ORAL HISTORY OF THE BBC:
ROBIN SCOTT INTERVIEWED BY FRANK GILLARD.
SECOND SESSION RECORDED IN BROADCASTING HOUSE, LONDON, 14th January 1981.

GILLARD: Let's move on now to the period you spent, quite a brief period really but a very important one, in Radio in the second half of the sixties, when you became Controller Radio 1 & 2. Tell us first of all how the job came to you and forget that I'm here.

SCOTT: I had after some three years, three and a half years or so, back with Television Outside Broadcasts, I'd become, not discontented with the job I was doing, but really felt that if I was to realise what I believed to be my potential I should look for an executive position somewhere in the BBC. And thought well why not go back to my first love which was after all Radio, and so I applied for the job of assistant head of Gramophone Department in Broadcasting House. Working therefore to Anna Instone who was Head of the Department for many years, a great many. And I duly applied for this job although it was not at a grade above my own, in fact I don't think it certainly didn't produce any more money, but I wanted in fact to get onto the rung of a different ladder, possibly. I also wanted to get into domestic radio broadcasting which I'd really only contributed programmes to but never enjoyed any kind of executive position, or producer position, having always in radio worked at Bush House. And I was interviewed, Dick Marriott was in the Chair at the interview, I remember the interview extremely well. I remember the questions that I was asked and in particular a question about how to deal with difficult records that is the records which the BBC didn't approve of, and what one should do if they got into the charts, or the hit parade as it was still called in those days. How was one to treat, for instance, a number one hit if it was on the banned list of the BBC. And my answer if I remember rightly, was that we would be quite right to ignore it in it's launch because we disapproved of it, but that we could certainly reflect it as an event when it had achieved that particular position of popularity, even though we had ourselves turned our backs on it. And I think Dick thought that was a perfectly decent sort of answer. It was a reflection of the kind of ambivolent attitude the BBC has to have towards such things at times.

And I didn't get the job of Assistant Head of Gramophone Department and I was actually disappointed a bit miffed about that, my very dear old friend Mark White, with whom I'd worked in the early 50's because he was one of the people who helped me to produce Jazz programmes in the European Service and later went on to produce Jazz Club and then after a period outside the BBC in the early days of commercial television broadcasting, came back into that, eventually into that job. So I was quite pleased it was Mark who got it, and I had no idea then that he was eventually going to finish up as being one of my executives in Radio. And the next thing was that Charlie Max Muller, the ebullient, key-ring shaking, head of Radio Outside Broadcasts one day said to me on some occasion or other, it was a party I think, Brian Johnstone, a lot of old friends from Radio, Charlie said, Ah ha, I think I know who's going to be the next Controller, or Chief as it was known then, Chief of the Light Programme when Dennis Morris goes, Ah ha. Looking at me. This was absolute news to me, but clearly there had been talk in the senior mess room of Broadcasting House, or somewhere like that, and Charlie was a little indiscrete, but I didn't take him at all at his word, I just thought it was one of those rumours. And then I was in fact invited by Frank Gillard, Dick Marriott to attend a Board for the Controller Chiefship of the Light Programme and to, it was perfectly understood, to be the person who would be responsible for setting up the new radio service at that moment ill-defined in content but the new radio service which the BBC was to start to "replace" the pirates. The Marine Offences Bill having gone through the House, and the date for the sinking of the pirate ships having been fixed for August 15th. 1967 we are talking about.

So duly in February I think, of that year, I came for an interview at Broadcasting House in Frank Gillards' office with Frank Gillard, Dick Marriott, .. there was Chief of Personnel at the time.. Oh there was Michael Standing there of course. And I was delighted to learn very shortly afterwards, the interview that in fact I had been selected to be the Chief of the Light Programme. I was at that time on a contract, and in fact I remained on a contract all the time I was in Broadcasting House from the Spring of '67, to the end of '68, a period only of something like 21 months or so. Because I needed the money and I couldn't actually afford to go on the staff. I'd come back, I think I was earning about £3,700 as a contract producer with Television, and I struggled to get a salary of £5,000 as Chief of the Light Programme and to that was added 15% because one wasn't on the staff. So I

was actually earning £5,750 which was roughly the figure I earned right through that period of 20 months or so. Which was not by any means a grand salary and one didn't have a car or anything like that. I mean these were the kind of conditions which were splendid for challenge but of course in the commercial world would have been regarded as quite ludicrous. None the less it was obviously a job to fire the blood and to be the greatest challenge perhaps I'd had to face. And I was to take up my position just before Easter, in 1967 when Dennis was leaving there would be a short hand-over because I was then Assistant Head of Presentation of the BBC 1 and of course Television had to find a successor to me.

The way I used the run in time was of course to listen to the pirate stations, and the first thing I did was to borrow a tape recorder, a reel to reel tape recorder from Broadcasting House with a time switching device on it and I would set the clock to programmes that I wanted to hear later, or I would actually listen going up to the top of my house in Teddington and listening sometimes into the small hours. And listening to all the ones that were in range, I didn't of course hear the Radio Scotland's and so on, but I certainly heard all those that were operating in the channel. And by the time the pirate ships had effectively disappeared all except Caroline, I had a very sound idea of who I wanted to engage for Radio One, because pretty soon I realised that it was a case of taking the best from those people and putting them on the new channel that they already had an audience which they would bring with them. That, as in the case of religion's over the years, if you want to make a religion successful you build your church on the ruins of some previous religion or you take into your church some of the taboos and the ceremonial that is associated with the previous religion and you build on that. And obviously this was the thing to do with the new Radio One, although at that stage it was not called Radio One it was the Popular Music Service, I think was the internal word for it.

Dennis Morris duly left. I then went into a kind of preliminary stage where I wanted to wind down certain number of the Light Programme programmes which I felt had outstayed their welcome, or which I realised pretty soon I wouldn't be able to afford. One of the obvious difficulties in setting up a new channel was that to build this particular new mansion there were very few bricks and there was very little straw, and the straw in a sense had to be the needletime, the allocation of minutes per day, or extra minutes per day, allowed by the Musicians Union, or rather allowed by the

Mechanical Copyright people, but in kind of harness with the Musicians Union breathing down their necks, and the extra amount of needletime which the new channel was to have was severely limited - I believe I'm right in saying it was some 20 hours a week, or even less than that, and it was a question of pinching extra hours from if possible, from the other chanels, there was an odd hour which was pinched from the Home Service, I remember banging on the door of Howard Newby's office which was next to mine, but two, in the extension at Broadcasting House, on the second floor, and asking him if I could have a precious half hour from the Third Programme, and Howard being very sweet and nice saying he couldn't possibly he was down to practically nothing already. And it really was a very sad position for the premium radio service in the world to be in where it could not actually do what it wanted to do. And understanding all the problems and all the anxieties of the Musicians Union in a changing world, none the less it was more than irksome, it was a quite appalling task to try and create a schedule in effect a spin-off another network from the Light Programme, make it viable, make it sound, fresh, new, different, and indeed an alternative and a replacement for all those various pirate ships. You know the 390 for the Middle of the road people which we could obviously try and maintain an interest with the, what was to be the Channel Two, the old Light Programme, but take the best of the Caroline and the Radio London, particularly the Radio London into the new service was going to be jolly difficult if you couldn't play the disc hits all the time. And it was after all the disc hits which had created a totally new pop music generation of popular music young lovers of popular music, and if one could not play those things to them then one was denying them precisely what had been apparently denied to them by the BBC and which the pirate ships were providing. It was that possibility of just taking records off the shelves putting them on the turntable. But there wasn't only that, of course, there was a whole style and a sort of freshness, breeziness, people talking the language of the mid-60's to this young audience. It was that also which one had to provide and with that of course the whole presentation style which after all the pirates stations themselves had picked up from the American commercial radio stations, and one had to.. It wasn't a question of swollowing hard and imitating, it was a question of saying that is the new style of radio and that's the way to go. There are no two ways about it. So during all those months of preparation I was in fact playing about with pieces of paper and creating schedules of different kinds and working long

hours into the night and then putting it asside at 2:30 in the morning and saying it is not going to work, we'll have another go tomorrow night. Until eventually I got to the kind of schedule pattern which I thought would work, given a bit of luck and a fair wind.

