STRICTLY GENTEEL

The plan for the Home Service, which was largely fulfilled, was for it to become increasingly speech-based until pure music vanished altogether to one of its two new safe havens. Light and popular music was for the Light Programme, of course, hence the name. Everything from the weaponised melodies of Edward White and Eric Coates to the technologically-assisted intimacy of the crooners, and even that blasted jazz stuff, showed up on the Light.

That was all very well for the proles, who wouldn't know art if it winked at them from the bottom of their beer steins, those metal ones with handles and everything. Haley's chief concern, once the war was over and done with in both math and aftermath, was to clear a space for the cultured and art-conscious, the intellectual elite, and people who knew Michaelangelo's surname. For these people, Haley unveiled the Third Programme.

The birth of the Third was a watershed in the BBC's history for multiple reasons. Not least of these is that it - and the entire new structure it was a part of - represented perhaps the most fundamental break from Reithian principles so far. One of the many, many things that Reith had been dead set against was the segmentation and segregation of the audience. One service for everyone, consisting of talks, music, information and (obviously) religion as required Broadcasting as spiritual nutrition, with the scheduler as the nation's dietician. His own preferred term was "the Great Audience". If there must be more than one station, let them be distinguished by nothing whatsoever bar frequency. None of this "one station for entertainment, one station for talks, one station for classical music and serious discussions of art, science, philosophy and other subjects requiring brows reaching into the stratosphere and beyond" nonsense.

The point, under Reithian principles, was to broaden horizons and ultimately unify the nation, spiritually and intellectually. Splitting it apart by giving them the option to only listen to the things they already knew they liked was hardly going to do that. Reith had a Utopian, if not realistic, vision of the BBC erasing, or at least helping to erase, the cultural divisions that existed in Britain at the time, uniting Britain as a society of moral, pious and intellectual people essentially cast in Reith's own image. Instead, Haley's new-look post-war BBC was responding to those very divisions - underlining, normalising and entrenching them even further, in fact.

This was the beginning of the end of Reithianism. It would be a long time before the giant shadow was fully banished, if indeed it ever was, but for the first time the Corporation was explicitly going in a direction of which its father would not approve. The very structure of the BBC's output was antithetical to Reith's ideas. He found the idea objectionable from the start and - to no-one's great

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surprise - never really reconciled himself to the concept, although when pressed he would probably have admitted he preferred its existence to its non-existence. Crucially, however, he didn't stop it from happening. Haley and the Corporation beneath him were no longer afraid of his wrath.

The Third Programme was something of an experiment in more than just its anti-Reith premise. Haley meant business here. Schedules were mutable; programmes would last as long as they needed to last. The Third was not just aimed at the highbrow listener, but almost existed as an attempt to isolate and provide a field taxonomy of the very extremely highbrow Briton. For all its (and its successor's) association with classical music - and for all the accuracy of that association - they didn't play the likes of Beethoven, Mozart or Brahms in the early days. That popular stuff went on the Home Service. Sibelius, Stravinsky and Britten were the order of the day on the Third. Forget the Marriage of Figaro. This is hardcore.

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