-subscribers. The pamphlet was later improved with the photograph of an announcer or an artiste on the front page. Such was the background of *the Ghana Radio Review and TV Times,* the first broadcasting journal, which was launched on the 31st of July 1960 during the celebration of 25 years of broadcasting in Ghana. The editor was Mr. Paul Sogbodjor. With the official inauguration of the television service on the 31st of July 1965, the word "Review" was dropped from the title and journal became *Ghana Radio and Television Times*. Several pages have been added to provide for programme details for the National, the External, Television, and later the Commercial Services. In it can also be found sermons and other talks broadcast, as well as articles and write-ups of new programmes.

It is necessary to mention that the development of Radio Ghana had long qualified it to be a Corporation, but it was not until 1st March 1968 that the Instrument of Incorporation was granted by a Decree and it became officially recognised as the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. The Corporation at present consists of seven divisions which are: Sound (Programmes), Television (Programmes), Engineering, News and Current Affairs, Common Services, Administration and Accounts. It is administered by a Board of Directors, including the Director-General.

Barely seven months after the 30th anniversary celebration, came the coup d'état of 24th February 1966 which toppled the first Republic of Ghana, and sent its President, Dr Kwame Nkrumah into voluntary exile in the Republic of Guinea. He later died in Bucharest, Romania on 27th April, 1972. Immediately after the coup, it was doubtful whether any further development would be possible, at least in the near future. The doubt did not take long to clear. Hitherto the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, which was being run on the BBC model, did not interest itself in commercial broadcasting. But after the re-organisation following the 1966 coup, the Corporation needed more funds to keep it going. A commercial radio and television service was therefore inaugurated on the 1st of February 1967. This service offers pop music, news, important announcements and commercial messages for a fee to augment the revenue earning power of the Corporation. The service brings in an annual revenue of about ₵900,000.00 from commercial advertisement and social announcements. Other sources of income for the Corporation are funds derived from the wired broadcasting service, television license fees and subventions from

Government. This commercial service is extremely popular with the young whose listening habits have suddenly shifted from highlife to pop music, which they find in abundance on the separate network.

Some adults, particularly those who were brought up in the colonial era on the other hand, sometimes find the music on the commercial service, popularly known as GBC 2, too noisy for their liking. Some of these listeners are accustomed to listening to programmes in English, including classical music, which is provided for on a separate network. This network, rightly termed GBC 3 may be regarded as the Ghanaian type of the BBC Third Programme. Transmission on this network, whose introduction was guided by listener research reports, lasts for six hours daily, commencing at 5pm and ending at 11pm.

THE BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT

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YOUR PROGRAMMES

FOR THE WEEK

6th January – 11th Jan., 1946

CHAPTER TWELVE

PROGRAMME TRAINING

Now, what about the training of programme staff locally? Like the Engineering Division, the Programme Division opened a Programme Training School in the same year, 1955. This happened at the same time the contract of Mr. Leslie Perowne, then Director of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, was coming to an end and he was preparing to return to the BBC. The Director of Ghana Radio, Mr. Millar, realised the scarcity of expatriate broadcast programme officers much needed at the time so he offered Mr. Perowne the programme training post, which he accepted. "Perowne's Academy" in its initial stages, concerned itself with training the individual on the job – disc-jockeys and announcers to start with. In those early days it was usual to find the Head of Programme Training and his pupil sitting side by side in his office, discussing a radio script. The subject discussed might be the difference between writing for the eye and writing for the ear, the need for a prospective news reader to know how to read intelligibly, or a demonstration to a budding disc-jockey on how to be intimate with his listeners in announcing a record programme.

When Mr. Perowne left rather abruptly in 1957 to head the radio organisation in Sierra Leone, the Programme Training School has since passed through several hands. The present staff of four is made up of a Controller of programmes, a Senior Programme Organiser, a secretary and a messenger, all Ghanaians. It still requires an Engineer or a technician to attend to technical matters. Today, in addition to individual coaching in certain subjects, regular courses lasting two weeks are held for specialist workshops or from six to eight weeks for general level courses for new and inexperienced staff. The subjects include: News Reading, Announcing and Presentation, Principles of Translation, Writing for the Radio, Preparation and Building of Magazine/Feature Variety Entertainment Programmes and the Use of Music on Radio. The lecturers are drawn from experienced senior broadcasting staff, most of whom have, at one time or other, been trained at the British Broadcasting Corporation, and have become specialists in their various fields. Among the members of staff who regularly lecture at the courses are Dan Awere for news compilation, Owusu Prempeh for Ghanaian languages and interviewing, Rowland Agodzo for talks, discussion and features, John Hammond for news reading, and Adu Daku for Radio Farm Forum. For specialised subjects, such as advertising and linguistics, guest lecturers from commercial firms and from the University of Ghana at Legon are invited and most willingly agree to assist with the training of GBC staff.

The courses do not pretend to turn pupils into experts within six or eight weeks. Only experience can achieve that in broadcasting. However, in addition to imparting to them the art of production, which is hardly available in books, the courses aim at developing latent creative abilities, and acquainting students with the problems which will confront them in their new job. In order to make the training effective, practical exercises are arranged as follow-ups to some of the lectures. An exercise may be interviewing passers-by on current issues. These are carried out in

the open, under supervision, and recorded with portable recording machines which the participants carry about.

Most, if not all, of those who take part in the general level courses are new and naturally, are unaware that BH 3, the Headquarters of the Corporation, has several wings in Accra. To let them know that there is much more to learn in the various wings of the Corporation, visits are arranged for them to such wings of the GBC such as the External Service, Transmitting Station at Tema and the Monitoring Station at Weija. At times the participants are transported to the Tema dockyard and to the Industrial Area or the dam site at Akosombo to prepare feature programmes. The programmes are then recorded, played back to the participants who with their lecturers criticise them.

Broadcasting demands special personal qualities. A student's usefulness to broadcasting is very easily assessed during the short period of training. His keenness and creative ability exhibit themselves, and at the end of the course he is posted to the job for which he is best suited. Then is the time for the student to establish himself in his job by doing practical work, which may be production of programmes, giving eye witness accounts, recording actualities and interviews for feature or magazine programmes, or perhaps reading the news in local language or in English.

Many senior members of the programme staff, and nearly all junior members, have at one time or other attended the School. Occasionally, refresher courses are arranged for old hands in order to sharpen their creative abilities or to remind them that the saying, "variety is the spice of life" cannot be over-emphasised in broadcasting.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

RADIO GHANA ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES

Before the advent of radio in Ghana, public entertainment was in the open in front of an audience who could see everything that was going on before them. Drumming and singing at a distance could not be enjoyed in isolation from the dancing unless the spectator went to the venue. In the past, in addition to drumming and dancing in the afternoon, there was often a stage entertainment in the urban areas usually at weekends and particularly in the schools on Empire Day. The part which such entertainers like the Two Bobs, the Axim Trio,[50] and Williams and Marbell, comedians of the West-End Kinema Palladium, Accra, played on the stage in the early thirties cannot be easily forgotten by those who enjoyed the fun of their performances. In the twenties two English comedians, Grass and Grant gave regular weekly performances at the West-End Kinema Palladium, Accra. They left the country in 1930, thus creating a wide entertainment gap in Accra.