So by the mid-Summer or so, even before that by July I had got to schedule I think it was Mark 6 or 7 of my schedules, that was the one in the end I said we will go on that one. With the names of the people who were to present these various programmes associated with the schedule. And of course I had gone for two hour, three hour, strips of programming with the same disc-jockey day after day. The Light Programme had done this before of course with things like Housewives Choice after all, it was the same person if not week after week, it was the same 5 or 6 chaps on the whole who came round every few weeks. And the most successful programmes of course on radio had been the ones which were associated with particular people. People knew that Bloggs was going to come up at 10 o'clock and they switched it on because they liked the way he did programmes. And precisely for those reasons one went obviously for programming pattern where the same people, the same disc jockeys would come back at the same time day by day, week by week. And that this was the thing which would be the success of the new network. Along with content of the programme. Content of the programme because of the shortage of actual commercial record needletime, meant that we had to use a lot of the house orchestral material. The BBC had done an agreement with the Musicians Union, a very valuable agreement which meant that items could be taken from different recording sessions and used, spread around over a whole series of programmes. And not used as complete half hours or complete sixty minute shows. The Musicians Union had at least recognised that the Northern Ireland orchestra for instance, or the Midland Radio Orchestra, that the days when you could have 30 minutes of that followed by 30 minutes with another orchestra had gone, that belonged to the 30's. So you could take an item from each of these things and it gave for more variety, provided more variety, and if you mixed that with other sessions and with commercial records you could in the end with certain programmes at least give a semblance of being up to date with the newest, whilst providing the kind of background music which a lot of other people also wanted.

GILLARD: You were saying that you had to get rid of some programmes from the old Light Programme.

SCOTT: The reason why certain programmes had to go from the old Light Programme which I inherited from Dennis Morris, were two, twofold. Firstly they were programmes which were going to obviously too costly and I had to find more money because there wasn't going to be much needletime, the extra money was of the order of two-hundred thousand a year, something of that kind, it was very little indeed to start a new network and I clearly had to pinch from what was there. And as always happens when there are cut backs in any service, you look and see what the most expensive things are, and the most expensive things which are not perhaps doing as well as some other programmes, and therefore I got rid of those expensive variety programmes and a little bit of drama which were costly and were not paying dividens in terms of audience response either numbers of people listening or appreciation. And some of those programmes sank without trace and without demure from the public, others were a little more difficult to dispose of.

I remember that the Pickles, Have A Go, programme which had been going for very many years and of course Wilfred Pickles and his wife Mabel had been great popular characters and entertainers and still were, and they had worked in the early days with Barney Colehan and you know 'Give him the money Barney' had passed into the language. Barney of course had gone on to television to produce Good Old Days and one thing and another. And Pickles, to kill the Pickles programme was clearly going to be quite difficult, but it was done in the usual traditional BBC way, that Wilfred in the end was found some nice drama parts to get his teeth into. With the publicity people one quietly set up a good story that Wilfred was now concentrating on acting and we were very sorry to see the programme go, and all the rest of it, how marvellous it had been. And then he was invited in and I gave him the silver salver. With the appropriate inscription on it. So it was done in that kind of way whenever possible. Later on there were to be other programmes which one had to kill and which caused a bit more furore.

So that by the time it came to the start of the new popular service, the date of which had been fixed for September 30th, we were in fact in a trimmed down shape as it were and the Light Programme which was to become the second of the popular series was to be rather unlike the previous light Programme also. So in effect one was creating a new service and the existing Light Programme

also was to be different the notion being that you catered for the young sort of hard rock or pop loving lot with the new service and the middle of the roaders and those who had their favourite programmes which they wished to retain, one kept on the existing Light Programme.

One of the things which caused.. one of the killings which caused the most difficulties was Music While You Work. And I knew that music while you work had to go because every plan that I set up for Music While You Work for the schedule for both new networks the 10:30 to 11 Music While You Work and I believe there was an afternoon one, but the 10:30 to 11 in the morning, that was the one that stared you in the face and it cut right across the mid-morning period, the housewife period if you like, and it would be absurd for the disc-jockey to say well good bye for now, here's Music While You Work and come back at 11 o'clock, particularly as at that time the Dales then followed, or the morning story, and it would cause an awful gap in the broadcasting when it was on Radio One, as it was to be, or Radio Two. So Music While You Work had to go and the notion was after all that if factories wanted oontinuous music there were ways of providing this with their own tape tracks, Muzak and other things And that they were going to get the continuous music service in any case from the new service, albeit with disc-jockeys chattering every so often. And so they didn't really have much to complain about, but of course they did and there were a great many brickbats hurled at us for getting rid of Music While You Work. What it had done during the War and all those stories about how cows produced more milk to this background music and so on. So that there were problems of that kind.

Now we come to the question of what to call these networks and Frank Gillard who was Director of Radio was obviously very much concerned with having a new nomenclature which would show that something new was happening, you couldn't say this is the BBC's Popular Music Service, and so the notion that the network should be numbered has after all BBC 1, BBC 2, Television, why not in a sense Radio's One, Two, Three, Four. But then which is the first one. Is it Radio Three that is regarded by the cultural world as the prime service to be Radio One. Or is it to be the Home Service which is Radio One, after all that is the one which covers the nation, has opt-outs in the various regional national/regional areas why not that. If it's to be one or other either the Light Programme or the New Popular Music Service which is to come up at the top then should not the existing Light Programme be the radio One. Just to show that the BBC have regard for its existing audience and

cherished listeners which it already had and I argued very strongly and Frank Gillard accepted the logic of my arguments that it should be the new service which should be the Radio One, even though there would be those who might regard the use of One as a change in the order of priorities at the BBC and that Broadcasting House had gone quite mad and that it was a kind of new pirate of its own kind, or as the papers said, it was Auntie sort of lifting up her skirts and running faster than she was really capable of doing. And all those kind of things of course were said about Auntie BBC, in advance of the opening of the service.

