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THE WEEKLY UPDATE ON THE UK RADIO INDUSTRY

GORDON DEMANDS SLOWDOWN

Radio Clyde Group MD James Gordon has demanded a halt to the Radio Authority's separation of the commercial radio industry, including the new Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) technology, and has questioned the optimism of new licence applicants.

Addressing delegates to the Radio '92 Conference in France, Gordon invited the present debate over the future structure of the BBC as reason to leave the commercial radio industry almost entirely as it stands.

"If Radio 1 or 2 were to depart significantly from their present format, that would clearly have major implications for the independent sector," he said. "Until the outcome of that debate is known, it is folly to plan in detail any further developments in the independent system."

He said that Radio 1 and 2 would prove the "litmus paper test" of the BBC and Government's attitude to public service broadcasting, and he noted that "half the Conservative Party thinks that the BBC shouldn't be doing Radio 1 and 2 anyway."

Gordon argued that investors in

British radio are "looking for a little more certainty as to the eventual structure and pace of development of the industry." And he believed that most radio listeners already had plenty of stations from which to choose.

"Despite the quite widespread choice, one gets the impression in this country that some people think we're lagging behind other nations in the number of services we provide," he said. "There is authority wishing to introduce new services has a duty to examine not only the viability of the service to be introduced, but its impact on the viability of existing services."

Gordon went on to criticise new radio licence applicants as "hurry-eyed with the audience shares they will achieve and consequential revenues they hope to earn" and he imposed the Radio Authority's philosophy.

"If they [the Authority] repeat to themselves as they say their right prayers 'orderly development'," he said. "and we never to repeat phrases such as 'a licence to go bust', all should be comparatively well."

Gordon also argued that new technologies should not determine the pace of separation in the industry, and he anticipated much industry discussion about the introduction of DAB.

"It may well be that more radio services could be introduced. Of itself, the introduction of DAB should not determine that more should be introduced," he said. "The nature and type of programme services we provide must be determined by listener choice and the availability of resources, news and financial, to provide them."

Gordon argued that BBC radio should be funded by either advertising or the licence fee, but not both, and he said an early call for the new 95-108 MHz channels to be allocated to a national commercial pop music station is 1996.

"The BBC are not going to be allowed to have perpetual occupation of the commanding heights of Radio 1 and 2 which they chose for themselves in 1967," he said. "There will be a challenge from the independents, whether it be three years down the road or whatever."

JAZZ INJECTS MORE SOUL

In its continuing shift away from a pure jazz format, independent London station Jazz FM has introduced a revised programme schedule and several new presenters, under a new on-air slogan 'Jazz FM - London's New 102.1'.

To Radio 1 and BBC Radio London and Of Radio 1's Vincent joins to present a Sunday lunchtime show entitled Jazz Flavour. Vincent will continue to host the popular nighttime phone-in on BBC and, until recently, had presented a weekend music show on Kiss FM, to show he donated his extensive record collection prior to the station's launch.

Another soul DJ, Mark Sebastian, has quit his long-running Choice FM/London breakfast show to present Jazz FM's weekday overnight shift, replacing the former back-to-back music, and its Saturday lunchtime slot. Ex-Treva/Nowcastle presenter DJ David Treva has joined for weekend breakfasts, bringing the station's presentation consistent to thirteen. Boosted from the new schedule are Steve Jones, Bill Oddie and Mark Walker.

Jazz FM's 14 show of 11staring has consistently ranked it twelfth out of the thirteen Londonwide stations. Latest audience figures show its drivetime show attracts as few as

12,000 listeners from a potential audience of nearly ten million. The station's most popular weekday show remains Miles Aymer's evening (liner Jazz, ironically the one remaining programme whose presenter retains artistic control and plays 100% jazz.

*** Following Mark Sebastian's departure, Choice FM's breakfast show is now presented by James Anthony and Angie Green. In other changes, Jazz Francis replaces Kike Go on weekday evenings, Jerry Gonzalez replaces Graves on weekend overnights, and Sam Spear joins to present a Sunday afternoon revival reggae show, shifting the soul Power Countdown chart to Sunday morning.