As the entertainment was meant for the eye, they did not fully exploit the new medium – radio – when it was inaugurated in 1935. It is however known that Williams and Marbell were the first to have a test broadcast in May 1935 before the station was officially opened in July that year. These two amateur comedians were at the time working at the Medical Research Institute, Korle Bu, Accra. They organised on their own initiative monthly entertainment programmes of fun, comic songs, and tap dancing to entertain hospital patients and their visitors. Some of the popular tunes at the time were "When it's night-time in Italy" and "We have no bananas today."

One day, the Senior Pathologist at Korle Bu Hospital, Dr George Robinson, told his two junior members of staff, Williams and Marbell, that one Fred Byron who was a friend of his was setting up a radio service in Accra, but was not quite sure of local talent to sustain listeners' interests at weekends. The amateur entertainers were later introduced to Mr. Byron, who took them to the radio station where they, accompanied at the piano by Adolph Doku,[51] made a test broadcast of some of the hit tunes at the time. Mr. Byron was pleased with their performance and exclaimed; "My work has come to stay."

But how was the test broadcast received by the inexperienced listener? With the expectation of those who knew of the test in advance, many did not realise that it was a local programme. Some of those who knew praised the artistes but regretted they could not see their faces as they used to on the stage. As BBC programmes were relayed most of the time, local entertainment on the radio could not flourish before war broke out in 1939. Serious variety entertainment programmes in English and in the Ghanaian languages began in the early fifties. They were modelled on the BBC Variety Entertainment Programme "Tommy Handley in Itma."

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[50] Concert party troupes.

[51] The Ghanaian pianist Doku later co-founded the popular Tempos band.

The usual ingredients of radio variety entertainment programmes are dance bands, singing groups and comedians, and it is the skilful producer who uses them successfully.

Variety entertainment as a radio programme was started by an expatriate, Mr. Leonard Pearce, an accomplished pianist, who after his demobilisation from the army after the war was appointed to take charge of musical output, including entertainment, on the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service. He was the first Programme Officer for Entertainment. Other Programme Officers had their separate schedules. There was for example a Programme Officer in charge of Hausa, Ewe and Ga (PO/HEG) and another in charge of Fanti and Twi (PO/Akan).

Dance bands play an important role in variety entertainment programmes, and in order to ensure regular broadcast, a Radio Dance Band was formed. The Band, in addition to playing dance music on the Broadcast Service, was also engaged at weekends by dance organisers in or outside Accra. Its most popular broadcast programme was "Radio Dance Time" which was broadcast direct from dance halls. With the formation of the Radio Dance Band, radio entertainment improved generally. Listeners to Radio Ghana still remember "Everybody Likes Saturday Night," a variety entertainment programme in which Dance Bands like Tempos, Choirs like DAMAS and Guitar Bands like the Chic Brothers, together with comedians and other artistes, took part before an invited audience. In Accra, the programme was relayed direct from the venue – Community Centre or a popular night club, but in later years it was pre-recorded outside Accra for broadcast. Two entertainers made the programme, produced by Leo Riby-Williams assisted by Herman Hesse, very popular. They are Pete Myers and Harry Dodoo. A great artiste is often not discovered after a massive talent hunt, but casually by producers who are on the lookout for them wherever they go. Thus, Pete's potential as an artiste was recognised in a casual conversation with Leo somewhere in Sekondi. Other associates of his who were used as comperes in the Variety Entertainment programmes or during Radio Dance Time were Mike Eghan and David Larbi.

Harry Dodoo an old entertainer since the producer Leo's boyhood days, broadcast in pidgin English. He played his part so well that many took him for a Hausa or a northerner from the Upper or Northern Region of Ghana, particularly as he was referred to as Issa Abongo in the programme. "Everybody Likes Saturday Night" increased in popularity and it was enjoyed not only in the Gold Coast but also outside it. Eventually, the BBC was also attracted by it, and it despatched a team comprising a cameraman, a producer-cum-interviewer and a technician who arrived in the Gold Coast and recorded Issa Abongo for a television programme, which was telecast to viewers in the United Kingdom.

Harry Dodoo was a born entertainer, delighting everyone who came in contact with him. Every word or sentence he uttered, whether in a private conversation or in a broadcast programme, drew laughter. At the height of his fame in "Everybody Likes Saturday Night," he was asked one day by Leo, the producer of the programme, to start preparing for the day he would appear in a television programme in Ghana. Coming events, it said, cast their shadows before them. In his

usual joking fashion, Harry answered with emphasis on two words; pointing to his right eye and then to his right foot, he said, “Leo, I say Leo, your eye can saw it but your foot, never.” Looking into Leo’s face, he repeated after a pause, “Leo, your eye can saw it, but your foot, never,” meaning he might not live to see the dawning of that day. How prophetic were those words uttered! Issa Abongo breathed his last a few days after Leo Riby-Williams had returned home from training abroad in television programme production techniques.

In course of the time “Everybody Likes Saturday Night” was rested to give way to other entertainment programmes, and budding artistes like Pete Myers and Mike Eghan left Ghana to seek recognition elsewhere. Thus they found themselves at the BBC where Pete now regularly comperes the BBC Morning Show. Mike, a successful disc-jockey, has since returned home, and is doing useful work in the Commercial Service where his voice is a favourite with listeners. Popular broadcasters find no difficulty looking for jobs. Their past performance advertises them. So, David Larbi found work with a local brewery as a salesman.

Variety entertainment was not confined to live broadcast alone; gramophone records also featured in the programmes. Over the years, the GBC announcers and disc-jockeys have developed techniques which have endeared them to their listeners. Following the development of live variety entertainment on the radio, disc-jockeys also developed a sort of disc variety entertainment programme. This was a make-believe programme initiated, built and presented by Charles Asinor, now Head of the National Service, who has a vast knowledge of the gramophone records in the library. The discs used were recordings of popular bands, film stars, and other artistes cleverly mixed with recorded applauses and other sound effects at appropriate points. The programme seemed real to many listeners unfamiliar with radio techniques, but some critical listeners were able to discover the trick when they realised the improbability of having together popular stars, in a live broadcast in a Ghana broadcast programme, especially where the sound effects did not seem Ghanaian.

Gramophone record programmes depend upon gramophone libraries stocked with various types of records and replenished as often as new releases become available. The GBC Gramophone Library started with a collection of a few commercial records kept on a rack in the office of the Programme Officer in charge of entertainment (PO/Ent.). They were the remnants of records played between news broadcasts in the local languages during the war and the stock was replenished from time to time with other records purchased locally. Most, if not all, of these commercial discs sold in the stores were not suitable for broadcast purposes – the language was questionable and the quality of the recording of most of them was far from satisfactory. There has always been a great demand for gramophone records in the local languages. As there were only a few in stock each time, they sold fast. In the past, the local language indicated on the labels was sufficient advertisement for their quick sale. Those who bought the records did not mind the bad language they contained. Played in private homes, they did not expose the bad language, as they were listened to only by a few. But on the air the vulgarity of the words seemed to be magnified and therefore, more noticeable. Accordingly, gramophone records

bought for Station ZOY were first vetted to make sure of the words and only those found suitable – usually one or two at a time – were bought.

In charge of the few records in the office of the PO/Ent was a young man whose interest in music had led him to resign his appointment as a policeman. He is the ever-smiling James Arthur, now a Senior Programme Organiser, in charge of the Gramophone Library. From a small beginning with a few commercial records, barely fifty in number which he issued for use at Broadcasting House, the gramophone rack has, within these 20 years, given way to a large air conditioned library containing 1,000 times as many records as the number which it began, and a number of sound proof listening cubicles for testing and timing records.