Now the opening, the actual announcement of the opening of the service and what it was to contain and my first real contact with the press, the press conference in the Council Chamber at Broadcasting House was actually on August 14th 1967, and it was on that date that we announced the new nomenclature and the reasons for it at a press conference where I think certainly of course Frank Gillard was there with Dick Marriot, and I was there, and I believe also I was going to say the Director General was there, I think Hugh Greene was there and it was then that we announced that it would be the new service, popular music service, which would be called Radio One, and I described the sort of flavour that it would have and I remember the previous night, because I knew a number of the pirate ship people personally, the previous night I had been having drinks as a matter of fact with my old friend Harold Pendleton who runs the Marquee Club and a man who organized the National Jazz Festivals every year and I'd had occasion in the early '60's to, because the National Jazz Festival at Reading had been accused, I think it was at Windsor then, had been accused by the local residents of causing too much noise and they were in danger of losing their licence and so on and I was one of those who had gone down in fact to the Court at Windsor to give evidence on behalf of the Jazz Federation and Harold Pendleton had never forgotten it and we remained very close friends, George Melly and I and Quinten Hogg was our Counsel and we in fact saved the annual Jazz Jamboree's although they moved their site after that, it was an amusing affair altogether. And Harold had invited me round for a drink the night before this new Radio, One, Two, Three, Four press conference, at the Marquee to meet Alan Keen, the General Manager of Radio London, the station which we all I think in the business admired most, it was the most professional and so on and he was the Programme Chief of that. And Alan had told me, he said well as a matter of fact, because there was a great question as to whether Radio London would

come off the air or whether it would defy the ban. And it was rather important that it came off the air from my point of view because it was going to be the chief rival. Caroline had become very much second rate, say behind London both in its professional content, and Ronan O'Reilly had I think lost his grip on the station rather, and he was a slightly petulant character although great brigand and one had to admire what he had done in terms of endeavour obviously. But Alan Keen said, Oh you needn't worry I'm pulling the lads home anyway, they will come off the ship tomorrow night. And I came out with this at the press conference, I shouldn't have done but it slipped out and because somebody said, are you confident that the pirate ships will in fact obey the order, and I said yes I think they will all obey the order, with the possible exception of Caroline, and they said, including Radio London, I said yes I would think so. And of course that became one of the stories. And I remember George Campey being very angry with me, he said you know you've given them another scoop. But that didn't in the end bother me because it showed that I knew what was going on in the business and in the end that counts with the press.

So we announced on August 15th, Radios One, Two, Three, Four. Radio One to be the new popular music service. Radio Two to be a restructured Light Programme. And at the same time I had already been made a Controller in fact before the departure of Dennis Morris, he retired as Controller of the Light Programme and within a few weeks of my arriving I became of course the Controller of the Light Programme and that was a change of appellation which reflected the change that had taken place also in the Television service where the Chiefs of BBC 1 and then eventually of BBC2 had been made Controllers. And it was an indication also that Broadcasting House recognised that the person who ran the network was not merely a scheduler and a kind of station master of chap in the signal box, he was actually the person who had decide very largely what the look of the railway was to be and what kind of trains and the services the public was to be provided with. That radio in fact which had kind of 'growed' over the many years was now coming to, or had come to one of those periods in its history where the rather more dramatic changes had to take place and inevitably therefore the people in charge of the network had to be given more power of decision. And the Barons in Broadcasting House of course did not, all of them, like this change and indeed it could be argued that a change never really took place in Radio Three which caused immense difficulties later on for

the Controllers of Radio Three whether Howard Newby or Stephen Hurst who succeeded him. But I was very anxious that all the services contributing both to Radio's One and Radio Two should actually work for the person in charge and not be working up separate ladders to the Director of Radio so that they were in a sense as a group of Barons more important than the man running the service. And it wasn't actually until I'd left Radio's One and Two, at the end of '68 beginning of '69, not until a little while after that that eventually all the staff working for those two networks, as it were came on the establishment of the Controllers of Radio's One and Two.

Now remember that I was a single person actually, and I had one Chief Assistant, Lawrence Stapley who was very useful in terms of the fact he'd worked as Chief Assistant for Dennis Morris in the Light Programme, knew the form, knew the politics of the House. I'd never worked in Broadcasting House before, and was a very good guide and mentor in that respect, but obviously this had to be my thing in a sense. And during all the time that I was running Light Programme, Radio's One and Two in particular in effect I was in charge of both networks. It's interesting to think that as I record this, these memories in 1981 that I've seen now three Controllers for those two networks, because there's a Controller at the top and then there are two.. there are Controllers for each of them I think underneath. So that we were a comparatively slim staff in those early days.

When it came to the run up to the start of the new radio service I was most anxious that it should have the right presentation which I've mentioned. That it should have jingles. Which were to cause some little problems, that is to say sung or spoken, identification of the station with little messages, nothing particularly disreputable about that, but it was to be a shock to some. The publicity had to be done right, I had to have the right kind of PR things. I had to have stickers, I didn't get stickers actually there was some opposition to stickers and particularly things that go in car windows, because they are regarded as dangerous. But I wanted lapel badges and I wanted posters, and I wanted generally speaking a very big press launch to the new services.

I needed then slogans, and the kind of snappy short statements which are associated with, what the men in the advertising business as the logo of a company or a service. And a number of these we invented ourselves, of course, and 'Go With Radio One', And'Radio One is Wonderful', obviously, which came from, I mean Radio London had used the Radio London is wonderful, but Radio One is

Wonderful, I mean it was so obvious that it was the inevitable cliche and it was one of the ones that I wanted recorded and made into a slogan on air because if there is one thing which creates liveliness in a certain type of pop, or rock disc-jockey session it is in fact the constant kind of titilation of the ear with identifications with little funny slogans, and so on.

One of the people whom I had wanted to work on Radio One was Kenny Everett and I had heard Kenny on Radio London he was clearly one of the most brilliant and inventive young people in Merseyside, Liverpuddlian, with another Liverpuddlian and its after all Liverpuddlians who had contributed enormously to the pop business with the Beatles and others. And Kenny Everett and another Liverpuddlian, John Peel, whom I will come to later, were clearly two of the brightest sparks to come out of the pirate radios and they both happened to work on Radio London. And I used Kenny initially I didn't give him a regular show, I used him initially to help me do the slogans and put together the jingles and so on. And I found inevitably that there was no agreement between the BBC and the Musicians Union and Equity in terms of the choral effort required to record jingles of that kind, but it mainly concerned the Musicians Union, that is to say there was no arrangement apart from the signature tune arrangement which would allow us to do sessions of slogans and use them indiscriminately, day in day out. And so I consulted with Dick Marriot and Michael Standing who were in fact my mentors, obviously, I worked to Dick Marriot to Frank Gillard, and to Michael Standing in terms of all the administrative side of running the networks, and got their permission to go to the same firm in Dallas Pam's Jingles, who had in fact done the jingles for Radio London. And so there was a certain similarity when we started which I didn't really mind about, in terms of what you might call the arranging the tonal arrangements which were used, although the jingle tunes were not always the same. But obviously when you go and buy jingles from an American jingle factory you are going to get 'Radio One is Wonderful' (SINGS) and that had, that particular sucession of notes had been used by one or other of the pirate ships also ordering their jingles from Pams. So we did sessions with them I sent the young Australian chap* who was also involved in that to Dallas to set up the sessions, so that when we were fairly soon shortly before we were due to take to the air the jingles had arrived we'd done all the copying, copying sessions and so on, the jingles identifying the disc-jockey's had also been done, and we were ready to go. The interesting thing about that whole run up period which

