

NOW RADIO

ISSUE #8

AUGUST 6, 1986
EVERY FORTNIGHT

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A L L R A D I O !

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OVERSEAS RATES ON REQUEST

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Without doubt the leading topic of conversation at the moment is the decision by the Governing Council of the tiny Principality of Sealand to go ahead with the licensing of three commercial radio stations.

One can do nothing but admire the sheer determination of Prince Roy, Princess Joan and the rest of the Bates family who have stood up against so many odds in the time they have occupied the former Wartime fort some eight miles off of the Essex, England, coastline.

There will, of course, be those who will not hesitate at laughing the whole thing off as a joke, but it is not. No many spends twenty years, and millions of pounds working for something that is merely a joke.

Sealand is a reality. Sealand Radio will be as legitimate as Radio Luxembourg.

It's been a long time coming - but it's just a short while now until British broadcasting gets another boost from competition outside of these shores.

Welcome to the Broadcasting Industry, Sealand!

A FULL REPORT ON SEALAND APPEARS ON PAGE 11

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO ALL READERS: We are compiling information for presentation to Northampton Head Post Office concerning the fact that some subscribers are not receiving their copy of NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER the morning after it is posted from Kettering Main Post Office. We pay a full first-class postage rate for everything we post and find it most unfair that some mail is not being treated as first-class. To assist our report to the Post Office we would like you to return the envelope in which you received this issue of the newsletter to us at PO Box 45, Kettering, Northants, NN16 0NW. All newsletters sent to subscribers are mailed at 1700 hours on the Wednesday afternoon of publication, so should be delivered to almost all addresses within the United Kingdom the next morning. Your co-operation would be appreciated. Thank-you.

COMPENSATION RULED OUT

Whilst members of the Community Radio Association are pressing ahead with a claim to the Home Secretary for compensation for losses involved in preparation of applications, many non-CRA groups are stating that to accept any kind of compensation from the Government would be equal to an out-of-court settlement to the problem, and would eliminate them from further licence applications.

MP SAYS 'LEFT' WERE TO BLAME

In a letter to one of the 266-applicants for Community Radio permits, Patrick Jenkin, Member of Parliament replied stating the reason for the decision by Douglas Hurd to scrap plans for Community Radio was the strong left-wing influence of stations.

Until now the strongest term used by the Government has been "subversive elements" hidden within applicant groups.

ALLOCATIONS 'RACIST'

Alexander Lex-Arnold, head of Community Radio applicant group, Pathfinder, has written to Douglas Hurd, Home Secretary, saying it was racist even to consider allocating Community Radio permits to ethnic minorities.

Lex-Arnold's letter said that special favours should not be given to ethnic interests by permitting them to control any type of broadcasting in the United Kingdom.

He said that if Community Radio was to be allowed to provide any kind of alternative to services already provided by the BBC or Independent Local Radio stations, it should then be 'across the board' for the entire community and not pander to any particular factional preferences.

In the letter from The Pathfinder Group, reported as being one of the most militant groups seeking Community Radio licences, Alexander Lex-Arnold continued: "It has come to my attention that one reason for the delay in permitting the commencement of Community Radio broadcasting services in the United Kingdom is a fear that such localised services could be used by ethnic minority groups for propaganda and for civil disorder purposes."

POPULAR STATIONS DECIDE FUTURE

South-West London organisation Radio Jackie have announced that they will wait until the Government publish their Green Paper on the future of UK sound broadcasting this autumn before deciding their next move in their campaign to obtain a Community Radio licence.

Jackie closed down last year and prepared one of 266 applications filed at the Home Office for consideration.

Another South-West London group, TW Sound, is to continue to operate. However, founder of TW Sound, and former operator of Border Radio - from which it was formed - Harry Marshall has announced that he intends to return to the air as soon as possible with his late night service for senior citizens, Marshall quit TW Sound after rows over operational policies being proposed by members of a committee established to run the station, if its application had been successful.

PRIVATE STATIONS CONTINUE

The private non-BBC/IBA radio scene in London is reported to be healthy and active at the moment, despite continued harassment by Department of Trade Radio Investigation Service officials.

London Greek Radio is on the air daily, despite raids that occur very frequently. The station is continuing to pull a large daily audience from London's Greek Community, and raises up to £15,000 a week from airtime sales.

JBC, serving Black and Asian listeners in the London Borough of Brent, also continues, though without interruption of the DTI.

Stations on-air in London include TKO, Starpoint-FM, KISS-FM, London Greek Radio, British Greek Community Radio, Alice's Restaurant, LWR, Flashback Radio, and Sina Radio,

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SEAWOLF GROUNDED!

Former Laser-558 DJ Charlie Wolf was due to take over the evening airshift at Radio Mercury last Monday (August 4) but a last-minute hitch has led to the top jock deciding to quit the United Kingdom.

Radio Mercury Programme Director, station solicitors and Home Office officials met and it was decided that Charlie could not work for the station without an official work permit. The Home Office told Mercury and Charlie Wolf he was welcome to make an application, but it must be submitted from outside of the country.

As a result Wolf will be leaving Britain in the next week or so, and returning to the United States. He intends to take up more radio work that side of the Atlantic whilst a new application is filed for a permit.

It goes without saying that Charlie was most upset at this latest set-back in his plans to make England his new home. He was to have taken over the evening show, identifying it as HOTS-102,7 (Heart of the South), following the departure of DJ Timbo, who is joining the BBC's new station for Essex.

TAKEOVER BID FOR BBC LOCAL

Record and TV entrepreneur, Aaron Sixx, who bid for Community Radio licences in both North and South London, has made an application to the BBC to take over the Corporation's station, BBC Radio London.

Sixx made a written offer of £250,000 for the station's frequencies and equipment. He was not particularly interested in the station's premises in the West End. On the subject of staff - certainly not on his shopping list!

Sixx proposed to the BBC that he would turn the station into an ADR operation. Aaron Sixx, of Radio Broadcasting Limited, wrote that the output of the BBC station was "absolutely abysmal" and that the whole operation was nothing but a drain on the financial resources of the BBC. He also attacked their very low audience ratings.

The BBC, meanwhile, claim they cannot find the letter of application from Aaron Sixx.

UNION SHOOT ACROSS BILTON'S BOWS

The National Union of Journalists says it is to take Radio Wyvern's managing director, Norman Bilton, to task over moves he has made in his two and a half years at the Worcester station to reduce the size of the station's newsroom.

The NUJ say the newsroom at Radio Wyvern, a station which began broadcasting four years ago, started out with a staff of six, producing bulletins hourly from 0700 - 1800 as well as a limited but present service over the weekends. Now the newsroom is down to a staff of three, with two about to exit the station, leaving a trainee as News Editor Designate.

Radio Wyvern now transmits only 7 local bulletins on weekdays, with no such local output provided over the weekend. The union state Wyvern is relying on goodwill to a great extent, with local freelance journalists offering their stories free-of-charge to the station. In addition, they claim, it was wrong for a presenter and a local vicar to be presenting news during local elections. A Ministry of Agriculture official covers Hereford United soccer games for the station.

The NUJ claims that Wyvern is one of two Independent Radio stations not paying staff what it calls the 'proper wage' for the job. They claim that not only has there been a dramatic decline in the station's local commitment, but broadcasting standards have also fallen.

On the other side of the coin, Norman Bilton, called in to rescue the financially crippled station, has turned the station around from a £200,000 deficit to a modest profit for the first time since it began operation. He has reduced staff from 32 to 18 and is running what he feels is a tight and much more efficient station. In a recent interview, Norman Bilton claimed he thought news was highly over-rated and it was a 'barmy' situation where newsmen, with very little time on the air, were paid more than programme presenters.

