

**In Obayi, P.M. Okalla F& Onyebuchi A.C (Ed.)
International Broadcasting and world media system.
Madonna printing and publishing house, pp.8-12
2017
ISBN: 978-978-51467-8-6**

HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

By

OBAYI, Paul Martin Ph.D

BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

The invention of radio in the 1920's influenced what is today known as international broadcasting. Although it have been argued that international broadcasting existed during World War I, as Germans and British officials used the Morse Code to communicate via wireless signals. The United States navy used the same wireless process to communicate as at 1917. It was not until 1920 that Guglielmo Marconi developed a full fledge radio station. In June and July 1923 a wireless transmission has already been completed. Bray (2002) states that high speed short wave telegraph circuit were then installed from London to Australia, India to South Africa and Canada as the imperial wireless chain. In 1925, the Germans have already started experimenting on short waves. In the same 1925, broadcasting in South-Asia was launched in Ceylon. This radio station was called "Radio Ceylon. By 1927, Germany has transmitted there first international broadcast in their local dialect. In 1932, the BBC empire service was finally inaugurated with specific target audience in Australia and New Zealand. In 1931, Radio Vatican came on board. By 1936, the International Radio Union recognized *Vatican radio* as a special radio station and gave it the license to broadcast worldwide without any geographical limitation.

The Second World War saw a different dimension to international broadcasting. The broadcast media became a heavy reference for world propaganda and global politics. In 1942, United States of America initiated its Voice of America (VOA). While different countries were establishing their global presence through international broadcasting, and were broadcasting all over the world or to target continents, Germany banned Vatican radio at the heat of the World War II. The British launched Radio SEAC from Colombo, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) as an alternative voice during World War II. The central aim of the British station was to galvanize allied forces for the war. It was truly a sensitive for international broadcasting.

The cold war was another period that heightened international broadcasting and changed dimension in international broadcasting. The central aim was to dismantle the communist state in the Soviet Union. While the Western world was busy bombarding and flooding the Soviet Union with information, the Soviet Union was busy jamming frequencies and counteracting the western base information. The communist states were broadcasting to influence the domestic audience of capitalist states. Prominent broadcast stations from capitalist state were Voice of America (VOA), BBC world service, radio free Europe/radio liberty. From the communist state, prominent broadcast station were radio Moscow (voice of Russia), Radio Peking (now China Radio International).

Today, the cold war is over, but global politics has taken a different dimension and the nuclear threat by Iran and North Korea has increased. The media are now used as platform for global debate. The BBC world service was the first broadcast station to launch a television outlet in 1976, but ceded being the first to CNN which had primary access to Canada. By 1990, many international broadcasting stations began upgrading to a 24 hour service.

WAYS OF RESTRICTING INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

Propaganda was at the heart of international broadcasting. International broadcasting is basically justified as a means of extending the influence, facilitating the acceptance of its foreign policies and possibly, further the general economic and trade objectives of a given country.

It is because international broadcasting is laced with international undertone packaged to influence and propagate the ideology of the funded nations that governments of other nations do not want their citizens listening to international broadcast. This is done to protect the virtues and ideologies of one's country without interference. Hence, governments move to restrict receptions of international broadcast messages. For example, in North Korea, all receivers are sold with fixed frequencies tuned to local stations, while in Nazi Germany, cheaper receiver that could not pick up distant signals were also sold (Graef, 2005). The following are the ways of restricting international broadcasting:

- 1) **Jamming of Frequency:** This is the most common method of preventing reception of international broadcast messages. It is the deliberate broadcasting of a signal on the same frequencies as the intentional broadcast. The resultant effect of jamming of frequencies is the transmitting of two or more different messages on the same radio channel. Such situations make it difficult for international audience to get a clear single message, thereby creating static noise. This is to say that the signal intended to jam an international signal might be reduced to noise radio in order to disrupt the international signal. While this is common, it is however different from interference.

- 2) **Encryption of Message:** Encryption of messages is another way of restricting international broadcasting. International broadcasting is the encoding of information into a form in such a way that only authorized persons can have access to it. This method does not necessarily block international messages but restricts them to only those that are deemed qualified to have access, thereby keeping such messages a secret.
- 3) **Strict Regulations:** In some cases, governments in trying to restrict international broadcasting turn to formulating and implementing stringent, extant laws in order to discourage citizens from listening to international broadcast messages. These laws are usually extreme with heavy sentences to jail term. For instance, in Nazi Germany, a major propaganda campaign backed by law and prison sentences, attempted to discourage citizens from listening to such stations.

Other ways through which international broadcasting is restricted is the manufacturing and selling of shortwave, FM modulated radio sets. These radio sets are deliberately sold to citizens as they do not transmit signals of international broadcast stations.

REFERENCES

Craef, R. (2005). Bicycling to Amersfoort: A world War II Memoir. Universe.

History of Radio Netherlands Archived. 2009-02-28 at the way back machine.

John Bray (2002). Innovation and the communications Revolution. From the Victorian Pioneers to Broadband Internet.

U.S Government Printing Office. International Law Documents: Neutrality, Conduct and Conclusion of Hostilities. 1919, p.55.

Wood (2000). History of international Broadcasting.

The bible of international broadcast

Encyclopedia Britannica, 1991 edition

BBC World Service. World Service timeline.