Jim (FISHER)

is through August and through September in particular in 1967, was of course that down at Aeolian Hall Donald MacLean who was in charge of the popular music department was putting together these strip programme sequences using these item recording things, allocating producers to the particular shows, and the same thing was happening in the gramophone department obviously, although there they were using gramophone records in preparing themselves as it were for the fray. And I had allocated, because of this structure internal structure where there were two chief barons in the sense there was the head of popular music and head of the gramophone dept., and they were the two barons that I had to keep peace with, and had to exploit their chaps and their facilities to the hilt. And I needed the support of the people at Aeolian Hall 100% which Donald obviously gave and Mark White and Anna gave it for the Gramophone Dept., even though Anna didn't at all like to start off with some of the things that I was doing like changing the style of Housewives Choice, expanding Family Favourites on Sunday into a two hour show. Making the top twenty show on Sunday's a two hour show from five to seven in order to pick up the obvious audience which was there during the closed period on television. And a lot of the things she didn't like and she didn't like eventually when I brought in people like Jimmy Saville to be one of the disc-jockeys on radio One, not to start off with, and so that there were certain conflicts as there are bound to be in this decision taking period because after all those departments previously they had been the barons who had said no I will have Bloggs to do that programme and the Controller of the network, or the Chief of the network had, didn't have much say in that. And here was I saying no I want Tony Blackburn to do the breakfast show and I'm giving that to Gramophone Dept., find me a producer to do it, and if, you know it was Johnny (Bearling) who actually produced the first breakfast show with Tony, and in fact was the producer responsible for opening up the network on September 30th. So that I knew from after a bit of tussling and I get from Jeffrey Bains (Geoffrey Baynes) of course who was Donald Maclean's boss and from Anna enormous co-operation, so that I had allocated the strips, two hour sequences and three hour sequences on to the Gramophone Dept., or the popular music department and one or two of them late night to the recorded programmes people and so that they were doing their separate things but I needed to bring that together so that it was cohesive, so that the network wouldn't suddenly jerk into something different. And I needed therefore to knock the heads of the presentation people together to in fact carry them into the 70's and

80's. And to convince them that what was required was a fast moving thing and that the kind of pauses that you got between programmes where there was a rather slow station identification and then a tranquil lead in to the next thing, that was a thing of the past, they had to think differently, and that in fact there weren't going to be presentation announcers on Radio One, there were going to be newreaders and there were going to be disc-jockeys and that was that. And the presentation people would do certain things in the evening and they would have a chance to have late night shows and midnight shows and things like that. But that they were going to be pushed to some extent into the background they were not going to be the king pins that they had been before.

So that there was a certain amount of resistance in those quarters and I had to work perhaps hardest I would have said with presentation than anybody else.

The other thing was that I wanted the disc-jockey's to do what's known as self-operate the equipment, that is to say to not sit in a large room with glass windows into a control cubicle where somebody put on the record or the tapes and turned the mics on and off, but to have a disc-jockey in effect in a little box with only the control room engineer between him and the public. And of course that in itself was raised some eyebrows because the BBC tradition had been the producer is the chap who is there ready to turn off the pot on the panel, volume control and switch the programme out in case something goes wrong, it is the producer who is paid to be responsible for the programme and so on and what is this nonsense where the disc-jockey effectively appears to be in direct contact with his audience. And of course that was a hard nut to crack and producers remained and indeed more producers were taken on in order to shepherd and guide these various strands through and they still survive, and the disc-jockeys are not alone still in, as I record in 1981, producers are still associated with these various programmes. But of course a certain number of disc-jockeys didn't like this figure behind them, they were used on the pirate ships to being on their own relating rather remotely to a chap sitting in a London office and they knew they could be fired but they were otherwise on their own.

However, I wanted that to move fast and I remember that towards the end of the run up period we were in our last rehearsals and I of course wanted to have a certain number of dry runs, I had managed to bully, bludgeon the system into getting me self operating equipment and there the engineers, one or two engineers particularly Don Cummings who had been marvellous in his

support, so that I was ready at least with one studio which also had cassettes which were necessary for the jingles and all the rest of it, cassette machines were installed building work had taken place all this had been done actually, I have to say for Broadcasting House with some alacrity because it was recognised that it was important and no doubt Frank Gillard was signing his name on a series of finance recommendations in order to get this work done, although I was not conscious of any direction from him and I think one of the remarkable things about this whole setting up period was the fact that confidence had been placed in me, having made the appointment it was up to me and you can say perhaps I was the fall-guy, but also if it was to succeed it would be to my credit and there wasn't to be a committee which would decide how these things was to be done, once we'd agreed on the general lines then I was to go ahead and do it. And the extraordinary thing was that actually until the day itself nobody except me and I wasn't absolutely clear how obviously until it happened how it was going to sound, had really a very clear idea of how it would sound, and what kind of impact it would have.

In the last rehearsals one of the things I discovered at the last minute literally the day before, when we'd had a first disastrous rehearsal because I'd given my presentation scripting to an assistant to do whom I relied on and found to my horror that he'd not done at all what I wanted and I spent the night before the night of the inauguration actually rewriting the whole of the presentation of Radio's One and Two, so that it should be exactly as I wanted it using.. they were all my words in effect, all the link words, but in the DJ's, the switching, the switching to the newsreaders and so on. But one of the things I discovered at the last minute was that there was a tradition that any switch between sources in the BBC for many years that had to be on a two second pause, and a two second pause was of course an immensely long time and is an immensely long time if I stop talking for a moment, pause for two seconds... you would realise that it is a long time when you are moving from one programme to another. And I only discovered this as I said, or registered my horror the day before because it emerged from a rehearsal, and Don Cummings said, Oh no you know you can't go quicker than that it's two seconds, that's the instructions. I said, you've got to change the instruction by tomorrow morning I'm afraid, rewrite the book because we cannot have any pause, it must go like that, as quickly as it takes to switch in the newsroom, or switch from one source to the next, for Tony Blackburn to cue in to Jimmy Young it must be like that and there must be no daylight as it were,

between the end of one record and the beginning of the next in a sense.

So that was changed and there was a last minute panic and so we went on on the air, slogans, jingles and all with a great deal of press ballyhoo. The jingles thing had caused in fact a real rift with the Musicians Union, I've mentioned the difficulty of getting an agreement because there wasn't one. The Musicians Union had heard that we were going to use jingles, had protested, had said these jingles must come off the air, I believe this happened actually after we'd gone on the air, it must have done, and I think there was the shortest BBC/Union meeting in history where Michael Standing at this meeting in response to that question from Hardie Ratcliffe, "Will you agree Mr Standing to take these jingles off the air until we reach an agreement or try to seek an agreement for use of this material recorded by our members ?" And Standing said "No, I'm very sorry we can't". And then Ratcliffe said "Well if that is all you have to say I don't think there's any point in our discussing the matter further" - and the M.U. delegation left the room, duration of meeting perhaps two minutes, fifteen seconds. Of course it meant that we went on using the jingles and nothing more was heard of it in a sense.

But I come back to September 30th. So on the air we went, seven o'clock in the morning and I did the countdown into the new networks and in effect the networks split out at 7 a.m. after the end of Breakfast Special which had already been a self-operated programme, I mean it wasn't a totally new thing to have self-operation because the Presentation Announcers who did Breakfast Special, the Paul Hollingdales and the David Symons's and so on had been doing precisely that, but it was an extension of it to embrace all those people or as many of them as were capable of it who were now involved with the new services. I even, there again not everybody self-operated from the start but they were all gradually trained to do it and I was most anxious that Jimmy Young should do so because it was Jimmy Young to whom I'd given that crucial mid-morning period and Jimmy himself became one of the best self operators in spite of the objections of the popular music people to start off with it, who said oh no, no it's much better to have somebody else putting on the tapes, you know it gives him too much to think of and the fact is that Jimmy was a very good driver, operator and very creative person in a sense and that he became fairly rapidly

one of the adepts at this business.