CROWN SHARES SUSPENDED

Crown Communications, owner of London talk station LBC, has asked the Stock Exchange for a temporary suspension of its shares while it attempts to refinance £15m of borrowings.

The company is continuing talks with its banker, the Bank of Scotland, and possible investors who might inject further cash into the debt-ridden operation. In the half-year ended this March, Crown lost £5.5m, completely wiping out its 5m retained from a rights issue the previous September. The pre-tax loss for 1990/91 was £5.7m.

In its effort to raise cash, Crown has sold its interest in the 20% share operation to ITN, its saleswoman IBS is about to be bought by American company Interpac, and its French subsidiary SWK has been placed in administrative receivership, following the failure of a proposed sale to the BBC network.

LBC's two London licences expire in October 1994 and will be re-advertised by the Radio Authority next March, though not as specifically speech-orientated services. The station's audience share rises from 2.8% (AR) and

seventh (PR) in the London market, and listening is still lower than before the disastrous AM/PM split introduced by Crown's Australian management three years ago.

*** On the same day that Stock Exchange dealings in Crown were suspended, shares in Allied Radio, Capital Radio, Chiltern Radio, Metro Radio, Radio Clyde and Trace World Radio all hit their lowest values of the year. Additionally, prices of Southern Radio and Midlands Radio shares held only 2p and 3p respectively above their 1992 lows.

CHOICE BEATS KISS IN COURT BATTLE

Choice FM's [beatbox] team defeated the Kiss FM opponents in a charity challenge match that ended without score. The match, held at North London's Michel Sobell Sports Centre

in aid of Sticks Dill research, was declared a win for the Choice team of 10 (including singer Junior) since Kiss FM fielded only half a team with none of the station's 50s. The Choice

FM crew walked away with the trophy ending their radio challenge campaign.

OPINION - THE BBC DEBATE

The present debate over the future of the BBC is as important for the whole shape of the Corporation's radio services as it is for the "higher ground" that the two television networks' programming will be forced to adopt.

In future, should RADIO 1 and RADIO 2 be funded by advertising, rather than the BBC licence fee? Should they abandon their present music formats and concentrate more on speech programming and society interests favoured by commercial radio? Or should they both be sold off to private interests, leaving the BBC with no popular music networks?

The greatest obstruction to sensible and positive debate about the future of the BBC's two 25-year-old music stations is undoubtedly the ignorance about them displayed by those people charged with determining their future. "Surely, all they do is play pop music", say the outsiders. "Is it right for that to be paid for by the licence fee?"

National argument is also obscured by the commercial radio industry's exhibition of self-interest. Its trade association recently argued for the abolition of Radio 1, on the grounds that "it already duplicates what independent local radio FM services are doing" and closure would "eliminate unnecessary overlaps."

That such statements are blatant lies is obvious to any music fan who has listened to both Radio 1 and its competitors. Even if you loathe Simon Bates, you would have to admit to never finding a commercial station in the UK that plays the breadth of pop music and new artists heard on Radio 1. But the fact that radio entrepreneurs can alter such attitudes in their official statements merely demonstrates the environment of ignorance within which they are operating.

So if demanding the closure of its major BBC competitor was not enough, the commercial radio lobby also wants to stop new advertising-funded rivals threatening to steal its audience.

In a "state of the industry" conference address last week, radio big wig Jimmy Gordon argued it was "folly to plan in detail any further developments in the independent radio system."

Gordon is Managing Director of the Radio Clyde Group, which holds a virtual monopoly over commercial radio in Scotland, and a profitable management contract to run London's Melody Radio. Should not such monopolists be jeered at heartily when they dare to pronounce publicly, as Gordon did:

"Obviously, I recognise that people like myself, as sitting tenants, are not the best judges of how such competition in the marketplace can sustain..."

To get off the platform, Gordon and your trade association, and perhaps that we can start an informed debate about the future of radio, unclouded by self-interest and ostriches.