The NUJ says it is to take the whole matter to the Independent Broadcasting Authority and to MPs, claiming that Wyvern has not kept to its commitments as promised in the station's original application for the franchise. John Foster, the NUJ Broadcasting Officer, says the IBA has to make a decision about how blatantly a station should be permitted to break his agreement with the Authority.

BBC LOCAL FIGURES UP

Listening to BBC Local Radio has increased from last year, according to the Corporation's 1986 survey BBC Local Radio stations are now able to claim a weekly reach of 26 percent, with a 14 percent share of listening.

The survey, which was conducted during the Spring, showed BBC Local Radio and Independent Radio had both increased their shares of the market by around one percent. The commercial competitors come out of the survey with a 27% share of listening.

Radio One is given a 30 percent share, with Radio Two having 17 percent, Radio Three 11 percent and Radio Four 11 percent.

BBC Local stations in Bristol, Leicester and Northampton attain better figures than their commercial competitors. The BBC stations which improved their figures the most in the last year include Radio Cornwall, Radio Derby and Radio Norfolk.

However, the Corporation's biggest Local stations, continued to struggle to make an impact. Radio London took only five percent, Radio Manchester seven and Radio WM (Birmingham) had only four percent.

AUSSIES STAKE IN INDIES INCREASES

Chalford Communications, the United Kingdom arm of the Australian media company, Darling Downs TV Pty, has increased its share ownership of Independent Radio.

Chalford has acquired the shares in IR of both TVS and Broadhatch Communications. The move means, in addition to owning 100% of IRS, one of the two major sales houses for commercial radio, Chalford now has shares in fifteen of the country's commercial stations.

The TVS shares in five independent stations were being sold to Broadhatch Communications, which in turn is being taken over by Chalford Communications. Broadhatch itself has shares in nine commercial stations. In the take-over deal, Chalford will allocate a 10 percent stake of its holding to Broadhatch.

Broadhatch is owned by The Mountbatten Family.

The stations effected by the change of share ownership from TVS and Broadhatch are Southern Sound, Invicta Radio, Radio Mercury, Moray Firth Radio, Wiltshire Radio and The Suffolk Radio Group (Radio Orwell and Saxon Radio).

Chalford Communications has bought an 18 percent stake in Radio Trent. At the same time it has been disclosed that JCB have acquired a 20% share, and now Trent has the required £400,000 it requires to open a Derby station. It is due to air next year.

MERGER TALKS OF YORKSHIRE INDIES

As revealed in *NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER* last issue, talks have been taking place between the three Chairmen of Radio Hallam, Pennine Radio and Viking Radio on a possible merger agreement between the stations.

The stations are staying 'Mum' on the talks - but are insisting that the end result will not actually be described as a 'merger' but more of an 'association'.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority has been asked for its approval of what the three stations have decided. Job losses are not being spoken of, officially, though it is thought that in areas such as engineering, sales and traffic and senior management, there would be losses.

In programming areas, Viking and Pennine already share at least six hours of programmes each night, from 0000 - 0600 - the hours down from last year when the share began - and the talks could be aimed at sharing night time programming between all three 'member' stations.

Unofficially certain Pennine staffers have been speaking of financial difficulties at the station, and with fears that Red Rose Radio, who own Leeds' based Radio Aire, may be interested in making a direct take-over bid for the station, the recent talks have taken on greater importance. Aire is going from strength to strength at the moment, with local sales figures shooting sky-high. Income per month has more than doubled of late, to more than £100,000 a month.

LOVE IN LONDON

Adrian Love is back in London after a stint with the British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) in Berlin.

Whilst continuing to prerecord programmes for BFBS, Adrian is also carrying out freelance relief work at LBC Newsradio.

SUNSHINE NOW IN BATTLE OF GIANTS

Dublin is the centre of a new and vigorous battle between three stations at the moment. Joining Q102 and Energy is Sunshine Radio, the Portmarnock-based station which was established by Robbie Robinson, and which has, until now, considered itself as more of a city community radio station than anything else.

Robbie Robinson, also known from past days as Robbie Dale, has always claimed his station was a serious contender for a broadcasting licence, and that his only interest lay with serving the Dublin area, with a full-service format.

Now, in has come a new Programme Director, hot-foot from the United States, and out go many of the 'traditional' elements in Sunshine Radio's programming.

News output has been slashed, DJs have almost been made a thing of the past. Station jingles and identifications have been stowed-away and all specialist programming has been dropped by the new programmer.

Non-stop Hit Music, and nothing older than a year appears to be the order-of-the-day.

The news that does exist on Sunshine now, is broadcast in a short, snappy bulletin airing at 10-minutes after the hour.

The new format puts Sunshine in direct competition with two other Dublin stations after providing a similar fuss-free format; Q102 and the newcomer, Energy-103.

Vetran Irish Radio commentator, Barrie Johnston, believes that Sunshine will lose many of its listeners, at least those after more speech-based output and those interested in local and community happenings to North Dublin Community Radio - though the new excitement being created by Sunshine's new lease of life, will attract many younger listeners, as well as being much more acceptable to those who are mobile, or working in offices, factories and shops, where speech-elements are a major factor in *not* selecting a station.

The new All-American format was preceded by the airing of the same song, (Bang Zoom) Lets Go Go! by The Real Roxanne, which was played time after time for no less than 150-minutes.

UNION WHINGE OVER ERI

ERI, the Cork commercial station, has returned to the air to be surrounded by controversy. Local residents, and a near-by Church, have complained that the stations transmissions are causing interference to electrical equipment, including radio, television and telephones. The Church complained in public of breakthrough on their amplification system in the Church and on PA equipment used for Bingo.

However, ERI quickly established what it calls a Communications Hotline and invited anyone with complaints to call, and have a team of six engineering staff correct any problem free of charge.

The station also established a special communications centre in the area for listeners to visit with problems.

The actual interference caused by ERI lasted only a short while and reports say the situation is now clear.

The station was recently put off the air by a High Court order which claimed the company did not have planning permission for its installation. Facilities have since been moved to a new location.

The station has announced massive expansion plans - but has come under fire by the Irish National Union of Journalists who say they are asking for an urgent meeting with Ireland's Communications Minister in the Dail, Jim Mitchell.

The Union is claiming their is a lack of Government action against unlicensed broadcasters and says this is unfair to its members.

CARY WILL NOT RETURN

Former Boss of Radio Nova, Irelands most successful venture into commercial broadcasting, Chris Cary, has stated that he will not be returning to Ireland and re-establishing the station.

His statement followed an appeal with the Dublin City Planning Committee, who turned down his request for permission to keep transmitters and aerial systems at the Rathfarnham location.

Cary closed Nova down earlier this year following a long and bitter struggle with the National Union of Journalists. In the end both the problem over planning permission, and the action of a director, resulted in the company being wound up and Nova closing down.

The station was replaced by Energy-103, under the direct control of Tony McKenzie.

Cary claims his return to the Irish radio scene would mean 'There would be a war'.

WASHINGTON FILE

The latest ratings book from Arbitron details KABC Talk Radio as Los Angeles' top station at the moment, with an averaged quarter-hour share of 7%. This shows an increase for the station from 6.1% in the winter of last year.

Top rated LA music station was KIIS-AM-FM with 6.3%, down from 7.8% last time around - and a decline attributed to the young KPWR (Power 106) which swooped in to take a 6% share.

In New York, Z-100 (WHTZ) lead the list again with 6.9% - a rise from winter '85 from 6.1%. All News WINS came fourth in the ratings book, with an average quarter-hour share of 4.6%, fairly steady considering the last book gave it 4.7%.