ORAL HISTORY OF THE BBC:
TAPE FOUR, SECOND SESSION, ROBIN SCOTT INTERVIEWED BY FRANK GILLARD.

SCOTT: One of the crucial things, and I've referred to it, was the selection of the presenters or disc jockeys for these various strip programmes, these two hour, three hour shows and so on. And of course it was one of the principal tasks when I was listening, not only to the existing Light Programme in the Spring and early Summer of '67 but also to the Pirate Radio output, one of the principal tasks was to pick the winners. It was not too difficult to come to the conclusion that a young lad from .. Poole I think he is, his father is a doctor was a doctor in, in the south, Dorset, was the chap to be the Breakfast Show man, Tony Blackburn who had done precisely that for some period at least on Radio London. And there was no doubt in my mind about the group who should be those who would have the lunchtime shows which I didn't allocate to a single disc jockey Monday through Friday. And there were other people who were obviously absolutely right for the weekend and Alan Freeman was obviously right to do the two hour new .. Pick of the Pops show on Sunday evenings from 5 - 7 p.m. And then there was a whole group of specialists whom I went for, the top rhythm and blues person, the country and western person, I wanted to push those specialist types of popular music and the folk music thing as well and I think that both on Radio 1 and even moreso on Radio 2 I was very much a pusher of the country and western music which of course has become so very popular quite a considerable time later.

So that Tony Blackburn was not a difficult choice for breakfast. The mid morning period because there was the 7 - 9 show and then we had retained Housewives Choice, although we didn't call it that 9 - 10 and I'd had to get rid of also the short five minute religious broadcast and of course I'd had to get rid of the Sunday morning religious service which was quite a jolt to those in the Religious Department although they were very understanding. The period from 10 till midday was obviously going to be a very crucial one and it was the period during which there would have to be a programme on Radio One and a switch out on Radio 2 of the Dales and the morning story so there was half an hour which would come out of it. And there was really after going through all the people and putting their capabilities and the audience reaction to the

programmes that they had been associated with and their own breadth of musical experience and so on. There was really only one man who was right for this role after computerising it in one's own brain and that was Jimmy Young. And the selection of Jimmy for the 10 - 12 period was, came as a great surprise to some people and they were even more surprised when they found that it was the great hit of, of what was the combined output of Radios 1 & 2 because the needle time, the straw to make the bricks to make this new hours, didn't, there wasn't enough of it to separate the two networks of course the whole of the day and we were for a number of hours in the day had to work in harness and it was the periods during which both networks were together where the strain was obviously going to be felt most and Jimmy carrying the, carried the main burden of that because radio listening of course tails off by degrees in the television age and you start with a peak at about 8 a.m. in the morning and then it, it gradually fritters away until by about 7 o'clock you're down to the very basic listening radio audience and that was the case in '67 even although television wasn't at saturation point at that time. And so Jimmy bore an enormous burden and it was an enormous challenge and his producer Doreen Davies and he created most extraordinary success story. And we had a lot of argument and discussion about the phone-ins and the, and the recipes and so on and I was most anxious not to have too much speech and to reduce the phone-ins because we wanted to introduce phone-ins although those first phone-ins were recorded they weren't live of course they were recorded and edited, they were done the day before and the recipes and one wanted to keep them as short as possible and so there was a certain amount of argument between me and Doreen because I tended to talk much sometimes to the fury of the Don MacCleans and so on, direct to the producers about the speech content in the Jimmy Young Show and we did in fact take out one of the phone calls which I felt was holding up the show.

But basically I thought it was an enormous success from Day One. We didn't actually go into live phone-in until oh sometime in the late Autumn of '67, I did actually the first live phone-in myself on Late Night Extra where we actually dared, without time delay, have somebody come right into answer questions about the network in fact. But I jump ahead. So that Jimmy was to do that mid morning period and it was the one I crossed my fingers most about and then a series of discjockeys did the lunchtime shows

whilst Radio 2 did other things, waltzing, marching, more popular music and indeed the type of thing which was not totally remote from the old Music While You Work type of programme. Then in the afternoon the networks came together again and then they split away because there was a drive home show in the early evening which David Symonds was to do eventually and then Kenny Everett I gave it to also at one time. And then the evening obviously the two networks came together and it was very much the sort of pattern that the old Light Programme had had and one had retained obviously the top variety shows and so on and late night I wanted of course to have 24 hour radio but couldn't, late night there were, there was a new show which I introduced called Late Night Extra and it's one of the shows which I am sorry, in a sense, went with the later cuts in the 70s, because it was a new style of late evening magazine programme, it was news, interviews, music and so on and the phone in was a feature of that. And that was done by Bobbie Jaye which, who in 1981 has taken over the Variety Dept.,, of BBC Radio. And it was a show that I was particularly fond of because I conceived it, as I'd conceived a number of the other shows and it through it actually came a number of the people who are now well known Radio & TV personalities because it was another of the shows where we gave a different person, Monday through Friday, a chance to do the show. And all these audition tapes, because all these people were auditioned, the audition tapes came through my office and I made the actual selections of the people which was also a bit against tradition, obviously working by agreement as far as possible with those who actually ran the programmes.

And one of the people who came through the audition tape was Terry Wogan and I said yes I'd like him he sounds fine, he'd been doing I think the odd show on Irish Radio but his style is too Irish he's got to get rid of a bit of the Irishness and then he will be very very good indeed and he actually started with one of the shows on Late Night Extra as did .. Bob Holness who is of course now with Douglas Cameron on Radio LBC, Barry Alldis a number of people of that kind came through Late Night Extra. And then there was a late, late show which was the midnight 2 a.m. And that was hosted by a variety of people, some people from Presentation but also one or two newcomers one of whom John Peel I gave a show having listened to him on Radio London having much admired what he did, he was obviously the kind of slow-talking

uncompromising disc jockey who would attract an enormous cult following he'd done a show on Radio London called the Perfumed Garden which was a kind of mixture of music and modern philosophy, a bit of a hotch potch and I gave him a late night show which was called Night Ride. In fact I called the whole, all the late night shows Nightride which I'd actually taken from the french 'Route de Nuit' of Europe No 1 and the idea was that it you know should be a show for lorry drivers and insomniacs and all the rest of it, it would gradually extend through the night and it obviously didn't, wasn't able to use many records I mean it was based on non needle time material, publishers tapes, film things, a bit of BBC recorded material and so on and a good deal of chat. And John Peel's show was the most uncompromising of the lot and it was the John Peel show in fact which was to bring me into contact and into trouble for the first time with the new Chairman of the BBC who was appointed of course late in 1967, Lord Hill.

Because I who had, not in any way felt constrained, influenced, cajoled or indeed in any way in contact with the Board of Governors, it was a body which to me as a BBC person throughout all my career had been a distant, fatherly group who didn't know much about business and fortunately let the pros get on with it. And the pros occasionally made a mistake but the cane was not administered very often, BBC was a nice establishment and if you had executive problems then it was your Head of Dept., the Head of your Establishment or Service or at worst the Director General who would get in your hair. And as far as I was concerned the buck stopped in Broadcasting House with the Director Radio, Frank Gillard. And the Director General, Hugh Greene was.. although I know and knew Hugh quite well because as Paris Representative I'd seen something of him obviously, and I'd known him from distant days in Bush House and so on, Hugh Greene was not somebody whom I saw very much and indeed the Radio 1, the setting up of Radios 1 & 2 and so on didn't really come into any contact with him and the Governors were a very remote body indeed.