The gramophone library today stocks about 52,000 records in Accra and about half that number in the regional stations. Out of the total stock, only about 15% are Ghanaian non-commercial products. These are GBC's own products and therefore are free from copyright and performing rights fees. Perhaps it is not known to many listeners to the radio and viewers of television programmes, the amount of expense involved in the use of gramophone records they hear from Broadcasting House. For every half minute a commercial record is played on air – unless it is not covered by any right – a fee of 2½ pesewas is paid for broadcast on GBC 3 and on the External Service. On GBC 2, i.e. the Commercial Service, it is 3½ pesewas for 30 seconds of every record used. On television, it is 4 pesewas.

Taking into consideration the number of gramophone records played every day in all the services, including Television, it would be realised that thousands of cedis are paid yearly for works protected by copyright and performing rights. Can this colossal amount paid yearly be avoided? The answer is in the negative. This payment is common to all radio organisations which use gramophone records legally protected in this manner. The amount can only be reduced to a minimum with perhaps less use of commercial records, supplemented by GBC's own products. About 800 different items of music exist on tapes and a selected number can be lifted and processed into discs.

The popularity of any radio network depends largely upon the freshness and quality of its music. The flow of records from overseas to Ghana has not been regular now and at times, the GBC is put months behind current releases abroad. The irregular flow of records inevitably causes a lot of repetition of available material already familiar to listeners. The Library also stocks a quantity of Transcription Service records from other Radio organisations, including the BBC. These are usually paid for and can be used without making further payments provided that they are used within a specified period of time.

When the recording of music outside Accra began in the early fifties with mobile recording vans, there were no tape-recording facilities in the Gold Coast. Music or speech programmes were recorded on soft discs, which were used as soon as they left the recording machine. This quick service satisfied listeners only for a short time, for the quality of the records deteriorated quickly.

To render them more lasting, it was necessary to process them, but the delay and the cost involved did not encourage the venture at the time. The processing of Ghanaian folk and traditional music into discs now for use on the services might help reduce the increasing performing rights fees.

Long before Mr. Leonard Pearce left the Gold Coast for good, an advertisement went out for the appointment of a Ghanaian musician to serve in the Music Department, which was then being created as distinct from the Entertainment Department. Mr. Ata Annan Mensah, who was completing his studies in music at the Trinity College of Music, London at the time, was interested, and after an interview in London, was appointed in the mid-fifties. He did a good job as the man in charge of music until the desire for further studies took him away rather suddenly. He returned to Ghana after some time, only to offer his service to his country in another place – the University of Ghana, Legon.

Though Ghanaians are generally music loving, good musicians, that is those academically qualified, are scare and are hard to come by. However, a few do come into the lime-light occasionally and are quickly absorbed into the schools and higher institutions. One such musician is Mr. George Akrofi, who for some time had taught music at Kumasi, University of Science and Technology.[52] After a few months with the Arts Council of Ghana, he stepped in to fill the vacancy created by Ata Annan Mensah. He is now Head of Music at the Corporation.

The musical output in all the services, including television has increased much. Before independence, there was no External Service, no Commercial Service and no Television, and consequently the musical output on only one network was not so elaborate. In the course of time, the number of dance bands in the country also increased, and the once popular Radio Dance Band was superseded by the new dance bands and then it became defunct. But there was another field untrodden by a dance band – the field of symphonic music where the ability of the instrumentalist to play from a music score is a pre-requisite.

Most well established broadcasting organisations have their own orchestras, even in countries where reputable orchestras already exist and can be used for broadcast. This enables the organisation to have at its disposal a full-time orchestra to provide a high standard of music in order to raise standards generally in the country. In pursuit of this aim, it has been the desire of the Ghana Broadcasting System since 1961 to establish an orchestra, but the desire did not materialise until six years later, when with great financial strain, it was started in 1967.

It has not been easy to get the required qualified musicians for the Radio Orchestra, but gradually through training and constant practice, it has reached an appreciable standard, and apart from broadcasting, it gives public performances. These have included a performance at the Arts Festival, Kumasi, another during the Second Trade Fair in 1971 and in December 1972 at the Goethe Institute, Accra. It performed also in February 1973 in honour of the first anniversary of

[52] Now known as Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

the NRC[53] regime. The invited audience, at this performance under the baton of the Head of Music Mr. George Akrofi, was spell-bound. The repertoire consisted of local compositions as well as Western music.

In a large radio organisation, not only a gramophone records library is required; a reference library for the regular use of staff in also essential. When BH 2 was built in 1957 separate apartments were provided for each of them. The gramophone library was the first to be equipped as Station ZOY had a gramophone records section long before the new Broadcasting House was erected. But the space reserved for the reference library remained unused for 5 years before it was gradually equipped. However, a librarian-to-be, Miss Miriam Kotei (now Mrs. Quaye), was appointed to serve in the gramophone records library until the books library could be started.

The reference library started in 1962 with 180 books recommended by sectional heads of the National and the External Services. Embassies in Ghana were especially requested to recommend books which would give information about their countries. At present the library contains nearly 3,000 books – on radio and television, as well as many other subjects – worth about ₵12,000.00.[54] This however does not include the amount spent on equipment, pamphlets, booklets, magazines and newspapers in English or French. Copies of Government Gazettes, decrees, and annual reports of statutory corporations are also filed for reference purposes.

The library is well patronised by the staff. An average of 35 people visit it daily to read or to borrow books for reading at home. Most of the books are bought from local bookshops, and only a few are ordered from abroad now. Complimentary copies of new books are received from publishers, embassies and other well-wishers.

[53] NRC was the acronym for National Redemption Council, a military junta that ruled Ghana from January 1972 to October 1975.

[54] ₵ = cedi, Ghana currency.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

GHANA MUNTIE

Ghana Muntie: Ghana Muntie: Ghana Muntie: This is the phrase of command pealed out by talking drums to invite listeners to the news in English. It means literally "Ghana listen: Ghana listen: Ghana listen": This phrase is pealed in crescendo three times and followed by "This is the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation," to signal to the listener that a news bulletin is about to be broadcast. This preamble or forerunner to the news in English is so forceful in character that when the Ghanaian hears it, he stops to listen at least to the headlines if he cannot stay to listen throughout, for such an appeal by talking drums is irresistible.

After the passing of the Preventive Detention Act (PDA)[55] during the First Republic of Ghana, deportation of aliens and detention of some Ghanaians were regular contents of news bulletins, especially the news bulletin broadcast at 13:00 hours Greenwich Mean Time which is the same as Ghana local time. This one o'clock news bulletin was so full of expectation that listeners were always on edge when the news broadcast time was approaching. They could not tell in advance whether their names would be in the news for deportation or for detention. It was popular among Ghanaians to refer to the one o'clock bulletin as the time for the "one o'clock fever". It was at this time that the names of deportees and some detainees were announced. Appointments and dismissals of Ministers and party functionaries were also announced usually at this time. Such announcements made the one o'clock news bulletin a very important one indeed. One made sure that one did not miss this all-important news bulletin.