The picture for Chicago's Full-Service formatted WGN was much the same as usual, with it picking up a mighty 11.4% share. The top rated music station was WGCI-FM, which has increased its listening figures.

CUTBACKS DON'T MEAN JOB CUTS

President of the CBS Radio Group, Bob Hoskin, has claimed that major cutbacks in the division will not lead to a cutback in their output and that with union agreement the cuts had been planned over the last two years.

Over the next year, new combo-equipment being installed at CBS owned stations will mean about 40 technician's jobs going.

In addition CBS have formed one combined sales force for KMOX and KHTR in St Louis and Tampa, Florida stations WSUN and WYNF.

SOLD

F-8 Communications has purchased WIOG-FM from Booth American Co. for \$2,500,000. KBCH, Lincoln City, Oregon, has been sold for \$325,000 and is now owned by Brown Broadcasting Enterprises.

AWARDS

The 15th Bobby Poe Pop Music Awards were held recently in Atlanta City. Radio station WMMS, Cleveland, walked off with an award for being considered the nation's best large-market station. Not bad, when one recalls that the station only switched to a top-forty format around one year ago.

The Programme Director of WPLJ, New York, Larry Berger was awarded the major-market leader distinction.

Other awards made included: Programme Director of the year (Large Market) went to John Gorman, Large Market Music Director and Air Personality went to Kid Leo, EZ Communications' Vice - President, Dn Vallie, picked up the National Programme Director award. Major-Market Programme Director went to Nick Bazoo from WBBZ, Pittsburgh - a station owned by EZ Communications. The Small-market Programme Director of the year was Kipper McGee for his work at WROK, Rockford, Ill. He is now with EZ Communications station WEZB in New Orleans.

WRNO FREQUENCIES

WRNO, The New Orleans international commercial radio station, is now using the following frequencies:- 0000 7355kHz, 0300 - 0500 6185kHz, 1500 11965kHz, 1700 15420kHz, 2100 11705kHz, 2230 9852kHz. On Sunday the station broadcasts are extended, running until 1200 on 6185kHz, then on 9715kHz until 1400 hours. Times given are gmt. Deduct one hour for UK time.

THE PIRATES WHO WAIVE THE RULES

Limited Supplies of this book by JAY JACKSON are available from NOW RADIO COMMUNICATIONS. It looks at offshore pirate broadcasting from the beginning in the sixties, through the seventies and comes up to the period when the North Sea was the home to Radio Caroline, Monique and Laser-558. It has been described as a 'Do it Yourself Guide' to Offshore broadcasting! 90 Pages A5. Price to NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER subscribers - £3.50p inclusive Postage and Packing (UK Price).

Order From: NOW RADIO COMMUNICATIONS, PO BOX 45, KETTERING, NN16 0NW.

NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER

MONEY TALKS CONTINUE

Following his departure from the Nanneil-project, Paul A. Rusling is in the United States putting together the final details of the financial arrangements for a new international offshore radio station which he hopes will be broadcasting to Britain and Western Europe before the end of the year.

"Once the financial structure is sorted out, I shall begin hiring a team. Until then, we will have to wait. I don't want the same thing to happen that has ended in the Nanneil remaining in port and amidst such a pathetic situation. Ours will be a straight-forward, legally watertight operation, and one which will win a massive audience." He told NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER.

CAROLINE ENGINEERING WORK GOES ON

Work in improving the antenna system, and preparation for the coming winter storms, has continued in the last fortnight aboard the Radio Caroline ship, Ross Revenge. Last week saw a further closedown during daylight hours, to allow a specially hired aerial rigger to climb the 300-foot tall tower, together with Caroline Overdrive personality Tom Anderson, to renew and repair guy lines. Some, as expected, were in very bad condition.

Caroline engineers have also continued preparations for the soon-expected increase in transmitter output on 558 kHz - doubling the channels output to 10,000 Watts.

At the time of going to press, Chicago Peter, is off of the Ross Revenge, leavin Mike Barrington in charge until his return in a few weeks time to conclude the aerial and transmitter operation.

NEW NAME ON 558

As predicted in NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER, the latest signings by Caroline-558 include Steve Essex, who as Benny James, spent a time aboard the Voice of Peace off of the Israeli coast a few years back.

With Tony Peters now due shoreleave, expect to hear a return of Caroline Martin shortly, along with a new name to the station, Richard Staines.

Currently, Newsman and joint programme director Peter Philips is taking some shoeleave, leaving programming duties in the hands of Johnny Lewis, the stations breakfast show air personality.

LEWIS BLOOPER!

Whether it was the effect of the station's Home Brew, GBH, or perhaps the stormy weather conditions on the North Sea, or whatever, Johnny Lewis dropped a classic clanger last week whilst detailing his new competition. The competition, where he is asking the name of the first hit single for Dire Straights, was announced, followed in one link by Mr. Lewis actually giving the answer!

If you would like to enter the competition, address your entries to Johnny Lewis, Radio Caroline 558, New York, 11518, USA.

Lewis actually is the centre of further debate here at the NOW RADIO office, because another studio chair has been totally destroyed, but this time Johnny is claiming he is not at all responsible for its demise! This would certainly make a change, as ALL previous demolition jobs have been the work of the senior Boogie Woogie man of 558! Don't tell us, Johnny, it was the weather!!! Or perhaps it was Raffles, the ships dog, thinking it was a new kind of bone!

GOOD LISTEN!

Actually, on the subject of programme content, may I take the opportunity to say how much we have been enjoying Tom Anderson's programmes on Caroline Overdrive of late. Anyone thinking that the output of Caroline on 963 after 2130 is only fit for hippies, should think again!

The music is well varied, and the presentation very professional, warm and, using that oft-quoted description 'Tight'!

NEW MONIQUE MAN

Radio Monique, the Dutch-language op from the Ross, has a new newsman, programme presenter. He's Jan Molenaar. He joined the station last week. (KEEP YOUR CABIN TIDY!)

LOOSE ENDS

RADIO CAROLINE deejay, JOHNNY LEWIS left for the Ross Revenge for this latest stint claiming it could well be his last for the station. However, those who know him well, can recall that just about every trip he's made to the ship has, in his own words, been his last! The only difference this time is Johnny has been having talks with certain radio programmers about making a move shore-side. No doubt we will only know the real outcome when it arrives at time for the next tender due to take him back!!...

UK and European broadcast firms wanting to secure space at the September meet of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS 1986 Convention in New Orleans should get their requests in pronto! We've just heard there is only about 5,000 square feet of exhibit space remaining - about 20,000 has already gone.....

ALICES'- the London UL station managed to only transmit for about 24-hours with its Not The Royal Wedding Programme before DTI bods decided they had enough! You'll find that story reported in the last issue.....

There was a lock-out at LBC News Radio last Thursday! Mind you, this one wouldn't have involved either unions of headlines across the London newspapers! Poor PAUL EASTON, LBC's Commercial Production Manager arrived at work, with a usual heavy workload lined-up, including a vox session in the afternoon, only to discover that the key to the production studio was missing! No spare on station meant calling in the local locksmith, who duly arrived at 2 p.m. to allow Paul to continue working. Questions are now being asked, like who had the key, and who was kipping (or was it bonking) in the studio on Wednesday night/Thursday morning?!.....

Imagine how quickly we moved when a letter arrived, from the INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY, marked 'NEWS RELEASE - URGENT'...there was no holding us ripping the envelope open in order to get the story into print in time for this issue...only to find the envelope was EMPTY!!!

What is this we are hearing around the biz that MIKE SMITH may be replaced on the RADIO ONE breakfast shift by BRUND BROOKS? Anyone know any more than that....?!

Dare we predict a departure from RADIO TWO of DAVID HAMILTON and the entry of SIMON BATES? What about more changes on two at lunchtime? Watch this space!.....

