HERE COMES TOMORROW

Now that Haley's baby, the Third Programme, was underway it was time to concentrate on the future of broadcasting, which was still television. For most countries in Europe and the world, the post-war service they were about to launch was the first they'd ever had. Britain smugly patted them on the head and prepared to *re*launch their own. Having said that, the original service had managed to run for barely three years before the War broke out and forced it back into hibernation - such a short span that it almost qualifies more as a prototype.

Prototype or not, its existence meant, importantly, that there was already an infrastructure in place - if not a structure. Much of the physical accoutrements and technologies had been stripped, cannibalised or otherwise recycled for the war effort. Whole industries had to be restarted to replace electrical bits and pieces that were designed to only last six months, and which hadn't been made in five years.

There was a palpable sense of excitement, however. Finally there was a definite future again, and it was the good one. Not only was the war over, but we'd won! Tomorrow turned out to belong to us after all, and now we could get to work on it. That spirit of confidence and adventure had already made the Third Programme, and the new radio structure in general, possible, and that was just a case of revamping something that already existed. Now it was time to get to work on building something that barely existed before the world came to a stop. The possibilities were endless, or would have been if it hadn't been for the cataclysmic over half-decade global conflict that had drained the resources of absolutely everyone in the entire world.

William Haley would be the first Director General to run a BBC Television Service since F. W. Ogilvie, and he hadn't done much beyond shut it down. The only other was Reith himself, and he had famously despised the very notion and washed his hands of any direct involvement at an early stage. Haley was arguably the first DG to actually like the idea of television, even to be excited by it. Not that it was his biggest priority: his radio reforms and precious Third Programme occupied him in the immediate aftermath of the War. But he knew full well that television was the unavoidable future; and even if he hadn't, the Government would have told him so.

The War was never going to last forever, and by the autumn 1943 there was a glimmer of an ending in sight. A victorious one for the Allies, even. WInston Churchill - expecting not only victory but a continuance of his own Premiership afterwards - started planning for such a future in September of that year, forming a series of committees to look into potential avenues of post-war redevelopment. One of them was the Hankey Committee - technically called the Television

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Committee, but renamed by posterity, as per tradition, for its head, Lord (Maurice) Hankey. Their job was to cast an eye on developments elsewhere, see what direction technology was taken, see which way the wind was blowing politically with regard to this new, potentially world-changing medium, and report back - which they ultimately did just two months before VE day. The nature of their mission - to look at global developments in television - ultimately had them facing in one particular direction for almost the duration. Across the Atlantic.

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