Of all speech programmes broadcast on Radio Ghana the news bulletin is the oldest and most important as far as its information value is concerned. In the colonial days news bulletins in English were introduced by a military band recording of the musical piece entitled "We'll gang Nae Mair to Yon Toun" associated with the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. The opening of Station ZOY at 10:28 hours and at 16:13 hours for the Gold Coast programme was heralded by talking drums played anyhow by anybody, not necessarily a drummer but by any member of the technical staff. This went on until Ghana became independent and Dr Amu's "Yen Ara Asase Ni"[56] came to replace the meaningless drumming.

After the war a special recording with talking drums featuring "Ghana Muntie" was made by Mr. P. A. C. Hall of Akropong then on the teaching staff of the Government Boys' School in Accra. This was used until Ghana became independent when a more meaningful recording of "Ghana Muntie" was considered as the signature tune for the news bulletin in English. Sample recordings were made by expert drummers at Akropong, Akwapim, led by Mr. Adu Daku, a trained teacher

[55] Passed in 1958 with amendments in 1959 and 1962, the Prevention Detention Act gave sweeping power to Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah to deport people and detain people for up to five years without trial. Critics charged that the law was used to infringe on the human rights of opponents of the government.

[56] "Yɛn Ara Asaase Ni", Twi for 'this is our land', was originally composed in Ewe by Ephraim Amu in 1929.

and drummer who had then been appointed to the programme staff. From the sample recordings the present signature tune for news bulletins in English was selected.

In the colonial days sources of local news items for Station ZOY were limited. District Commissioners sent news items to Accra, collected occasionally by their clerks. But during the war more serious attention was paid to news reporting of local items, most of which centred on the war effort. The District Commissioners sent news items on what was being done in their districts, to promote the war effort – for example farming to feed the country or contributing to the Spitfires Fund, entertainments, concerts or appeals.

But today Ghana has her own news agency, the Ghana News Agency, which, apart from collecting news from all over the world has in the regional centres, news reporters who travel to surrounding villages where there are activities worthy of news coverage. Besides there are freelance reporters who are paid for their news reports or commentaries on current issues that are put on air. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation also has news correspondents in the regional centres who follow the activities of chiefs, ministers and others whose movements make news. Outside Ghana, Radio Ghana relies on world news sources like Reuters, Ceteca, Tass, Tanjung, Agence France Presse and New China News Agency. The monitoring station at Weija is useful in assessing world opinion on important world issues and checking unconfirmed news reports.

When Station ZOY started, there was no selection exclusively for the news. The world news and other programmes were relayed from the BBC. In the course of time however, local news bulletins were introduced, and broadcast after the BBC news at 6pm. The news readers were expatriates or Africans who read part-time. Each bulletin contained war news as well as local news and it lasted between 8 and 10 minutes. Transportation was arranged to collect the readers from their homes to Broadcasting House and return them after the news broadcast. A fee of ten shillings was considered enough for a bulletin. There were several inconveniences connected with the part-time news readers – sometimes they were not ready at home to be picked up, or the transport could not reach Broadcasting House on time with the news reader. This made the Information Department draft some of the Announcers on to the news reading roster, and gradually the part-time news reading ceased altogether. The Announcers handled the reading of the news in English in addition to the other programmes until a separate news section was established in February 1956 with an expatriate as the head, who later handed over to Mr. Eric Adjorlolo as the first Ghanaian Head of News.

In the good old days the official means of informing the public of any happening was the gong-gong, which the itinerant announcer beat from lane to lane shouting out his message. But today the radio has superseded the village announcer and the talking drum. Though the gong-gong beater still carries out his task, but this is confined to the village. The villager now depends more on the radio for information than on any other means of communication, for the message can be received at all places quickly at the same time. The increasing number of social announcements,

especially of deaths and funerals, on the Commercial Service proves the popularity of the radio as a means of information.

It is interesting to note that quite a large number of the social announcements come from out-of-the-way places where means of communication are difficult. Although villages may be far apart and inaccessible by road or river, they are in touch with one another and the world by transistor sets which many villagers now own.

The appointment of news readers in English has not been not easy. Although a high academic qualification is not necessarily a qualification for good news reading, a good voice, the ability to read fluently and intelligibly, together with a good general educational background, are considered pre-requisites. Often news reading in English seems simple and easy, but proves difficult, the language being foreign to the Ghanaian reader. Though the Corporation does not require its news readers to read like Englishmen, it aims at setting a high standard of performance, which can be clearly understood and safely emulated by the radio listener. Several advertisements for appointment of people with good voices to be trained as news readers have failed over the years to yield good results. A good number of enthusiasts apply each time, but hardly can any be found trainable.

The present experienced members of the news reading staff – male and female – were discovered one at a time and gradually built up to attain the high standard they have reached. Most, if not all of them, were not originally appointed as news readers. They were appointed as announcers in the first instance and, encouraged by their performance, they were trained to read the news. They all started in the Programme Operations Department where they also operate programmes at the control panel or play gramophone records in addition to news reading.

Like the practice at the BBC, women also now read the news in the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. When this system started as an experiment about 16 years ago, it had to be dropped, on the ground that it was against Ghanaian custom for women to act as linguists. As a chief's message reaches his subjects through his linguist, so the critics argued, a news broadcast which they regarded as a message from the Government, reaches the people through the news reader. But after some time the idea that women should not read news faded away, and today both sexes read the news on the National and the External Services as well as on Television.

Listeners are familiar with the voices of the news readers – voices like those of John Hammond, Kwame Amamoo, and Emilia Elliot, to mention only a few, but listeners are unaware of the part played by a host of reporters, editors, editors-in-chief and their bosses in the preparation of the bulletin they hear.

In the developing stages of broadcasting in Ghana the Programme Assistants – the new designation of the Announcers – did all kinds of work, both in English and in the Ghanaian languages. Their appointment was based not only on their knowledge of a Ghanaian language but also of English. In fact, at the initial stages, appointments were based on the Cambridge

School Certificate with credit in English and credit in a Ghanaian language or a Teacher's Certificate "A", which covered the qualification in a Ghanaian Language. Today, Broadcasting in Ghanaian languages is done on the original network, designated GBC-1. It is meant essentially for the illiterate listener whose musical taste lies in indigenous music and in programmes broadcast in the local languages.

Broadcasting in Ghanaian languages had started seriously during the war with news broadcasts in Ewe, Fanti, Ga and Twi. Hausa was added later in 1942. Though Hausa was taken off the air sometime after the war when the Hausa announcers returned to their homes in northern Nigeria, it was later restored with the appointment of Western educated local Hausas available at the time.

During the war it was thought that Hausa could be understood all over the country, including the Northern Territories, so no attempt was made to broadcast to the north in the local language which all or most of them understand. But early in 1951 an attempt was made to broadcast in Dagbani. Unlike the Hausas who are found in small communities or zongos in every part of the country, the Dagomba (people from the Dagbon state)[57] were mostly confined to their homes in the north. Thus, it was difficult to recruit Dagbani staff at first. However, broadcasting in that language started with a part-time Dagbon person called Mr. Bawa Andani Yakubu who later became Inspector-General of Police during the second Republic of Ghana. He was then a young constable in the Police Force who was willing to help Radio Ghana and his people in the north when he could be spared. As he was able to share his time between police duties and the radio, we had his kind of services for some time until permanent staff was recruited and broadcast in Dagbani began seriously on the 5th of November, 1951.