RADIO TWO Newsreader and Continuity announcer, JAMES ALEXANDER GORDON, is seeking to end his eleven year marriage. James, 49, and his wife Cristel, 43, have lived apart for five years. Gordon resides at Reading, whilst his wife is living in Leatherhead, Surrey.

She had a talent for news, current affairs and presentation, yet was turned down by several IR stations before being given a position with CAROLINE - we're talking about JAMIE KING. A wealth of previous experience is to be found listed on this young lady's CV.....

Remember, a few issues ago, we reported on some of the feedback from around the Independent Radio system on the NETWORK ALBUM SHOW, which is produced by PICCADILLY PRODUCTIONS, an off-shoot of PICCADILLY RADIO (Manchester), but recorded and produced at the studios of CAPITAL RADIO (London)? Well, we've just received a note from a presenter at one of the Yorkshire stations, which has a bit of a go at the syndicated programme. For those of you who don't know, it arrives at stations on Saturday morning, via Datapost, on two open reel tapes. Actually, unlike the NETWORK CHART SHOW, it is in stereo. The Chart show is in Mono, because it is fed up the IRN line from London, which is only monophonic at the moment. Anyway, those comments, which read; "Who in professional radio starts a tape rolling and recording, opens the mike, then fires a dry-voice ident show opener with a cartridge machine 'clunk' then speaks??? Who Shuffles around in a squeaky chair??? Who produces a Cue-Sheet that looks messy and unprofessional??? If you were producing a syndicated programme for 300 stations, perhaps...but when the show is aired on a couple of score IR stations there is no excuse for the taped programme arriving with no leader. The tape is not banded at all. Is It Just Too Much Hassle????!!" Well, what do you think? We would suggest that those responsible for the programme take a look at the way that programmes via ABC/Watermark are presented to stations - Last weekend, GAMBACCINI even fluffed the last link, then did it again...so station's be warned...never run the show without editing it!

Talking of the NETWORK ALBUM SHOW - some kind of history is to be made next weekend when the programme actually contains its first commercial, a spot for EMI, which will be aired during the second hour of the two hour long programme! That will leave stations with just about 11 minutes plus to fill up during that hour!!!

Finally, it was great to receive a letter this week from STEVIE GORDON, former shipmate of mine, and a man who has done the rounds on such op's as Caroline, Sunshine and The Voice of Peace. One of the nicest guys I've ever worked with says he looks back on his times at Caroline with many fond memories - and recalls our times in Israel working with Abe Nathan with some horror and disbelief! Perhaps one day we can both recall some of the funny moments we had!!! Cheers Stevie!

FLASHBACK!!!

This was your commercial radio choice of listening at the end of January, 1967.

RADIO CAROLINE SOUTH

6am Keith Hampshire, 9am Mike Ahern, Noon Dave Lee Travis, 3pm Tommy Vance, 6pm Robbie Dale, 9pm Johnnie Walker, 12pm Steve Young, 3am Night Owl Prowl.

RADIO CAROLINE NORTH

6am Jerry Leighton, 9am Daffy Don Allen, Noon Bob Stewart, 3pm Mick Luvsit, 6pm Requests in Action, 12pm Midnight Surf Party.

RADIO LONDON

5.30am Kenny Everett, 9am Tony Windsor, Noon Mike Lennox, 3pm Ed Stewart, 6pm Tony Blackburn, 9pm Marc Roman, 12pm Norman St. John.

RADIO 390

6.30am Bright & Early, 7am Morning Melody, 9am Stars on Disc, 9.30am Light and Bright, 10.15am Masters of the Organ, 10.35am Pause for Prayer, 10.45am Keyboard Cavalcade, 11am LP Special, 11.30am Music from the shows, Noon Lunchbreak, 1pm From me to you (request programme), 2pm Playtime, 2.10pm Moonmice, 2.15pm Melody Fair, 3.15pm Spotlight, 3.30pm Intermezzo, 4pm Memory Lane, 4.30pm Tea Time Tunes, 5pm Music Bound, 6pm Scene at Six, 6.30pm Rendezvous with Whythm, 7pm Country Style, 7.30pm From me to you, 8pm Dinner at Eight, 8.30pm Continental Cabaret, 10pm Serenade, 12pm Closedown.

BRITAIN RADIO

6am Woolf Byrne, 9am Graham Gill, Noon Alan Black, 4pm Ted Delaney, 6pm Woolf Byrne, 8pm Dave McKaye.

RADIO CITY

6am Early Bird Show, 8.45am Up and Go!, 10am Just Go!, 10.45am Coffee Break, 11am Just Go!, Noon Gary Stevens Show, 1pm Breakaway, 5pm Five by Four, 5.30pm Sixty Minute Special, 7pm Ralph Cooper Show, 7.30pm City by Night, 11pm Late Date.

RADIO 270

6.30am Paul Burnett, 9am David Sinclair, Noon Roger Scott, 2pm Brendan Power, 4pm Roger Scott, 7pm Paul Burnett, 9pm Brendan Power, 12pm Dave Sinclair.

BBMS

6am Daybreak, 9am Morning Melody, Noon Musical Magazine, 3pm Swing til Six, 3pm Music til six, 6pm Swing Session, 7pm Evening Inn, 9pm Formula '67.

MORE MEMORIES NEXT ISSUE!

SEALAND TO PERMIT THREE NEW COMMERCIAL RADIO STATIONS

British listeners will shortly be benefiting from the arrival of three new national commercial radio stations.

The Principality of Sealand, based on a former World-War II anti-aircraft gun fortress, 8 miles off of Harwich, will be base to the stations.

The territory was first occupied by Roy Bates and his wife, Joan, in the nineteen sixties. Previously Mr. Bates had owned and operated the offshore station, Radio Essex, based on Knock John Tower in the Thames estuary. Radio Essex closed down early in 1967, after it was prosecuted for transmitting without a licence, prosecution having claimed that fort was inside UK territorial waters.

After several years of occupation of Sealand, originally known as Roughs Tower, the Bates' declared it an independent state. International law shows that Sealand has all the requirements, and after many years of speculation, the Principality is about to issue three broadcasting permits.

Roy Bates, Prince Roy of Sealand, says there has been great interest in the project and said that the first station could be broadcasting by the end of this year.

He said "It will bring a bit of sparkle to British radio."

The British Government has admitted that Sealand can broadcast - adding that Mr. Bates would not be breaking any laws. A spokeswoman at the Department of Trade & Industry said "It would be a unique situation. Because Sealand is semi-recognised as a mini-state, it would not be in the same position as the so-called pop pirate stations."

She added, "Mr. Bates would have to join the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva..." Sealand's three commercial radio stations will each have a unique format. Each will also pay full royalties for music broadcast.

The Sealand State Corporation, the Principalities Governing body, will provide some equipment, including power and an aerial system, though each station will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of each unit.

The licences are being administered by The Sealand State Corporation. Principals in this are Prince Roy, Princess Joan and Millionaire Song Writer and Music Publisher, Hal Shaper.

Hal Shaper has said "I think it will become one of the most successful maritime developments ever."

Amongst the formats being spoken of are an all-oldies operation, and a Country station.

Each station will be able to operate with full programming, production and sales offices in the United Kingdom. This may place other 'offshore' operators at a disadvantage when it comes to selling airtime, as Sealand's radio stations will be one hundred percent legitimate. The stations will find themselves able to broadcast free of UK needletime restrictions, and able to use staff at present working on BBC or IR stations, without fear of upsetting anybody. Sealand radio stations will be as legitimate as, say, Radio Luxembourg.