I'd met them, been invited I think to lunch once and on occasions such as the visit of Princess Margaret and others, I'd obviously met one or two governors but basically one was running one's own ship and the .. high admirals didn't send any signals to you on the whole. No doubt they were registering approval and disapproval but it was, there was a proper blocking process between the BBC as the Governors are and the Executives.

So that the arrival of Lord Hill some months after the start of Radio 1 was a salutory experience or perhaps not a salutory experience for me because I remember taking a call in my office once, one morning, a voice said "Is that Robin Scott you're in charge of this network most appalling thing last night I had a telephone call about something was said in the John Peel is it that does a show for you, I don't know what it is, late night...." all that I got all that stuff and apparently I had not heard it but I immediately got the tape because we ran a sort of spy tape at very slow speed tape, recorded the whole of the output and was switched on early in the morning and switched off late at night, it was chuntering away at 1.78 or something, inches per second and so I listened to this and it, John had been interviewing John Lennon and Yoko Ono and Yoko had been talking about losing the child and I don't think they were married at the time and she'd been going into some detail, not lurid detail but the pain to her and the horror of the whole thing and it had been perhaps not scatological but it had been a little bit physiological, medical in its description and people had objected to this. There was this unmarried mother talking about the problems of losing her baby and that was very shocking and it was immoral and so forth and what was this curious other form of culture which was being propogated by this new network, another example of the BBC being misled into, or led down the wrong alleys, the effect of competition and it shouldn't be in this business anyway and thank God for the Third Programme and we had all that stuff.

So Lord Hill said I'd better listen to this. Now, and Kenneth Lamb who was then I think .. had arrived as the... no it must have been still...

GILLARD: He was The Secretary.

SCOTT: Yes he was The Secretary, Kenneth at the time, and I think I mentioned it to Kenneth, oh he said well if the Chairman wants to see you, you'd better go and see him. But I suppose you see what I should have done was to say well Lord Hill have you mentioned this to, to the Director Radio, or to the Director General, I mean but when you're Controller of a Network and your Chairman summons you as it were so I paraded in Charles Hill's office and wheeled in a tape recorder and we played this thing back together. Well we played through piece by piece this interview, or I played it rather for Lord Hill.

And I remember him saying, "I'm surprised you can work one of those machines" and I did the obvious professional retort saying you know I would hope that anybody in my position would know how to handle the machinery or words to that effect which was a bit pompous and anyway we spooled through it and he listened to bits and pieces he said "Well I don't think there really is too much to worry about that kind of thing, I think maybe your Mr. Peel ought to be watched a bit but I think that's all right, Robin, if I may call you so". And that was the end of that, but it was, in a sense my first encounter and it was my first encounter with a Governor, an admonishing Governor let alone the Chairman and it was a bit of a shock, the realisation that there was another power in the BBC and that perhaps a new style.

And not long after that ...

C U T

Not long after that there was another incident which also involved direct encounter with the Chairman and it was also in the same show, the John Peel Nightride and he had had on the show John Wells the satirist who had been involved of course I think with the tail end of That Was The Week That Was, at any rate was a satirical, young figure and they had been discussing during this programme the situation in Nigeria, Biafra war. And the .. and as everybody will recall at that time opinions were very divided and there were very divided feelings about situation in Nigeria and there was a very vociferous minority in .. in the U.K. which did not follow the Wilson Government line that the Nigerian Government should be supported and there was the proper Government for Nigeria and were as young people tend to back revolution, revolt in any case the Biafran thing was regarded as the real Nigeria and the British Government's attitude towards the situation was thought of as being disreputable. And this was in a sense what John Wells was saying and expressing therefore a political point of view in a programme which was meant to be an entertainment programme. Now of course as far as John Peel is concerned the Biafran/Nigerian thing was a subject which he and his .. his friends talked about no doubt when they met and it was something that was felt perfectly decently aired in his programme but it caused a great storm. And I was summoned in again by Lord Hill and this was in a sense much more, the whole process thereafter was much more dangerous and worried me much more than had the previous well let's listen to the tape and see if it's

really as awful as my correspondent says. This had been an M.P. complaint, I can't remember which one, over the Biafran thing. And so I was summoned again with the tape machine and again played it back and he said "I don't think we ought to have that sort of thing, I think that you had better go and see Sir John Hunt".

Now John Hunt I met many years later because he's now involved with the Commonwealth Institute and various things had been I think Ambassador to Nigeria and .. was meant to be the expert on what was going on there. And John Peel and I were actually paraded before Hunt, in his office somewhere in Whitehall, and were admonished, were told you know this is not at all what's going on and so forth. And John I remember being absolutely you know taken aback by the whole proceeding and rightly he should be but I was under orders from the Chairman, sent to John Hunt to learn the real facts. And that was a black mark against Peel and I suppose to some extent against me.

That was obviously much more serious because in effect John Peel and I had been given a reprimand by the The State in a sense and it had been done with the connivance of the Chairman and with only the partial knowledge, I'm not sure to what .. I mean Dick Marriott I told what had happened and I don't know whether it got up to Hugh Greene he was in his last weeks as Director General and Charles Curran, well no, no no when I say that I'm talking about the end of '67, I mean the change from Greene to Curran is sometime towards the end of '68 actually, the effective change. But I think it was done without you, I'm pretty sure it would not have been, be found in the minutes of the Board of Governors, probably not, might be in the minutes, wouldn't be in the minutes of the Board of Management you see, it was that kind of thing. Now that of course was very very dangerous indeed and it never happened to me again with Charles in quite that form, though subsequently I had quite a lot of direct dealings with the Chairman when I moved back to Television as did others. I mean he would ring up direct. And after a while I'm afraid these habits can change in organisations and you do inevitably bow fairly low in the direction of your Chairman, you don't question a thing which comes direct from him anymore than I questioned any later direct phone calls from Michael Swann, so that the change of style as I think it definitely was a change of style and I am perfectly certain that even directors prior to the arrival of Lord Hill, were not often telephoned direct by

the Chairman. I would guess that Normanbrooke, didn't ring Tangye Lean at Bush House very often except on what you might call social matters and so on, he would leave the process of government within the BBC to operate in the proper way. So that change was very disquieting. I felt also that in the last period of the Hugh Greene era, that Hugh's own. I mean obviously from the arrival of Lord Hill onwards that he in a sense backed off perhaps appreciating it was either a question of confrontation and resignation or it was a question of backing off and that perhaps in the end it didn't terribly matter if Charles Hill fiddled around here and there interfering as long as it didn't get too serious and as long as the main thrust of broadcasting continued. And it maybe there that Hugh initially allowed certain things to happen which with hindsight of course you get some of the enmity between the two men is very strong in 1981 even at dinner the other night, I mean they had been placed as far apart as possible they did not speak to each other and so on a very deep felt resentment and dislike by Hugh Greene of Hill, who felt really that he did damage the body of the BBC. That he inflicted very serious wounds on it and diminished the BBC thereby. And I believe that also to be true of course Hill with his manner and his style and his political acumen knew how to govern, there's no doubt, in his own particular way, and he had become a pro. I mean he'd been a partial pro before, but the ITV experience had made him into far more of a pro. But like people in such positions he did actually believe that he knew more than he did.. that he did know more than he actually did know about the business and what he didn't realise was that you could not run the BBC in that way in the way that he was doing you had to run it in harness with your executive or with a properly established system of interrelationship with your executive. And I think that the rot was set in from that time. I don't think speaking in 1981 that things have actually, that we have found the previous status quo and maybe it wasn't possible for the BBC to revert to the happy days of Normanbrooke and his predecessors. And that the present Director General is perhaps right to adopt the kind of political stance, political in the general sense, stance he has visavisthe Governers and the Chairman. I'm not really sure, I think we have to decide we have to know first what we are trying to achieve by broadcasting and to what extent it matters to protect what you've got even if that means sacrificing a little bit of independence visavisGovernment. But I'm jumping ahead, I think I'd better come back to the general atmosphere in Broadcasting House, in the professional sense in the late '60's. And my relations with my