RADIO CONTACTS

YORKSHIRE RADIO, Breakfast Television Centre, Revier Crescent, London W4 6EP tel: 071-268-4317 [second national commercial radio station on-air next Spring]
MIDLANDS RADIO, 42 Station Road, Pudding, Dyfed SA71 4BB tel: 0646-641285 Tlx Faxer 6 0437-532476 Stephen 30ent [applicant for new Pembrokeshire FM licence serving 65,000 adults]

RADIO WAVES

Kenzie's *See/See* theme includes a CLASSIC FM classical music supplement ***** Regional companies seek the time as such advertising revenue on local radio ***** New RADIO 5 invites Writers' Weekly (starts Sun 1st Nov 9am) in running a competition for bedding novellists and poets with over £1000 in prizes ***** New Los Angeles station is called JACK FM ***** Tony Blair's memoirs has accepted RADIO 4's offer for thirty minutes to mark the fourth anniversary of the Northern Ireland Broadcasting Bill, preventing the broadcast of the station's local news programme ***** The BBC RADIO 5 news on the third floor of Broadcasting House has had a £300,000 refurbishment and will be home to the new 24-hour news network ***** GUR needs a freelance travel reporter to replace Fiona Farrell who is moving to 77 071-224-2424 ***** BBC NEWS needs a Senior Producer for its 6:30-7:00pm show 020-742993 ***** BBC RADIO 5 needs a Production Assistant for its daily expense show 0203-860225 ***** BBC WORLD SERVICE needs a Cardiff-based part-time Production Assistant for evening cover, working on Welsh programming 0222-572888 02078 ***** RADIO 1's breakfast show joins Anyo's Music Monday competition each Monday in November, to win a Peugeot and trips around the world. Lyn Parsons replaces Anyo's holidaying sidekick Elaine O'Leary ***** John Cole is interviewed on RADIO 3's *Living It* (Sun 2nd 10.45-11.30pm) ***** RADIO 2 reports the tributes programme to scriptwriter Doc Farrow and Nert Monson who passed away the Last Dance For Me and Can't Get Used To Losing You (Tue 3rd 9-10pm) ***** Delight Youker's recent *Jamesstreet* Odeon show is RADIO 1's In Concert (Thu 5th 8-10pm) ***** CRITIC FM holds a South London Fashion Fair on 5th Dec at Crofton Leisure Centre, Brockley 071-485-5225 ***** BBC holds its third anniversary party on 7th Dec at London's 3rd Bar nightclub with the by Vicky Iris, Chlo Clark, Waaco & Dennis Sasse 081-809-1547.

Betty B has joined the station to present the official alternative reggae show Sat 10-11pm ***** RADIO 2 is mailing *Poddy* Fan Print Packs, containing 22 stickers, for 5p through B&N, 5p 50p and 50p/50p. In aid of the Children in Need Appeal ***** BBC WORLD SERVICE has advertised for a Working Director to replace John Tait ***** BBC RADIO 4's *WORLDWIDE* needs a Producer/Presenter for its 4:30-5:00pm output 0442-2322 ***** THE ARTS COUNCIL is awarding grants for research & development to independent radio producers with ideas to promote books and reading. 588 to Literature Dept, 14 Great Peter St, London W1P 3Q ***** RADIO 4 is organising a 20-hour course in radio production 11-15 Nov at London's Croydon College 071-520-6043 ***** WFL/News York DJ Scott Shannon has released an album "The Sessions in the Morning" (Crescent Moon) with Scott & York's show proceeds benefit AIDS research ***** CAPTIVE GIRL launches a new press. It is a campaign this month using the slogan "London's All Time Classic Radio Station" to remind listeners of its AM frequency and format, focusing on music policy rather than personality Gals ***** BBC WORLD SERVICE needs an Executive Producer for its (classical) *Music Now* 071-280-3455 02675 ***** Tower Records' Low Keyline shop has launched *TRM*, a low-power station available within 1km on 92.7 FM, playing a repeated five-minute type of new releases, changed weekly ***** CRITIC FM needs a Senior Sales Person 011-738-7969 ***** BBC SCOTLAND is to make significant changes to its opt-out services in Aberdeen, Highland, Tweed, Tisbury, Orkney and Shetland ***** CLASSIC FM's 50th Anniversary Chart Show now has its Top Ten displayed in the 300 of the obelisk's music department in a seven-month deal ***** RADIO 4 is the sole applicant for the Radio Authority's new *Northamptonshire* FM licence, serving 85,000 adults. A decision will be made before long ***** A Toledo station is offering