Sealand has its own flag, passports, postage stamps and currency. Being recognised in the UK as a separate state, means those visiting Sealand, or returning from it, must pass through customs both in England and Sealand.

The 50,000 Watt AM signals from Sealand will cover much of England, the Benelux and Scandinavia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fleet Street Gossip columnist Nigel Dempster is to take over Radio Two's breakfast show later this month when regular host, Derek Jameson, goes for his summer vacation.

This will be Dempster's debut as a presenter. Jameson is a former Fleet Street Editor.

One of Washington's longest serving air personalities, Ed Walker, had the surprise of his life recently when he discovered amongst his mail, a letter from President Ronald Reagan!

The flattering letter from The President was to greet Walker back to the MOR station, WRC from WMAL Radio.

NEW YORKER FORMAT CHANGE

Under new ownership WAPP New York is the centre of broadcast industry talk at the moment. The new owners, Emmis Broadcasting, are about to change the station's format. Mid-August looks to be the likely time the change will occur.

At the moment WAPP is running a music intensive hit format. Amongst the talked of changes, leading contenders appear to be either a Top40/Urban hybrid or all-Country.

It's also for sure that the station call-sign, WAPP, will be going along with the present format.

WAPP, you may recall, was launched in a blaze of publicity as it ran 'commercial-free' for its first three months on the air - a stunt that at least two Dublin leaders have tried in recent years.

MID-SHOW QUIT FOR TOP JOCK

One of the most popular air personalities in Ottawa has quit CFRA Radio after ten years. In fact, the sometimes controversial deejay, quit whilst in the middle of an airshift!

Mark Elliot resigned over a money dispute with CFRA management, and a recent decision by station management to reduce the length of the playlist.

Elliot, on air for 20 hours a week, paid his own travel expenses, much of which were spent producing interview material for his programme, claimed he was only netting about \$25,000 a year.

CFRA management have admitted that they are upset over Elliot exiting the way he did, but hope they will be able to entice him back to the station.

TALENT LINED UP FOR NAB '86

Joe Cocker will be providing some of the musical entertainment at the National Association of Broadcasters Radio '86 meet planned for New Orleans, September 10 - 13. Cocker will perform on the closing night in a concert promoted and sponsored by Westwood One.

This year's event is reported to be even bigger than last year's, which was held in Dallas, Texas. So far 65 hospitality suites have been booked by radio stations and broadcast programming and equipment companies.

NEW MUSIC SEMINAR

Speaking to the pop and rock music section of the recent New Music Seminar in New York, Programme Director of New York's WHTZ, Scott Shannon told his audience "If we (programmers) pick ten or a dozen bad records in a year - we're out of the #1 spot in the ratings."

Shannon and his fellow panelists described methods they use to choose material for the often heavily vetted playlists. Sales figures in local stores help programmers decide the prime movements in station playlists. Call-out research helps them decide which records, in the main, have 'burnt-out'

Shannon himself claimed that programmers, themselves alone, would always listen out for new product and make the final decision on their own gut feeling.

Perhaps a full reversal of previous such meets, major market stations were praised by a record company executive for breaking new talent. Arista Records Vice-President of Singles Promotions, Phil Quartararo, accused the small and medium market stations who follow the major market stations in adding product. He said they should again stand alone, as in the past, and make their own minds up on new product.

Programme Director of WXXS, Boston, Sonny Joe White agreed with this thinking, recalling that when he was in small market radio, "We used our ears...now it seems that the little guys only care what the big stations are adding to their playlists."

OUT BUT NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

After conducting more than 25,000 on-air interviews, 60-year-old Betty Kennedy is retiring from CFRB, Toronto, after some 27 years with the station.

Betty says she is not retiring, just looking for something else to do, "for a while."

MEMO

NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER is published every fortnight - please make sure you have the latest - SUBSCRIBE!

NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER

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STEREO-HITS

a NOW RADIO NEWSLETTER special report

RESEARCH: JAY JACKSON, GAVIN COOPER and GRAHAM KENNEDY

Since the first issue of this publication we have reported several times that work on a ship in a North of Spain port has continued in an attempt to launch a new offshore radio station for Britain and Western Europe. The station, we revealed, would be known as *Stereo Hits* and broadcast AM Stereo using a 50,000 Watt transmitter.

Work on the project began last year, whilst Laser-558 was still broadcasting, but when that station closed down, in November, the new project, found itself with added reason to get to the air, and commence broadcasting faster than ever. Indeed, a number of former Laser-558 staffers were hired by the new organisation, mainly engineers hired to work on the installation of technical equipment. There were many rumours about the station at that time, and for the sake of safety, the ship intended for use as a new pirate station, was moved around from one UK port to another. It was to be seen in Southampton as well as various Kentish ports. When certain publications took to publishing more detail than the financial backers had wished for, it was at first easiest to simply deny the vessel was to be used for broadcasting. Then, with the interest of DTI officials growing, it was decided to sail the ship outside of the United Kingdom, and thus escaping the arm of the law, the Marine Offences Act 1967.

The vessel, *Nannell*, sailed to Santander, Northern Spain. The port was put on the radio map when the Radio Caroline ship, *Ross Revenge*, was converted from a former Ross Fisheries trawler into a broadcasting vessel and provides ample facilities for such an operation.

With the use of a good number of telephones, a telex machine, our main in The United States of America, and a reporter who managed to board the *Nannell* in Spain, and with the use of a few bevvies, observed the situation the ship and its small crew now find themselves in.

One fact that immediately comes clear is that, whilst the crew, including radio engineers, are being paid, and paid very well, there is little work being carried out. One engineer, formerly with Radio Caroline, claimed he was being paid £250 cash every week, but the backers were not forthcoming in actually providing equipment, spares and facilities to make the transmitters operational.

We have discovered that £420,000 has been spent on the project so far, and whilst the backers at the outset thought they would be on the air by now, they have of late seemed to be happy to almost sit back and await an offer for the ship as a ready-to-use broadcasting unit. Talks with various people have been held, including one man who was involved with Radio Caroline's plan for a relaunch following the sinking of the *Mi Amigo*. The same man was never actually hired by Caroline, and caused a major upset in the USA over his ability to extract finance which never found its way to the Caroline bank account. He was also under investigation by the FBI. People involved with Stereo Hits and the *Nannell* are worried in case this person actually manages to offer the \$500,000 asked by the ships owners and offers it in cash.

Laser-558 has provided the evidence that a format of non-stop hits would attract a large audience, and a wide variety of potential advertisers confirmed they would buy time on such a station providing certain criteria were met. These were chiefly integrity and honesty on the part of the stations sales team, legality (in particular concerning supplies), and consistency. This was the thinking used to seek potential investors in this new station, and one senior figure involved in the past with Stereo Hits explained that 'consistency' actually translated to reliability, a quality that he claimed had evaded offshore broadcasters, in the main, in the past.

However, the search for finance, of several million dollars, was made almost impossible. Millions of dollars of backing was withdrawn as a result of the DTI 'Observation Exercise' and more-so the publicity Laser-558 gave to the 'Spy Boat'. Finally, we understand, one man, with a spirit of adventure, brought in some members of his family, and the new project was finally underway.

Movement of finance was delayed, but eventually it began to flow, and despite this delay, the station could have been able to commence broadcasting early this year, were it not for the constant delays in obtaining seaworthiness certificates for the ship and papers for the crew.

Two transmitters, one 50,000 Watt - the other 10,000 Watts, were delivered to Santander in late December. However, cost-cutting by the backers had lead to the transmitters being transported in open-top crates and there was damage caused to the 50,000 Watt transmitter.

This was then followed by a number of engine breakdowns, which delayed the ship even further. When she was ready, money began to prove to be an obstacle.