The later addition to the number of local languages broadcast is Nzema, the need for which was felt after independence in order to reach the speakers of that language in Nzemaland,[58] including those beyond Ghana's western border. The demand by other groups for their languages to be on the air continues, notably Dangme, which is spoken in Kroboland, Ada, Shai, Osudoku, Prampram and Ningo.[59]

Rather than increase the number of Ghanaian languages on the air, an attempt was made some time ago, to merge two of them which are closely related. This experiment was successfully carried out in 1960 between Fanti and Twi, which had previously been broadcast as separate languages. Their merger is understood by speakers of all the Akan dialects – Akwapim, Akyem, Ashanti, Fanti and Kwahu. Based on the same principles, it was thought that Ga and Adangme might sometime be so merged. However, it appears the relationship between Dangme and Ga is not as close as that between Fanti and Twi. It is however gratifying to say that a wired broadcasting station has now been opened in Kpong to serve most parts of Dangmeland,

[57] Dagbon is in the Northern Region of Ghana.
[58] An area in the Western Region of Ghana and close to Côte d'Ivoire.
[59] All towns in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

although it is not known whether Dangme will be included in Ghanaian languages used for broadcast.

Until October 1956, when broadcasts in the evening were started, programmes in Ghanaian languages were confined to the afternoon from 15:45 to 17:30. Local programmes in English were mainly the news and talks such as "Today in the Legislative Assembly." All other programmes were either gramophone record programmes or relayed from the BBC.

Over the years programmes in the Ghanaian languages have improved and they conform to the three principal objectives of the radio: information, education and entertainment. It is evident that the standard of Ghana languages on the air has followed the line laid down by the Grenfell-Williams' Commission on Broadcasting. The Commission recommended: "It is essential that in order to attract listeners, vernacular programmes should be as rich as possible in idioms and the many figures of speech in which the various languages abound"… "if broadcasting is to make a real impact in the rural areas, it must speak to the people in the language and idiom they understand. A deliberate attempt must be made to capture the local audience by giving them their music, their own story tellers, and their own voices on the microphone discussing their problems."

The Ghanaian languages have really succeeded in capturing the local audience. However, it appears the entertainment side is not now as seriously pursued as in the past. This is understandable; since Ghana's independence, the radio is used more for education and information than for entertainment. There is more the listener wants to derive from radio and television now than just enjoyment so that he can share in developing the country.

For some time, women's programme in Ghanaian languages were translations of the original women's programmes in English initiated by Miss Mary Rowlatt, then an expatriate member of the Public Relation Department Staff (now Mrs. Frank Lintott-Newton). Miss Rowlatt did much to improve the immediate post war broadcasting in Ghana and was influential in hastening the training of the first batch of Station ZOY programme staff at the BBC in 1949.

Women's programmes in Ghanaian languages have also improved considerably, and unlike the early days, their contents are now original. When broadcast for women started in 1947 they were only items of short talks of interest to women listeners. These short talks were translated by the Announcers into their languages and sent to some lady teachers in their schools to rehearse and read as an item in their language programme. This went on for some time until it was considered profitable to recruit permanent women staff. The more regular part-time lady script readers who had helped in the early days were therefore appointed in 1948 as lady programme assistants who also did some announcing in English in addition to programmes in their languages.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

RADIO AND TELEVISION IN OUR DAILY LIVES

This year, 1973, radio service in Ghana is 38 years old whilst television is only 8 years old. It is however surprising that television, the late-comer, appears to be more popular because of its visual impact. But has it succeeded altogether? No; the cost of possessing one is very high, and therefore confined to only the few who can afford it. Radio on the other hand has penetrated into every nook in the Ghanaian forest.

Both radio and television have so influenced out lives that a day without one or the other seems to have cut us entirely from the outside world.

On Independence Day, 6th March, 1957, the worth of Radio was proved. All through the day and night, activities connected with the celebration were on the air, and many in the country and outside it who tuned in or were tuned in to Radio Ghana, heard the ceremony of the change of power – lowering of the Union Jack which once waved proudly over the country, and the hoisting of the Ghana Flag in its place. The general jubilation in the country was carried far and wide by talking drums, orchestras and other forms of communication gadgets.

During elections, people stay up all night to hear the results on the radio. At important sports meetings and games, those who cannot afford to go to the venue, stay by their wireless sets or radio boxes to listen and follow the games with their mind's eye. They kick in the air here and there as if they were on the actual playing field.

After the Accra Municipal election in 1951, an appreciative listener commented on the coverage in the Echo, and among other things he observed the following:

"One of the best features I ever listened to on our local radio was the one broadcast last Saturday at 5:15pm on the Accra Town Council General Elections. There were both African and European voices, all describing the elections, and giving their impressions as well. Recordings of interviews with voters and other people were included. I thought the whole thing was very fair, and above all, progressive because never in the history of the Gold Coast Broadcasting had there been such a special programme relayed throughout the re-diffusion network of the country. Those who covered the affair and reported thus should all be congratulated, and I suggest strongly to the PRO Mr. Moxon, to effect a repetition of this programme so that all those who missed it on Saturday may hear it…"

Jubilation in private homes when Ghana wins an international soccer match exceeds jubilation on the field of play itself. Public statements on important issues are also listened to very keenly, while listeners practically glue their ears to the summary of proceedings in Parliament entitled "Today in Parliament", "Today at the Treason Trial", or "Today at the Military Tribunal."

The Radio was a very effective means of bringing to the nation news of the 1966 and 1972 coup d'états in Ghana. When after the usual opening drums at 5:30 in the morning there was an unusual lull, followed by military band music, it was easy to guess that there was some trouble. At this time, listeners clustered more closely around their loudspeakers to hear the full details of what had happened.

To us in Ghana, radio now means so much. Apart from serving as a means of entertainment and information as Sir Arnold Hodson originally meant it to be, its use in educating the masses is enormous in Ghana and other developing countries. When Station ZOY was inaugurated in 1935, more attention was paid to its entertainment side; its information side was developed during the war and its educational use was fully extended after independence.

The British Government had an interest in the radio services in the then Gold Coast and in other British colonies. These services serve as a means of linking the Commonwealth together, to enable colonial people to focus their attention on activities involving the Crown and the Empire. In this respect, Station ZOY, until Ghana's independence, was more or less like a BBC miniature regional station. Listeners in the then Gold Coast were, according to Sir Arnold Hodson, to listen to "Orchestral Music from London and any important speeches which are being made by cabinet Ministers and at other official lunches in England". But today, the indigenous listener is more concerned with listening to the radio for events affecting, or likely to affect him at home than to listen to the BBC worldwide coverage which cannot give him the day-to-day happenings in his own country.

When some of the countries which were once British colonies became independent, and later chose to be republics, they did not sever their connection entirely with Britain, nor were they aloof in matters concerning the Commonwealth. They are still linked to the Crown, and do certain things in common in their own interest under the auspices of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Examples of this 'Commonwealth membership belongingness' are found in the conferences and courses which the member states attend periodically. One of these courses was the studio Programme Operators' course, which was held in Ghana in 1970.

At the Commonwealth Broadcasting conference in New Zealand in 1968, a pilot training scheme for radio studio Programme Operators in the Commonwealth was considered. Ghana was chosen as the venue for the first course in West Africa. Four Commonwealth countries attended the first course: the Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Uganda. The purpose of the course was to improve the performance of the men and women who ensure that the good programme conceived by producers and transmitted by the engineers are brought to the listener in a form suitable for his enjoyment.