its audience the "ultimate job" prize as a professional WWS listener for a year, earning \$30,000 plus a \$5000 benefit package ***** CAPTIVE FM's Tim Westwood heard regularly on *CRITIC FM* seeking a promotion for a Choice-presented 280 concert ***** Having lost its morning team to a takeover, WWS/Albany auditioned ten replacements on air and ran a write-in vote in the local paper, won by syndicated shock-jock Howard Stern's talk show ***** New book *THE 80'S - 70 YEARS OF BROADCASTING* (£9.95) by John Cain, former BBC Controller of Public Affairs, just published by BBC Books ***** Interesting to read in *Radio Times* that editor Nicholas Brett cannot get his 12-year old daughter to listen to anything on the radio other than *ATLANTIC 252* ***** RADIO 1 DJ Annie Nightingale working on a book with Faber's Sheila says *Miss O'Hara* ***** RADIO 2 presenter Sheila Tracy had been the first woman to read the news on RADIO 4 ***** *CONDUCT* 34, *INVEST* and *CHARLES* DJ Mark Withness now on East Anglia Radio's *See-You* weekdays 12-1pm ***** Garrison Keillor's fictional account of *Minneapolis* radio station *WOL* "radio romance" now published in paperback (Faber, £8.99) ***** The Country Music Association presented Molly Wythe with the 1992 Wesley Rose Foreign Media Achievement Award for his 25 years of country shows on RADIO 2, *NEWS* and *BBC WORLD SERVICE* (but not for *Playboy* *Millions*) ***** *BBC WORLD SERVICE* (but not for *Playboy* *Millions*) ***** Equipment supplier *WORLD SYSTEMS CONCEPTS* has a useful free publication *The Little Book of Quotes* to help prospective radio stations cost the equipment needed for a radio licence application 0734-813000 ***** A new book *Handy For Broadcasting* (Routledge, £14) collects together independent studies on broadcasting economics, commissioned last year by the BBC for its *Chart* series

RADIO DIARY

- 31 OCT THIRTY FM 6th birthday party at the Whitehead Reg Park, tickets £5. Tel: 0622-872066
1/2/3/4 NOV JOINT CONVENTION & NATIONAL TRADE SHOW OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS AND LISTENERS ASSOCIATION OF BROADCAST ENGINEERS at Vancouver, Canada
6 NOV UK RADIO 20th ANNIVERSARY PARTY at 3rd Air Regatta, Watford Road, Sturford E15, with PAs by Wilson, Sarris Sasse, Vicky Iris & Chlo Clark tel:081-809-1547
12/13/14/15 NOV CRITIC FM FIRST SOUL & PEGASUS HEAD NEIGHBOURS with PAs by Evelyn, Sinclair, Vivian Jones, Peter Macgregor, Trevor & Mike Davis, Thomas 190 (inclusive of travel & accommodation) tel:071-738-7966
13/14/15 NOV RADIO 20th BROADCASTING & RADIO PRODUCTION WORKSHOP at Cranleigh College with 20 hours intensive tuition tel: 071-580-6043/4074
15/14/15 NOV COMMUNITY BROADCASTING EXPO 1992 organised by The Public Broadcasting Association of Australia at Albany Convention & Performing Arts Centre, Sydney. Info: 021 310-2995
16 NOV RADIO 4/5/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31 NOV COMMERCIAL STATION starts broadcasting on W.A./103.3 FM. Info: Unit 51, Science Park, Gwentlan, Newport-on-Tafel 0935-25626
17 NOV Also NW/PM closing date for licence applications for new FM station on 1170 AM. Info: Radio Authority
17 NOV TRANSMISSION services for Sir Richard Francis, former MD BBC Radio, who died in June. 11.30am at St Paul's Cathedral. Ticket admission only from Dr Marion Gashott, British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2NN