Disagreement over the tower staying system, ships crewing, generators and the purchase of studio equipment then arose between the Project Director and the investors, who at this point decided to direct the operation themselves.

To add to the problems, the main investor then decided he wanted to quit the project, and wanted to sell his share for around £250,000. Within weeks the figure rose to £500,000. The Project Director, as a result, appeared to be the only one prepared to continue working on the stations launch.

At this point James Ryan, a wealthy American businessman, arrived in Spain to inspect the Nannell, with a view to purchasing it. Negotiations began in London and the USA.

More problems then arose with the ships registry and the transfer of ownership. A major row broke out over a plan to sail the ship with no guys on the tower, and with a complete lack of funds and the Project Director, who we know can say we understand was Paul Rusling, quit and moved to a new base in the Caribbean either to raise new funds or to instigate a new project.

We spoke to Paul Rusling yesterday, who said "Whilst I wish the station every success, I cannot be involved in a project which I am not confident will succeed. I am putting together a radio station which will not compromise its potential by cutting corners such as lowering either technical or engineering standards. It must be free from interference by backers, and free from any smirch of illegality. I just wish I didn't have to travel four thousand miles to do it...."

Rusling is currently based both in the Caribbean and Miami.

We asked him about the alleged involvement of Robbie Day, to which he told us Day was never involved on the Stereo Hits project either as a backer or employee and that his company, Global Radio Sales was simply one of the agencies that had provisionally booked airtime on the station. Rusling told us that Day had accompanied him on some meetings with potential clients and that he had set up various meetings. Paul Rusling wanted to make it clear that Day did not make contact with Stereo Hits until after Laser-558 had closed down. "There was no jiggery pokery" said Rusling.

We took the opportunity to ask Rusling about the closure of Laser and certain allegations that he had a hand in the ship being brought within UK waters. Rusling was involved with Laser during the building of the station in the United States and claimed to be owed several thousand pounds by the original management of the station. He issued a writ which was pinned to the ship on its arrival in Harwich, which led to it being seized by the Admiralty Marshal, and then to it being sold to raise the money owed by the Laser operation. "I knew the Captain quite well, but he did not bring the Communicator in at my behest. I was not even in the UK when she came in. I was in Belgium on my way to a meeting with a radio engineer to arrange a mast for the Nannell. I've not visited the Communicator since she came in, that's not the way I want to remember her...morbid the people who have been to see her..."

Paul continued to state "I do admit I was pleased to see Laser close when it did, it had finally gone downhill and the people running it deserved to be shown they couldn't pull the stunts they were pulling and get away with it. Far better she closed after a period of outrageous success, and not absolutely collapsed, although the last few weeks were dismal technically. I was particularly pleased to have the on-air bleatings about the spy boats stopped, that was defeating the whole thing. I think had Laser stayed out their much longer Caroline may have fallen first. As it is a reasonably better result than having no Caroline and just a poor Laser there."

Back to Stereo-Hits for a moment, and a final check before we go to press, reveals that there is still a small crew on the Nannell, only the 10,000 Watt transmitter could be used if she were to sail at the moment, studio equipment is poor and there are no definite plans by the remaining investors. Wages are still being paid, though.

Perhaps Stereo Hits will pull itself together and begin broadcasting - but one does have the feeling that the new project Paul Rusling is working on at the moment from his offices in the USA and Caribbean, will be the first to break the silence on the ether!

With at least one other 'known' offshore radio project on the go at this moment, and the Principality of Sealand about to offer three new commercial radio channels it appears that competition provided by radio stations from the seas is going to do nothing but grow over the coming months.

One question that does spring to mind, from time to time, is where will all the staff come from to engineer, programme and run these new enterprises? Are we about to see a mass exodus from land-based commercial and BBC radio to these new giants? Is there enough new talent on the horizon to fill the scores of hours of programming already on offer by the likes of Caroline and Monique, and planned by Stereo Hits, Paul Rusling's new project and the three new stations about to take to the air in months to come from Sealand?

All that can be said, is wages for those who do become involved in these operations, will be good...certainly better than have been offered in recent years. Indeed, for some this could be quite a 'get rich quick' situation - rather similar to the hey days of the North Sea Oil Rigs!

PROGRAMMING COMMENT

"The thing that may surprise you about commercial radio and it certainly surprised me, I've learned a lot of lessons...I had an opinion formed by conversations with other people, a totally false impression really of what commercial radio was supposed to be about - that is it is full of worthy items and worthy people saying worthy things which are absolutely worthless. As far as I'm concerned, the important thing is the figure at the end of the financial year, does it pay the wages? Does it pay a dividend?

It's a business and unfortunately because so many of the local stations have actually broadcast to the IBA and not their listeners in an attempt to cling to their franchises and they have in many respects written their own death warrant.

What the listeners want and what the IBA want are often two different things, as a matter of fact the IBA might share that opinion because there is a different attitude towards commercial radio in Britain now, even by the IBA.

We don't need the IBA to tell us we are not doing the job properly and in many respects that is true of a lot of radio stations. Although, of course, we have to be very careful as they are still our Lord and Masters.

MARK WESLEY
FROM AN INTERVIEW
IN 'THEN & NOW'

music

PLAYLISTS

My comments in an article in issue #6 of the newsletter, suggesting that promoting the next record, or other up-coming elements in a programme, has resulted in some hard debating between myself and a number of fellow broadcasters!

Let me say that, on reflection, I've always thought that the argument for or against this policy in programming is perhaps fifty-fifty, and like most programming policy, it all comes down to gut-feeling. There is nobody who can say 'This is the answer' - and that is the wonderful thing about radio - one is always learning and as I recall Alan Freeman saying years back, and a statement I've often found myself repeating, 'The day you stop learning is the day you quit...in this business you learn something every day...'

The subject of whether to have a playlist, and how strictly presenters should adhere to it is another of the un-winnable arguments in this country's radio system. However, you, in most cases do need to establish some kind of musical base for your station, otherwise you end up with no common-thread to your daily schedule. Even the same programme will end up varying from day to day, as the mood of the presenter changes.

To many programmers a playlist is often something which is drawn up for the benefit of a secretary who has to type the list out and mail to record companies, in order to keep getting new product. It bears little relationship to what actually is going out on the air. Indeed, I've witnessed stations where a playlist is drawn-up, but never even distributed within the station. It simply lists the titles which record pluggers want to hear are being given airplay!

So, what is the purpose of the playlist? For a start, it is not at all for the benefit of the record firms.

It is a selection of music on which, unless you're an oldies station, your main programming is going to be based. It is a vital aspect of programming and should be an area in which programmers spend a great deal of time and energy considering. Music is the staple of most stations - and its something that radio can present best. People expect music on radio - what kind of music, and how that music is programmed is up to you.

Music, of course, is emotional and personal and how to choose, how to programme and how to please the audience are matters of constant debate and diverse opinion. Each programmer knows what he likes, and should rely greatly on introspection and experience to tell him what his listeners will like. Mind you, the moment he decides, there will be a deejay who will clash head-on with him over some part of the choice. The deejay will claim the listeners want something else, or that a certain record is 'rubbish' - but this arguing is often as conclusive as a debate about religion or politics.

If you do want a common thread throughout your output, it is constructive to assemble a playlist - and formulate what's known as a Hot Clock. Before you simply divide your music into two groups, an A and a B list, you should consider what it is you really want to do with the music that you've chosen. Your music list will come from various bits of research. You will need to air many tracks from the current charts. So, you'll need your copy of Music Week and the full Network Chart - as opposed to just the top-thirty that some music programmers use! You can access the full Network

chart via Oracle on Channel 4 from Sunday night until early in the week. Next you want to note what new releases are climbing the charts, or which are guaranteed to become hits. Then you may have a supply of the 'also-rans' like regional releases or cuts from acts which are good 'turntable hit makers' but don't sell. (Chris DeBurgh has been an excellent example of this until 'The Lady in Red'!)