The course, organised by Mr. Geoffrey Seymour of the BBC and financed by the Commonwealth Governments, was attended by 12 participants, 6 from Ghana, 3 from Uganda, 2

from Sierra Leone and one from the Gambia. The instructors were Mr. Julian Woodward, from the BBC and Mr. Stan Evanyshyn, of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Certificates were distributed to the participants by Mr. Alva Clarke, Secretary of Commonwealth Broadcasting Organisations who flew all the way from London for the purpose.

Considering the value of the experience gained by the participants, the benefits to be derived by the participants and the benefits to be derived by the participating countries, it is hoped that similar courses will be held elsewhere in the Commonwealth, in the near future.

There are other conferences – world or continental – which also have the improvement of radio and television programmes for the enjoyment of the listener at heart. Among them is the Union of National Radio and Television Organisation of Africa or Union des Radio-diffusions et Televisions Nationales d'Afrique (URTNA) – which held four of its conferences in Ghana between 1961 and 1972.

Education by radio and television benefits two different audiences and viewers – adults and children, both literates and illiterates. Adult education on the air started with the Radio Doctor's talks on diseases, their prevention and the action to take by the patient in the event of an attack. The Radio Doctor's talks are originally broadcast in English and afterwards translated for broadcast in the Ghanaian languages. These proved very effective during the outbreak of cholera in 1970.

Other adult educational programmes broadcast on Radio Ghana are "English by Radio", "Parlons Français", and "Rural Radio Forum". "English by Radio", a BBC recorded programme broadcast on Station ZOY before independence was in course of time replaced by a local programme under the title "Everyday English", a 5-minute series.

On television, we have "Ten minutes of English", which deals with colloquial expressions in English and corrects errors in Ghanaian English. Unlike "Everyday English" and "Ten minutes of English", "Parlons Français", an English-French programme, is directed at the adult listener who wants to learn to speak French. When the experimental news broadcast in French mentioned earlier in chapter 10 started and the Schools Broadcast Department began to mount elementary French programmes, the need was felt to teach conversational French on the radio to adult listeners. French Radio ORTF (Office de Radiodiffusion - Television Française) readily supplied a series of programmes entitled "The French have a word for it." The programme ran for some time but it did not have the desired effect, as it proved rather too advanced for the beginner, and devoid of local colour. It was therefore replaced by a locally prepared and graded series of 5-minute lessons for beginners. Mr. Michael Coleman, an expatriate then on the teaching staff of Mawuli School, Ho, in the Volta Region, prepared the scripts but the voice that successfully carried them across and gave it life was that of Mr. C. L. Patterson, a West Indian attached to the office of the President at the time. Mr. Coleman, who was affectionately called "Radio Teacher," made substantial contributions to educational programmes on Radio Ghana.

The popular adult education programme, 'Rural Radio Forum' is directed to a special audience – the village folk. These forums were introduced into Ghana in 1964. The Ghana Government launched the project in co-operation with the Canadian Government after farmers had been convinced that such forums could be of tremendous help to them. The Canadian project is exclusively for farmers and is called 'Farm Radio Forum' but in Ghana it is 'Rural Radio Forum'. Farmers meet on their farms and discuss their problems which include how they can improve their yield. The programme embraces the activities of not only of farmers but fishermen, carpenters, bricklayers, and other artisans in the villages. Rural Radio Forum aims at improving, through discussion, the health, farming and fishing methods of the village folk, as well as the raising of the standard of living and the improvement of craftsmanship of the people.

Ghana is predominantly agricultural and the farmers need encouragement to produce more of their products not only for their own consumption, but also for local sale and for export. In the rural areas, everybody is, first and foremost, a farmer. He can take up other jobs as carpentry or bricklaying on days when he does not go to the farm. Similarly, fishermen in their homes on the coast do such other jobs as carpentry or bricklaying, during the off season.

The availability of low-priced transistor radio sets now enables the 'Rural Radio Forums' to be heard everywhere by all including the farming communities. Many farmers now take their transistor radio sets along with them to their farms and listen while at work. Every week a number of farmers discuss on the air new techniques in farming imparted to them by agricultural experts. Diseases affecting crops and animals and their prevention or cure are also discussed with the experts. Subjects for general discussion directed at raising living standards include subjects like "Making the Village attractive" and "Some barriers to progress in the rural areas". Regular talks by specialists on nutrition, child welfare and prevention of diseases are also broadcast in the languages of the target areas.

A significant feature of 'Rural Radio Forum' is the 'Village Day'. On this day many farmers, their traditional heads, and the different communities in the area have a conference at which discussions and demonstrations on specific subjects are conducted. Brass bands and traditional music groups attend the conference to make the day lively. The impact of such conferences on the rural population is usually great and lasting. The staff of the Corporation responsible for the Forums make contact with the villages where the forums have been set up to find out the effect of the discussions on the village folk and to answer questions put to them – a feed-back system.

Broadcasting directed to school children started before the war. These were mostly entertainment programmes which took the form of drumming and singing. Educational broadcasts for young listeners were introduced after Ghana became independent. Miss Felicity Kinross was specially seconded from the BBC to organise the broadcast to schools. When her term of office came to an end, she handed over to Mr. S. B. Mfodwo who had understudied her; he also took courses at the BBC to prepare him for the post, which he held creditably. Miss Kinross began with broadcasts to Secondary Schools and Training Colleges. When they proved successful, facilities for

listening were extended to Primary Schools also. Over 75 percent of the 7,000 schools in the country are now provided with facilities for listening to radio broadcasts. Facilities provided in the schools now are in the form of radio boxes, wireless, transistor and television sets to make it possible for the pupils to listen to the lessons on the radio and to see the television programmes specially prepared for them. Until 1965 when the Ministry of Education took over the responsibility of providing the facilities in the schools, GBC had supplied a total of 1,300 radio boxes to them.

Programmes broadcast to the schools include English Literature, Pronunciation, Spoken English, Current Affairs, Elementary French and World History. Sometimes experiments for young scientists are telecast. There is a Schools Broadcast section at GBC, which is solely responsible for the programmes. It is the duty of this section to find experts in the various subjects for the programmes. These experts write scripts and prepare suitable teachers' notes for the various grades of listeners. The notes are sent out to the schools for the necessary preparation before the programmes are broadcast. After each broadcast, the teacher is expected to do a follow-up lesson. For the Primary Schools, in addition to storytelling programmes, lessons are given on the rudiments and appreciation of music.

It may be correctly said that up to now some schools have not been interested in schools broadcasting; however, schools that understand the value of schools broadcasting make adjustments in their time-tables for the radio programmes. They are aware that the lessons are not meant as substitute for their work in the classroom but to supplement it.

The staff of the Schools Broadcasting section do a good deal of background work before the series of programmes go on the air at the beginning of each school term. This background work consists of trekking to contact experts, teachers and head teachers for whom they organise briefing courses in the new school broadcasting areas.

There is ample evidence on the whole of the success of schools broadcast in Ghana since its inauguration in 1957, for applications from other schools for the installation of Radio and Television sets in the schools are on the increase – a demand difficult to meet because of the lack of funds.[60]

[60] NB: None of the programmes mentioned in this chapter are currently on air.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SELF RELIANCE

As we conclude "Ghana Muntie", we wish to pay tribute to all members of staff of the Corporation – past and present – whose contributions have made GBC what it is today.

Like all human organisations, the GBC cannot be perfect, but it can endeavour to approach perfection. "Variety is the spice of life" and nowhere should it be more manifest than in broadcasting, for the best of programmes when repeated too often, ceases to hold interest.