neighbours who were after all the controllers of Radio Four and of Radio Three. Gerry Mansell was in the office next door, and Howard Newby was in the one beyond and we were very close indeed. Gerry and I particularly, we'd known each other before, we both speak French fluently as it happens, he by upbringing, and I by learning and acquiring it over the years and a great deal of our sort of inter channel professional and indeed social talk was conducted in French in fact. And the atmosphere down that end was a very good one indeed and the disposition of having the three Channel Controllers next to each other in the second floor of the extension was a very good one. I was obviously, because I'd set the thing up in that particular way and had been allowed to do so very much more on top of my output, it was also live of course, essentially, almost all of it live, although I would go down to the recordings of Round the Horne at Aeolian Hall and some of the outside things obviously. But basically the output of Radio's One and Two was a live output, whether during the daytime or in the evening I would often go into Late Night Extra. But of course the continuity studios were underneath my office and the control room was so that I had direct access to my people. Since I was listening a great deal of the day always on in the background I could interfere and intervene, which I did frequently. And I suppose it was that rushing round and sort of being the boss stuff which gave, which inspired the nickname which I got of the white tornado. I can't remember which of the DJ's invented that one.. known as the WT around the place. I only learnt that a little while afterwards as a matter of fact. And Keith Skues.. I think it was Keith Skues who told me because Keith Skues was writing his Radio One is Wonderful Book about the setting up of the service and I recalled that later on at the ten year, the publication which was brought out to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Radio One to which I contributed in 1977, of course. Where a lot of the things that I've been talking about are accounted, but that atmosphere then was a very good one. But I being on top of my ship could actually control it.

And of course certain things took place which with hindsight perhaps should not have taken place I remember the Russian walkin to Czechoslovakia and there was, I mean the Czech's had said, or their exile Government, or their Government in hiding had declared a day of mourning as it were for what had happened and had asked people round the world, freedom lovers to have a thought for the situation in which Czechoslovakia found itself at midday on this particular day in the Spring of '68. And I decided that Radio Two

which after all was the one which had the 1500 long frequency, and could in fact be heard quite clearly in Western Europe where it could be heard in Prague is another matter, should in fact mark the occasion. I took that decision and rang Bush House and talked to the chap whose name I can't remember who was in charge of the Czech service, the Eastern service of the BBC, and consulted with him and it occurred to me that I should pay a bit of (Ma Vlast) MY Country, Smetana, and perhaps just say a few words. And I remember my disc-jockey was a man called Pete Drummond, who was I think rather left-wing himself, and I suggested to Pete that he should do this and he declined. So I said I would do it myself. And did in fact do it myself and just said one sentence, 'at this moment .. and so on. And then played a little bit of Ma Vlast and Bush House was delighted of course, just the thing they liked. And I felt very strongly about that but of course in a sense I shouldn't have done it because it was the boss as it were going straight onto air which was not his own, and one has to guard against that kind of thing although it wasn't such a bad thing to do I suppose in that respect. And there were other occasions where I would obviously intervene direct.

The day that John Kennedy was assassinated and Jimmy Young was on the air, and of course as soon as I got the news I went straight down to Jimmy and .. no it was Bobby I suppose.. It was Bobby I beg your pardon. It was Bobby Kennedy's assassination.

Yes when Bobby Kennedy was assassinated and the news came through, and it came through, or his death at least came through I think it must have been about 10 o'clock and got into my office. Jimmy Young was on the air and so I immediately went down into the studio and whilst they were playing a record passed on the news and said now you know we've got to play quiet music and whatever you've got and so they fished out a record I think it was Elgar or something and I said you must stay with that and cool the whole thing for a while until you hear from me again, as it were. And it is true that they did go in after the short announcement was given by the newsreader into this fairly bland kind of Elgar music. But Jimmy very unfortunately, and it was an error, just a sort of human manual error in a sense, when he came up next on the air punched up by force of habit, punched up his own jingle which is you know the Jimmy Young Show jingle, and of course that was an immediate shock and everybody was absolutely horrified, and my phone started ringing and everybody, John Peel was the first I think to ring me up and say he thought it was a disgrace and so on, you know. Which indeed it was as heard, and Jimmy himself was so upset that he'd just done

that and he realised what he'd done but it was too late, just force of habit. And I suppose you could say one of the dangers of allowing people to self-operate their own equipment and something which in theory as a producer in charge you wouldn't get. They are small prices in a sense although very unhappy ones, to pay for what is an enormous advantage which is to have people, as it were, on top of the machinery which they are using to play their own support music and jingles and so on.

There was another occasion when in fact I didn't interfere in any way and deliberately kept back from the whole situation, that of course was in '68 during the student riots in Paris and we had, I'd set up with the old French Radio system which was to undergo radical changes thereafter, after the riots and so on, I'd set up a series of exchanges with the main channel Paris Inter and our DJs had gone over and they'd come to us and so on and we'd had some fun with it and I was pretty well-known in French broadcasting having obviously worked in Paris and worked after all since the early 40s with French broadcasters, and I actually got a call, one of several but this was the most important but I actually got a call from the leader of the what you might call the dissident group in French Broadcasting, in French Radio which had for a while occupied the Radio Centre, in the middle of the rioting and the crisis and so on and asking me personally to send a message to them because they said that this would be of inestimable value to them because my name was respected and it would be in the BBC, My God this would make a difference and of course I did not say anything at all I just had to turn them down. So there were occasions when one was not rash in that respect quite clearly and anything of that kind would have been absolutely ridiculous.

The whole atmosphere at that time, I took a holiday a month or so after the start of Radio 1, I remember doing a lunchtime lecture fairly shortly after the launch and when the first audience figures had come through which were marvellously encouraging because the audience in effect took a great big leap and stayed like that for a number of years. And then only suffered by, through competition with television creeping gradually into the daytime, the derestriction of hours by Chataway which of course came much later. And so all that was marvellously encouraging and I went on holiday then in the Autumn, went on safari in Kenya, had a good rest and of course it was a taxing job, very taxing and I've always been a hard worker with a great deal of stamina but it did mean starting one's day pretty

early and going on very late in the evening, being around in the West End late at night very often at pop shows, going to a good deal of the sort of social events which the publishers and the record companies and people like that organised, and yet of course keeping that necessary distance away from those people who were only too ready to try and influence you. I think I have to say I never received an interesting pecuniary offer at any time either during setting up period or during my running of Radios 1 & 2, I'm pretty sure that in some countries I would have been offered something or other and it was not as if I was earning great sums of money or indeed finding it very easy at times; I had no motor car for instance.