If you are not a lazy programmer, you would also take time to listen to the new product to help you decide. You might also listen to the new albums - and choose a number of album cuts for airing as part of the playlist.

Now, having brought together a massive list of possibles, you should look at forming a playlist that is going to work. After all, it's no use having a list of 150 titles, if this means only one play per week for the top numbers, is it?!

The A list should, I feel, be the box of the biggest hits from the current chart. Only include those in the top-forty which are climbing, or in the top twenty in full. You could also add to this list a few of the definite hits from established bands...the likes of Wham, and the acts which are much requested by your audience.

The B list would contain the rest of the top-forty, that's to say those on the way down. You will then need to add the rest of the top 75 and the rest of the best of the new releases from good and popular acts. This, somewhat longer list, could also include some of the best album cuts and regional acts which receive good local support.

Your C list will be made up of other new releases and more album cuts.

Finally, I would suggest having a D list which is all album - a small yet effective selection of some of the LPs on sale at the present time.

Now, you have to work out for yourself how long each list is to be. If you feel that you should be playing the top hits every four hours and you have 20 titles in the box - giving time to five A titles per hour, means you are on target. You work out each box like this, but giving slower rotation to those in the B box, and even slower to those in the C section.

If as a programmer you're after an audience which expects, or demands hit music, your Hot Clock could show each hour starting with an A selection, followed by a B, then perhaps a recurrent (a hit from the past 18-months), followed again by an A...and so on until you have the full hour worked out for balance and good listening.

You may want to Daypart your music - so that certain heavier numbers are restricted to times when a younger audience element is tuned in - if so - do it.

Once you have established this system, stick to it, but carry out continuous research to discover any weak points, whilst also noting the strong factors. Don't keep a record on the list a moment longer than you feel comfortable with - pull it off if there is anti-feeling from the listeners - and don't just keep to changing the playlist once a week - consider looking at the list, listening to the output and making decisions from the 'feel' on a daily basis. You may think that certain tracks should be on faster rotation - doing this means you can make that adjustment by walking into the studio and doing it yourself at a moment's notice!

THOSE JICRAR FIGURES REVISITED

Further study of the latest JICRAR survey, conducted for the Independent Radio 'Network', show one or two interesting things.

First, it's worth stating again that IR's share of all listening (by all adults) has remained steady, when compared with the last JICRAR, two years ago, at 28%. Perhaps one might dare to mention that the figure, compared with years before that, is actually down. Indeed, in 1981, IR had 31%, a year later the figure had risen by a further 2%. In 1983 IR was pulling 29%, before slipping in the last two surveys to 28%. In the same time BBC Local Radio has increased its share from 6% in 1981 and 1982 to 8% in 1983 to 9% today.

'Others', being BBC World Service and Radio Caroline in the main, have made the most marked increases. This figure also tends to include out-of-area stations. A prime example would be in Leeds where some people (for reasons best known to themselves!) tune to Bradford's Pennine Radio. In Bradford, by the same count, people tuned to Radio Aire in Leeds. In fact in West Yorkshire one can receive an amazing selection of stations that are out-of-area - such as Viking from Hull, Hallam from Sheffield, BBC Radio Manchester, BBC Radio Sheffield, BBC Radio Humberside and what not.

The best indication of the pirate's doing well comes in the reach of 'others' in areas such as London (Capital/LBC territory) and Chiltern land, where the figure is 21%. In Hereward's TSA it's around 15%, whilst in Saxon's TSA the figure is 20%. In Kent, Invicta's survey shows Caroline and co reaching 23% with Radio Mercury having 37% of the adult population tuning to such operations.

COMMUNICATIONS

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An Open Letter to Gavin Cooper

Your *Questions That We May Ask* piece on the subject of Community Radio was one of the worst articles I had had the misfortune to read on the subject, and shouldn't go unanswered, for it will have done a gross disservice to a magazine which aspires to being a serious challenger to magazines like Broadcast and Media Week.

For a start your attempt to shift some of the blame from the Government to what you call 'radicals' is downright laughable, and I think the whole thrust of your argument is exposed in the telling description of these so-called radicals as people who have jumped onto the Community Radio bandwagon 'seeing it as another way of getting their viewpoint across'. Er... I don't want to sound stupid, Gavin, but isn't that precisely what Community Radio could potentially be about, You know? Access, and all that.

I'm aware that a lot of the programming advocated by 'radical groups' would in fact be very dull - something that doesn't always seem to have occurred to them. However, you seem to go further than that in being against them entirely for having the temerity to apply for licences in the first place. Would you for instance be against gays, or a particular ethnic group having community access to the airwaves? Because if you are (and I suspect you are) I think you should come out and say so, and not hide behind generalities about School Bullies and Left Wing 'council-backed' stations.

In fact your cheap point about JBC being backed by Brent Council stinks. It wrecks of sour grapes, not to mention racism, its remarkably inconsistent too, for in the same magazine there is mention of the Conservative supported Radio Jackie being left alone by the authorities for a long time (while incidentally other stations were having their doors kicked in left, right and centre - no pun intended!)

Gavin, if you think JBC is being left alone because of political support and fear of sparking new riots you should go and talk to Lepke and all the other Dread Broadcasting jocks who suffered constant harassment from the DTI in Notting Hill until their excellent station was finally smashed.

I don't know about 'Classroom Bullies' and 'The Rest of the form suffering in detention'. Your article reminds me of the spoilt brat or classroom creep who can't bear it when somebody else gets the attention, or finds a way of getting away with something you wish you'd thought of. Ultimately you remind me of all those naive anoraks in 1970 who really thought the Tories would stop jamming RNI when they came to power. And when they didn't, had to concoct all kinds of reasons and excuses why; simply because they refused to face the facts.

For a truer picture of the whole issue I thought Chris Elliotts rant on the back page was spot on. The scrapping of the Community Radio experiment has exposed the Tories lip-service to Free Speech and Free Enterprise for what it is, Hypocrisy.

ROB CHAPMAN

SOME OTHER GENERAL POINTS FROM YOUR COMMUNICATIONS:-

ROGER FITCHFORD, of Oakland, Rutland, Leicestershire says to our Editor, JAY JACKSON: "I found it very interesting. Although my main interest lays in one area, It is also interesting to read about radio in general. Also many thanks for some really enjoyable programmes on Caroline last year. Will you be broadcasting on the radio ever again?" (ACTUALLY, ROGER, I PRESENT TWO WEEKEND PROGRAMMES AT LEEDS' RADIO AIRE, THEY GO OUT FROM 2200 - 0200 ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY NIGHTS, I'VE ALSO WORKED FOR VIKING RADIO, DOING AN OLDIES SHOW ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, BUT GAVE THAT UP BECAUSE OF THE DOWNRIGHT HYPOCRITICAL NATURE OF SOME OF THE MANAGEMENT! I'VE ALSO HAD THE PLEASURE OF BROADCASTING ON HERWARD RADIO SINCE COMING ON SOME EXTENDED SHORELEAVE!)

P. I. CHAMPION of Durham City says: As well as pirate coverage, keep a good coverage of ILR, BBC Local, BBC National and Luxembourg as It's hard to get information on developments on those stations."

KIERAN MURRAY of Drogheda, Ireland; The lay-out is excellent. I can't find any fault with the Newsletter's content; everything seems to be covered - my only criticism is of the PAMS jingle feature which reads more like a P.R. job for the jingle company, rather than a serious look at the jingle market."