For nearly 40 years now, listeners to Radio Ghana, and for less than 10, viewers of GBC Television programmes have grown to appreciate good programmes and to offer their reactions to them. In the colonial days, listeners regarded Station ZOY as government-owned and were reluctant to express opinions on the programmes, for they did not wish to interfere with anything governmental. But today, listeners to Radio Ghana, and viewers of GBC Television know that the Corporation is their own, and therefore vocal in their praise or condemnation of the programmes. When at times a repeating groove in a gramophone record programme continues too long, they wonder why the fault should be so prolonged. When a television picture rolls continually, viewers naturally start to fiddle with their sets in an attempt to stop the pictures from rolling further, not realising that perhaps the fault came from the studios. On the other hand, when they are touched by a human story in a programme like "Avenue A,"[61] they heave sighs of satisfaction. This is the time the viewers crave for more local programmes in place of the cowboy and the burglary films often shown.[62] Of course, the radio listener or the television viewer is unaware of the difficulties the producer met before a programme said to be successful, went on the air. In a radio or television play for example, the producer in Ghana has first to select a suitable play from a number of scripts submitted mostly by amateur writers. His next problem is how to find a suitable cast.

In a developing country like Ghana, playwrights are few and consequently, suitable scripts are difficult to obtain, and there are few professional artistes who can be readily used by producers. In the absence of enough playwrights and professional artistes, producers are at times obliged to write the scripts themselves and draw the cast from among a team of amateur artistes they themselves have gradually built up.

On the technical side, all Ghanaian staff are self-reliant. Apart from maintaining the Corporations fleet of vehicles, the engineers and technicians carry out repairs to radio and television sets at their workshop where they also design and build some of the equipment. They maintain the studios daily and see that everything is in order before transmission begins. During

[61] At the time, a popular drama programme.

[62] Hollywood westerns such as *Bonanza*, and *The High Chaparral*, and dramas such as *Hawaii Five-O* and the British thriller series, *The Saint*, were part of the programme line-up in those days.

the colonial period when the radio service first started, Station ZOY's technical problems were few, and were attended to by the expatriate staff. But as the service has expanded with the opening of other relay stations, more technical staff have been recruited and they have had to learn from scratch. They have gained practical experience over the years and have become self-reliant as they have to be on their own in the relay stations dotted all over the country.

In the course of time, radio engineering started to attract a few Ghanaians at University level, both in Ghana and overseas, and gradually, successful applicants were appointed to the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. Similarly, the Programmes Division also attracted other graduates. Appointment to this division is usually based on creative ability, a good voice delivery, and manual dexterity, together with a good educational background. Perhaps no organisation makes more demand for talent than a radio organisation, therefore unless a person has the talent and wishes to develop it, he cannot enjoy being in the Programmes Division; he would find it exacting as well as boring. But the joy that a true producer feels after a successful programme, is immeasurable.

Today, there is not a single expatriate serving in the Corporation. All members of staff, now nearly 4,000 strong, are Ghanaians. Indeed, the Corporation is self-reliant. Every radio organisation has or should have an image of its own; an image which identifies it from other radio organisations. This image depends upon the general sound that emanates from it – language, the music and the type of programmes put across. What image has Radio Ghana? Since independence its Ghanaian image has been developed, and there is no doubt about its identity now. Ghana being the first African country to achieve independence, all the developing states tune in to Radio Ghana to know what is going on in the country, to know how she tackles certain problems, and to know her opinion on certain world issues.

No one who tunes in to GBC 1, the network which carries programmes in the Ghanaian languages, can deny that it has the Ghanaian image. The Commercial Service – GBC 2, in its bid to attract a large listening body to the advertisements, uses pop music and an ever-increasing percentage of locally composed catchy tunes typically Ghanaian. Though GBC 3 is intended to be highbrow – a type of BBC third Programme – the Ghanaian image is somehow preserved. The External Service of Radio Ghana[63] aims at selling Ghana abroad, and therefore it is "Ghanaian in character and African in content" as it was originally meant to be.

It would be invidious to single out individuals who have made substantial contributions to the development of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, for the success of a programme does not depend only on the beautiful voices that listeners hear at the listening end. Behind those voices there exists a host of unseen backroom boys and girls who, with the producer, have in one way or other, made the programmes possible. Among those responsible for the administration of the

[63] The service no longer exists.

Corporation, laying out the broad plan for the type of programme which would conform to policy, may be mentioned the Director-General and the heads of Divisions in the Corporation.

No other organisation draws more on the accumulated experience of its old staff than a radio organisation. The new Board of Directors of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation in the NRC regime are fully conscious of this and occasionally express their awareness at a get-together with retired staff.

As the richness of the tone of a fiddle increases with age, so the number of years a radio producer spends on the job determines the richness of his experience. Old staff with such experience, hardly available in books, are always ready to share their experience with ambitious producers anxious to gain knowledge by starting from the known to the unknown, guided by those who have been before them, to build their own store of broadcasting knowledge.

Appendix A

MANAGEMENT IN JANUARY 1970 JUST BEFORE APOLLO 568

1.	Director-General	:	W. F. Coleman +
2.	Deputy Director-General:		Eric Adjorlolo +
3.	Principal Administrative Officer	:	Y. O. Asare
4.	Chief Accountant	:	W. S. Swatson +
5.	Director of Engineering:		J. K. Asare
6.	Ag. Director of Sound Broadcasting	:	E. K. Senayah +
7.	Director of Television:		A. A. Opoku
8.	Head of Common Services:		K. Shang-Simpson
9.	Ag. Head of News & /Current Affairs	:	Dan Awere
10.	Head of Music	:	G. E. Akrofi

- Apollo 568 – Nickname given to the sudden termination of the appointment of 568 Members of the Civil Service and Statutory Corporations early in 1970 during the 2nd Republic Of Ghana. A good number of those affected has now been re-instated by the Military Government which came into power on 13th January 1972, the courts of Ghana having ruled that the compulsory retirement exercise was unconstitutional.

\+ Affected by Apollo 568

Appendix B

MANAGEMENT AFTER APOLLO 568

1.	Director-General	:	S. B. Mfodwo, 1st Sept. 1970-31st Aug. 1972
	" "(Acting)	:	A. A. Opoku, 1st Sept. 1972- 8th Oct. 1972
	" "	:	L. W. Fifi-Hesse assumed duty 9th Oct. 1972
2.	Principal Adm. Officer	:	Y. O. Asare
3.	Ag. Chief Accountant	:	I. B. Dadson
4.	Director of Engineering	:	J. L. Mills
5.	" of Sound B'casting	:	S. A. A. Amarteifio
6.	" "Television	:	A. A. Opoku, 9th Oct-9th Dec. 1972
7.	Ag. Head, Production Television	:	Leo Riby-Williams
8.	Head of Common Service	:	K. Shang-Simpson
9.	Ag. Head of News & Current Affairs	:	Dan Awere
10.	Head of Music	:	G. E. Akrofi
11.	Ag. Commercial Manager	:	T. Acquah-Hayford
12.	General Manager, Film Production Unit	:	H. M. Hemans-Mensah

Appendix C

NLC DECREE 226

GBC, which was incorporated formally on March 1, 1968 under NLC Decree 226, now consists of seven main divisions: Sound (Programmes), Television (Programmes), Engineering, News and Current Affairs, Common Services, Administration and Accounts.