I remember I managed to borrow a BBC staff car and then got hauled over the coals for having done so during the absence of Michael Standing, I just rang them up and said I wanted a staff car, got one and then secured a loan, a fairly small loan from the BBC to buy a car, again which Michael didn't really approve of. I mean the BBC was a pretty stingy outfit and it took a great time for the BBC to adjust to what were the competitive rates and competitive styles of employment of senior executives, it took really until the late 70s for the BBC to adjust to that kind of thing it wasn't until really ten years later and at that time things were fairly tough. I mean there was no jam on expenses or anything like that and it was really the fact that the job in itself was exciting enough that to be recognised as the boss of an enormous influence in popular music and the channel which 75/80% of the listeners of the BBC were listening to was in itself quite something even though the material that was being broadcast couldn't be said to represent a great cultural range of interests or indeed to represent my own range of interests which obviously go far beyond Radio 2 output.

None the less that, although taxing and although long hours it was of course enormously invigorating and very exciting and I can't think of a happier period in a sense than that and in a sense when the, when I got a phone call from David Attenborough towards the end of 1968 I suppose it was in September October of 1968 something of that kind, come and have lunch I've got something to talk to you about, we went and had lunch I think at the Copper Grill in Wigmore Street and he then said, look there are going to be changes obviously, Kenneth Adam is going to go and I've been asked to move up one and Huw Wheldon is going to take

over and I'm going to be his No.2 and I think we'd very much like you to come back and run BBC 2 and I knew then that David had had a private word in the Board of Management with Frank Gillard and that Frank had very graciously and generously not stood in the way of that removal of me from Broadcasting House and obviously very attracted by the thought of going back to television and running the prestigious channel particularly following in David's footsteps and the trail that he had blazed in no uncertain fashion.

On the other hand I was actually enjoying myself immensely and felt a considerable tug in the other direction and when eventually the time did come to leave Broadcasting House which was very much a question of just picking up one's bags and going down to Shepherds Bush as it were, I did feel a wrench because I felt, and I realised it only perhaps now ten years later that it was one of the better things that I'd done in my broadcasting career in the sense of managing to create something which has basically endured in the form which I put it in which pleased far more people than it upset and has eventually come to be accepted and I suppose more than that perhaps encouraged by the thought that I, that I amongst the few discjockeys whom I really thought had talent and whom I encouraged the John Peels and Kenny Everetts and so on, Kenny even with all his stupidities, that those are the two who have gone on to be recognised as people of real creative and enduring value. Kenny with his television show and John still after all these years the No 1 discjockey to at least what you might call the discerning pop audience. I suppose the regret about the whole period was the, coming back to the bricks, the straw analogy, was that I was not able to do what I would have liked to have done through lack of money, through lack of needle time and so on which was to produce the kind of network which I would have otherwise introduced which would have been much more consistent within itself and obviously allowing Radio 2 to be equally more consistent within itself doing a more middle of the road mix with light music kind of thing, which again needs records if you're going to pay, play the great music as recorded by our national performers and creators of music or indeed by Americans and others. So that there is still that hang-up there and it's still not, it's not been totally achieved although great strides have been made since and that's a regret but that's also the pride, I think, in what I

was able to do during that period.

GILLARD: Good. Let me just ask you one thing which is very much in the margin of, I don't think it's even on your list there but, at the time when you were developing this immense new service for the great audience, the mass audience there was also going on in radio right at the other end of the scale an equally revolutionary development for the tiny audience in the locality, did that impinge on you at all ?

SCOTT: During this time I heard about obviously the first tentative steps of local radio and which Frank Gillard had been himself very much the architect of and which started, I think with experiments in the West Country indeed, Bristol and one or two other places. I think in general terms I believed in local radio, I, I say in general terms I was, had quite considerable doubts whether it was something for the BBC to get into and I actually still do have doubts and I think those doubts are echoed and translated in substantial terms by the Annan Committee in its report. And I would rather agree with the Annan Committee's expression of fears about the way that the development of local radio might impinge, in harsh economic, real terms on the main stream output of the BBC. That debate still goes on in a sense. I mean I am totally, as I said in principle in favour of local radio, I'm involved actually with an independent local radio station in my own locality and I've .. I'm seeing in '81 from within how these community stations, and they are community stations, are created. There are 15/20 of us in the Bury St. Edmunds area who believe in community radio, there is no BBC community radio, my farming neighbours want it and I know that the shopkeepers want it and the public wants it. It's not going to make any pennies for any of us, I mean we're going to be as community spirit involved as any of those people who get involved with BBC Local Radio Stations. It's just a question of whether in fact that should be a charge on the licence payer and if it does stop, if 20 radio stations, 40 radio stations or however many stations make it less likely that BBC Radio Drama will produce another good play next week or will enable Radio 2 to become more separate from Radio 1 or Radio 3 to be able to afford that stereo broadcast from the Opera House, it is at various points of crisis where one inevitably has to question the cost.

So that in the early days I only sort of sensed that this was happening, didn't think actually at that time it was likely to spread, although I absolutely respected Frank Gillard's own enthusiasm for it and knew that in terms of community reflection local radio had to happen. I was not absolutely convinced that the BBC should go a bundle on it and am actually still not, although there is no doubt about its success in particular of certain stations. There is no doubt about it in my mind about the second rate performance of certain other stations but that has been a matter of the station managers own influence because if there is one area where a man or a woman can exert enormous influence it is in fact in the atmosphere and performance of a small team of people, what are they 15/20/30 people operating a local radio station which must be integrated into the community and must reflect it and yet must kind of lead the community in a way. So I have mixed feelings about it.

GILLARD: Your radio term was relatively brief but looking back on it now you can see, and I can see, that it was in fact about the most crucial period in BBC Radio's history even from the very inception of Radio, more things happened (yes) in those couple of years or so did they not (yes) than had happened in all the 50 or nearly 50 years of broadcasting before.

SCOTT: Yes that whole period there's no doubt was a very crucial period. I would have liked to have gone on actually and been Managing Director of Radio in succession to Frank Gillard and was of course at that time we had McKinseys, yes I would have liked to have gone up the radio ladder higher and become eventually managing director of radio perhaps because it was my first love in a sense, if you've worked for, as I did for twelve years in your formative years from your early 20s in a particular profession medium, that's the one that you've got in your bones really and you have a sort of sense, feel of it. I was actually one of those interviewed for the Managing Director, Radio job when it was known that Frank Gillard was going to retire and of course that was when Ian Trethowan was chosen as Managing Director, Radio kind of out of the blue as a Charles Hill candidate I think, if not protegee. And I and others, Gerry Mansell and Peter Dimmock even was summoned from Mexico more than once where he was preparing the Mexico Olympic Games for BBC Tv. And Charles Hill doesn't actually mention the fact

that I was interviewed, in his memoirs, but I was and would have been very keen but there's no doubt I didn't have the.. the long service background in domestic broadcasting and I was shortly to be tugged the other way to television anyway and probably, again with hindsight it was, I would have been very sad if I'd not had the Controller BBC 2 experience and to have been able to have done successively two of the most important things in anybody's career to run the popular services on Radio and then to go and run the prestigious cultural service on television was most extraordinary overnight changeover as it were. And I can't think of many people who've had that enormous privilege.