SALES

Bosses of all radio stations should be carefully looking at the costs of clients buying time on their stations at the moment. In particular, the many extra's charged by commercial stations in Britain and Ireland should become a thing of the past. If not now, by the time radio becomes more deregulated and competition grows.

The actual Advertising Rate Card could do with being made a lot more simple than it is at the moment. The standard, local or national, card card is nothing more than a maze to the average potential client. He really wants to know exactly what he is getting for the budget he can afford. The moment you add the extras, you are in danger of losing him.

There is no reason for any station not bringing its rate card down to two standard rate bases. One for daytime, 0600 - 1800 and another for evenings, covering 1800 - 2400 hours.

Next one should look at doing-away with Volume Discounts, New Advertiser Discounts, and the like.

Adventurous stations might want to consider publishing only the 30 and 60 second rates, and making anything in addition, shorter or longer, pro-rata. Imagine how easy it would be to understand. A quick glance by a client would inform him that he will be paying £X per spot daytime, and £X at evening time.

The hidden extras, which of course include VAT, also require some thought. Why not do-away, once and for all, with charges for scripting and production? After all, in the USA, where they happen to run commercial radio as a business, there is no charge and all local production comes free - included in the cost of buying airtime. You can't really charge 'em for carting spots - can you?

IBA RADIO TELETEXT

The Independent Broadcasting Authority is seeking applications from companies wishing to apply for two new radio franchises for the London area. The franchises are for Radio Teletext, for the transmission of subscription services for customers which they could read via desk-top or hand-held readout units.

A Radio Teletext service could be carried, inaudibly, on each of the two FM ILR transmitters which provide programmes from LBC Newsradio and Capital Radio. One contract could last until October 1991, the other until October 1992. Each transmitter provides a radio service to a potential audience of around 8,500,000 people.

Radio Teletext, otherwise known as SCA (Subsidiary Communications Authorisation), uses spare bandwidth within a FM channel. Possible uses include the transmission of financial data and electronic mail despatch (open subscription). The Independent Broadcasting Authority leaves applicants free to make whatever proposals they wish for services which are available to the general public on subscription and within the terms of the 1981 Broadcasting Act. They should also come within the terms of the Cable and Broadcasting Act of 1984.

Radio Teletext services are widely available in North America - but this is the first time such a service has been made possible in the United Kingdom.

In the USA some stations carry specially produced music and information on SCA for subscribers which might include eating places, factories, etc.

The closing date for applications is Thursday October 2, at noon.

AWARDS

The winners of the Capital Radio and Creative Review commercial of the quarter have been announced for the period ending June.

In the Humour category, Red Stripe's "Haircare" commercial won. It was written by Hugh Grant, Chris Lang and Andy Taylor. The producers were Ray Hearder, Carl Shuck and Talkback. The commercial extols the lagers appeal, not only of one with a distinctive taste, but also as a lager that "makes your hair stand out in the crowd".

In the music section the award went to "Ain't No Mountain" for DHL Worldwie Express. It was written by Simon Brooks and Hugh Mosley and was produced by Sarah Shaw. Using a re-mix of the Diana Ross hit, "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" it told of DHL's ability to reach any part of the world at any time of day or night, superfast.

There was no award in the drama section this time around.

The panel of judges consisted of Brian Davies of Creative Review, Jeff Stark of Saatchi and Saatchi Compton, Ken Mullen of Kirkwood & Partners and Bob Connor of Brunning Advertising and Marketing. The winners received a trophy and framed wall certificate.

"CAN'T YOU PLAY SOMETHING ELSE?"

A number of people are becoming quite concerned that nearly all of the major unlicensed radio stations, pirates if you like, in London are following much the same kind of format. They tend to lean towards playing soul and jazz funk, and whilst I don't intend to receive another letter from Rob Chapman accusing me of being a racist, I do think it's about time those responsible for programming London's alternative stations, start searching for an alternative format!

The possible formats, if we are to look at music-based radio, that would attract an audience are numerous, I would even dare to suggest a slick top-forty operation of the like of Laser-558. It is no excuse to say Radio One is top-forty. Radio One leans towards top-forty, but it doesn't do it around the clock. It also tends to provide much more speech than a solid top-forty station, like Laser-558, would. Radio One is also national, so a station looking at providing a London-wide service, would attract a large and important audience. Especially if it were in tune with the young audience and its needs.

Again, a well-programmed Adult Contemporary station would go down well. As would Country, Easy Listening or Classic Rock.

The audiences for currently available formats from the UL stations is limited - so if the scene is to expand, let's really hope that those setting up future stations will be a little more creative.

GAVIN COOPER

REFLECTIONS

JAY JACKSON

I am at the moment hoping to complete writing a book on the setting up and day-to-day operation of Radio Sovereign.

Radio Sovereign, you may recall, was the private station that was funded by John Kenning, and of which I was Programme Director, Head of News and Public Affairs and also presenter of the morning drive shift.

At this very moment I am up to the opening broadcast, and have found many, many items to illustrate the book. I've discovered we actually have many interesting photographs, advertising rate cards, publicity material, programme schedules and many letters - including to and from politicians...including Douglas Hurd!

Radio Sovereign really did play an important role in broadcasting, and to this day I find people who call me, want to discuss that station, with its unique format of playing almost nothing but Solid Gold music from the fifties, sixties and early seventies. There seems to be considerable respect for the output of news and public affairs the station provided, and I intend to open a few eyes in the book, by describing that news room staffing in most UK stations is not low, as the unions will have it, and we showed how you could cover even a major event, with only a couple of people, and a lot of commitment. Radio Sovereign covered the IRA bombing at Harrods in London and was putting out news ahead of even IRN/LBC.

Something that has made me feel very warm about Radio Sovereign is the fact that all the staff have gone on to good things. I won't say better! I went on to join Radio Caroline and head the news and public affairs unit for Newsweek International, then to add a daily morning programme to my work-load. Jim Irvin is lead singer with chart-topping Furniture, Kevin Turner went with John Kenning to a new station they set up in Italy, Rob Randall and Ron Brown joined Radio Jackie, Steve Colman landed a series of programmes at Viking Radio in Hull, before getting a proper job (the breakfast show on Metro in Newcastle-upon-Tyne), Richard Jackson went off in the end to Dublin for a good healthy stint with Energy 103 and so it goes on. Of course, that Turner boy is now with Caroline-558, and makes me smile every time I listen to him, thinking to myself "That's one of our boys!"

Of course, Radio Sovereign is not dead. Although it closed down at the beginning of January 1984, following a decision made by John Kenning, I formed a new organisation Richmond Radiocasters, which made an application, along with 265 others, for a Community Radio permit for the London Borough of Richmond.

Despite the problems caused by the Home Secretary, in so far as he wants to wait a while, it is my plan to get the station back on the air as soon as possible. However, it may not be called Radio Sovereign - though we have legal right to the name - you will know it by both its on-air sound, and from the high level of professionalism that will flow across the airwaves from its transmitters.

In the meantime, I must return to writing this book. Unlike the last, this time I will have access to this word processor, and will be able to make it a nice long read! When it's ready, I'll let you know. I hope you will want to read it. Even if you never heard the station yourself, you must by now have heard how it really did put a special kind of excitement back in to British radio for a while.

LATE NEWS, INFORMATION & COMMENT

With Charlie Wolf not taking over the evening airshift at Radio Mercury, the new host for the programme is Paul Lee, Charlie will be back off to the USA shortly.

The m.v. Communicator is looking very smart at the moment. As you know, the former Laser-558 ship was bought by East Anglian Productions, of Frinton-on-Sea, Essex. The ship has been painted, nearly all generators are working one hundred percent, the studios and transmitters are fully operational. Indeed, she is about ready to sail. Watch this space, as they say!

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