

GHANA AND TELEVISION

THE PROVISION of a comprehensive sound and television broadcasting service for Ghana has been an immense challenge to the Company, and the satisfaction of having successfully completed so large a project has been very rewarding.

However, where the challenge ends for us, it begins for the Ghana Broadcasting and Television Corporation. Not that the Corporation has entered the field unprepared. An immense amount of forward planning and training has been undertaken. The form and purpose of the television service were carefully considered. President Nkrumah, speaking in Parliament in October 1963, said: "Television will be used to supplement our educational programme and to foster a lively interest in the world around us. It will not cater to cheap entertainment nor commercialism. Its paramount objective will be education in the broadest and purest sense."

These are laudable objectives and their implementation in the true spirit of the intention will require constant vigilance. What the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation has planned is a completely indigenous television service with its own trained Ghanaian engineers, producers, cameramen, filmmen, editors, actors, script writers, etc.

To achieve this end the Government approved the setting up of an Advanced Television Training School in Accra. Here engineers and programmers have been intensively schooled in television techniques. Over and above this, various key personnel have undergone courses of training with some of the best established television organizations in Europe and elsewhere. Under an aid agreement with the Canadian Government many Ghanaians, after their basic training at the Accra Television School, have been coached under real working conditions in the studios of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Here they have produced

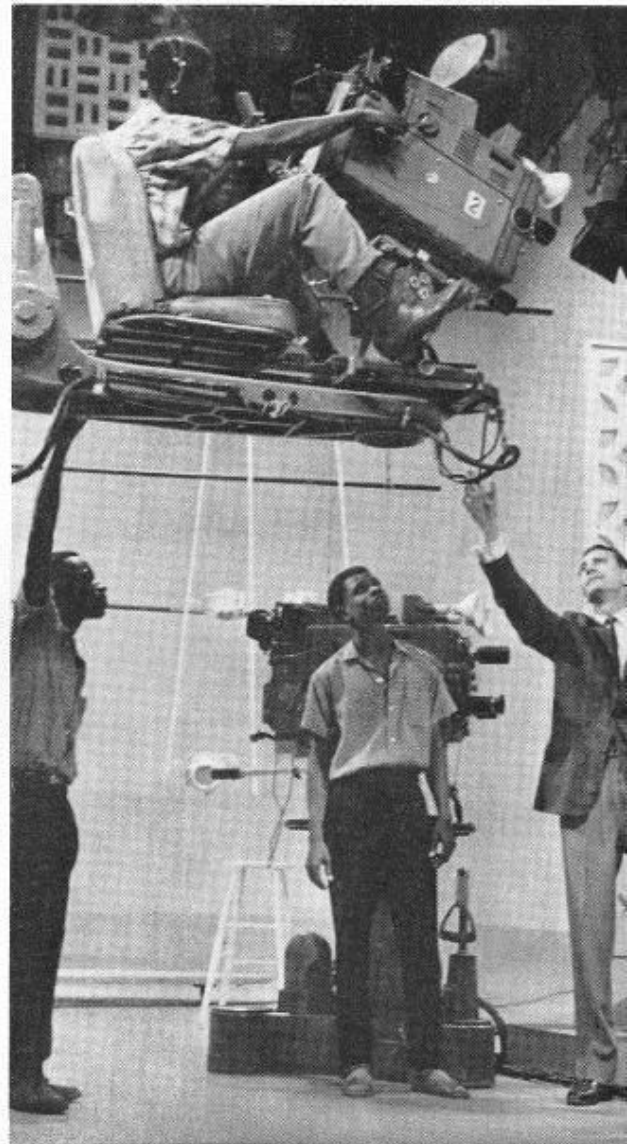


Fig. 1. Ghanaians undergoing training in Canadian Broadcasting Corporation studios.

shows, edited scripts, handled cameras, microphones, lights and assisted in the production of news programmes for the Canadian audience of 10,000,000 viewers.

For more than a year before the opening of the television service, the training at the school at Accra has been devoted to putting on programmes under broadcast conditions. Major events in Ghana have been filmed by camera crews. The news section have been producing 'dry run' newscasts. Script writers have been given courses in the production of scripts specifically suited to Ghanaian needs.

On the equipment side Ghanaian engineers and technicians have undergone intensive training at Marconi College and at the Marconi Works on the equipment involved in the system. Equipment familiarization training has also been given by the Company in Ghana itself.

A visiting executive from a long-established television organization said of Ghana's training programme: "I have never seen such extensive advanced preparation for any television."

The thoroughness of the training effort is matched by the preparation which went into the programming. With the guiding principle that the object was to educate and edify, teams of students from the Kwame Nkrumah University conducted a nation-wide survey which studied the needs of potential viewers. Based on this programmes were built up of an essentially Ghanaian character, drawing on the local art, culture, folklore and tradition. The Programme Department's

object is to serve, not sell. The need of the people is the rapid acquisition of new skills and knowledge and television provides a powerful means of doing this. Freed from the need to attract maximum audiences, minority groups can be effectively catered for.

Ghana has just started her great television adventure. We, who are proud to have provided the means for its realization, look with great interest at its development.



Fig. 2. Ghanaian engineers were trained at Marconi College at Chelmsford.

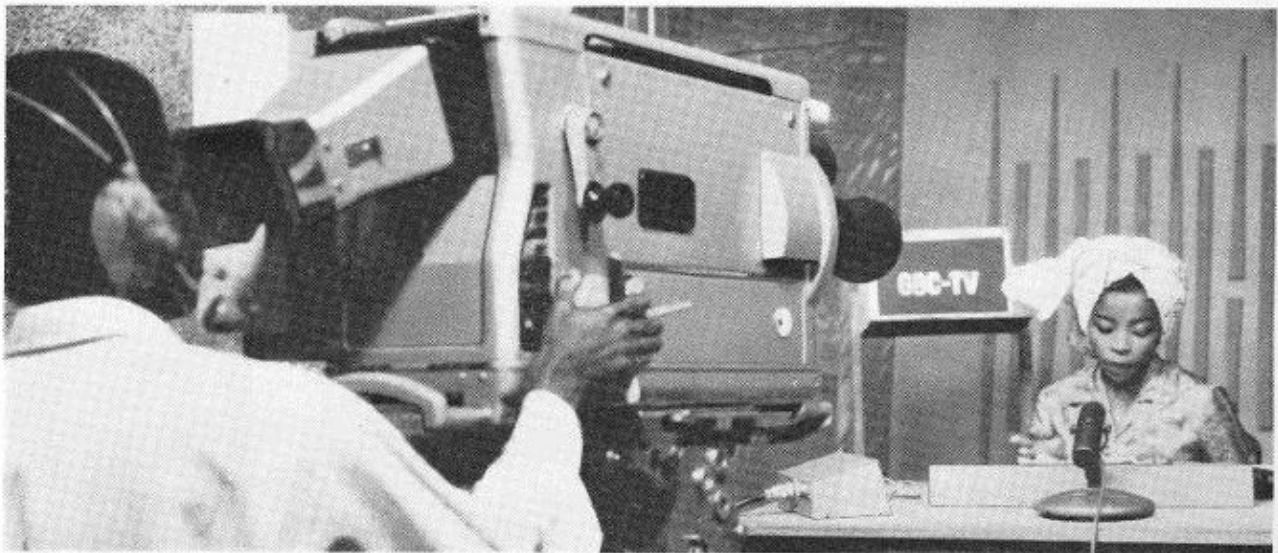


Fig. 3. A charming young Ghanaian announcer reading the news.