The Corporation is administered by a Board of Directors acting on the advice of Management which comprises the Director General and the Heads of the Divisions.

According to the instrument of incorporation (NLCD.226), the objectives of GBC are, among other things: -

To undertake sound, commercial and television broadcasts;

To prepare in the field of culture, education, information and entertainment programmes reflecting national progress and aspirations;

To carry on an external service of sound broadcasting. Andin its public service broadcasting, GBC has been asked to provide for:

Government pronouncements, that is, speeches by members of the Government and Ministers responsible for departments of state consisting of statements of fact or explaining the policies and actions of the Government;

Party political speeches dealing with the views and policies of the various political parties;

Speeches expressing different points of view on matters of controversy;

Matters of any kind (including religious services or ceremonies) representing the mainstream of religious bodies according to their respective claims upon the interest of members of the public of Ghana.

The Decree says that in performing these functions, GBC shall allocate and apportion airtime equitably between the parties, points of view and religious bodies according to their respective claims upon the interest of members of the public.

Appendix D

DATES OF OFFICIAL OPENING OF WIRED BROADCAST STATIONS

		Initial No. of Subscribers
1. ACCRA	31/7/35	10,204
2. CAPE COAST	10/6/36	1, 769
3. SEKONDI/TAKORADI	1/4/37	4,100
4. KOFORIDUA	5/8/37	1,765
5. KUMASI	9/8/37	6,447
6. TAMALE	1/12/37	1,267
7. WINNEBA	1/3/38	584
8. TARKWA	3/5/38	2,311
9. PRESTEA	5/5/38	960
10. OBUASI	18/5/38	1,406
11. AKWATIA	15/6/38	892
12. SALTPOND	30/7/38	666
13. BIBIANI	30/7/38	641
14. NSAWAM	9/2/39	725
15. ODA	20/4/39	1299
16. SWEDRU	21/4/39	2,694
17. MAMPONG-ASHANTI	20/12/48	1,296
18. KETA	20/6/49	1,250
19. KONONGO	2/1/50	935
20. DUNKWA	1/2/50	838
21. TAFO	1/6/50	1,090
22. MPRAESO	1/11/51	2,154
23. HO	29/11/51	788
24. HOHOE	15/10/52	467
25. BEKWAI	1/9/53	586
26. APEDWA	18/12/53	1,381
27. YENDI	2/11/54	353
28. SUNYANI	1/4/55	1,112
29. KPANDU	3/3/56	545
30. BOLGATANGA	25/8/56	344
31. BAWKU	3/11/56	358
32. WA	25/1/57	360
33. AXIM	25/2/57	437
34. POKOASE	7/11/57	125

35. NAVRONGO	30/8/57		215
36. ADEISO	22/12/58		208
37. BEREKUM	14/1/61		491
38. DUAYAW-NKWANTA	29/5/61		289
39. TEMA	15/9/62		1,040
		TOTAL	54,389

Appendix E

RADIO GHANA. DOMESTIC SERVICE

TRANSMISSION TIMES AND WAVELENGTHS

BROADCAST IN GHANA LANGUAGES – G.B.C. 1

Wave-length (metres)	Frequency (KHZ)		
61,03	4915	5.30 a.m. – 8 a.m.	12.00 noon – 11.00 p.m.
89.56	3350	5.30 a.m. – 11.00 p.m.	
		5.30 a.m. – 8 a.m.	4.00 p.m. – 11.00 p.m.
		5.30 a.m. – 9 a.m.	4.00 p.m. – 11.00 p.m.
50.05	5990	12.00 noon – 4.00 p.m.	
		9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	

COMMERCIAL SERVICE – GBC-2

Wavelength (Metre)	Frequency (KHZ)		
60.24	4980	5.30 a.m. – 8 a.m.	12.00noon – 11.00 p.m.
		5.30 a.m.	11.00 p.m.
89.13	3366	5.30 a.m. – 8 p.m.	4.00 a.m. – 11.00 p.m.
		5.30 a.m. – 9 p.m.	4.00 p.m. – 11.00 p.m.
41.12	7295	12.00noon – 4.00 p.m.	
		9.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	

BROADCAST IN ENGLISH – GBC-3

Wavelength (Metre)	Frequency (KHZ)	
91.05	3295	5.00 p.m. – 11.000 p.m.
		5.00 p.m. – 11.000 p.m.

- Indicate Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays

Appendix F

RADIO GHANA'S EXTERNAL SERVICE

TRANSMISSION TIMES AND WAVELENGTH

Service	Country	GMT	MHZ	Metres
English Service 1	Ethiopia, Somalia	1400 – 1430	15.285	19.63
	Sudan	1815 – 1900	15.285	19.63
	North America	2000 – 2100	11.850	25,28
2.	Caribbean			
	South Africa	1445 – 1530	12.545	13.92
3.	Central Africa	1500 – 1545	15.285	19.63
	West Africa	1400 – 2215	6.130	48.94
4.				
	Europe	2045 – 2215	9.454	31.43
5.				
	East Africa	1645 – 1730	15.285	19.63
6.				
French service 1	West Africa	1700 – 1745	6.070	49.42
		1900 – 1945	9.545	49.42
2.	Europe	1900 – 1945	9.545	31.42
Portuguese Service 1	Angola	1400 – 1445	21.545	13.92
	Mozambique	1700 – 1745	21.545	13.92
Hausa Service 1	West Africa	1800 – 1900	6.070	49.42
Arabic Service 1	Middle East			
	Sudan U. A. R.	1600 – 1645	21.545	13.92
2.	North Africa	2000 – 2045	9.545	31.43
Swahili Service 1	East Africa	1545 – 1630	21.720	13.81
		1730 – 1815	15.285	19.63

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Photographs to be printed in the book

No	Caption	Suggested Spot
1	Talking Drums and Drummers	Title Cover
2.	Sir Arnold Wienholt Hodson, Governor of the Gold Coast, 1934-1941	After page 2
3.	Mr. Frederick Augustus William Byron The Engineer who built Station ZOY	At the end of Chapter 1
4.	The first Broadcasting House on Ninth Road, now referred to as B.H.I	At the end of Chapter 1
5.	The first members of staff H.A. Young, B.H. Perkins, A.A. Tetteh, Bukari Moshi and R.A.S Buckman	At the end of Chapter 1
6.	The second Broadcasting House in Ghana, built in 1939/40, now referred to as B.H.2	At the end of Chapter 1
7.	J. Ghartey and B. S. Gadzekpo at a BBC Studio, London	Middle of Chapter 7
8.	Mr. James Millar, first Director, Ghana Broadcasting System	Middle of Chapter 9
9.	Mr. Henry Swanzy, first Head of Programmes	
10.	The third Broadcasting House, Broadcasting Village, B.H.3 built in 1957	
11.	Mr. W. F. Coleman who succeeded Mr. J. B. Millar as Director of the Ghana Broadcasting System, and later as Director General of the G.B.C.	Towards the end of Chapter 10
12.	Radio Review in Stages	After 1st page, Chapter 11.
13.	Mr. John Hammond, reading the news	
14.	Mrs. Emelia Elliot, reading the news on G.B.C	
15.	Television. Mr. Kwame Amamoo, reading the news on G.B.C Television	After first page Chapter 14
16	Mr. Eric Adjorlolo First Ghanaian Head of News and Current Affairs	After page 158