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The World Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which now broadcasts in English as well as more than 40 other languages, has its roots in the English language Empire Service established in 1932 to keep Britons in the colonies and dependencies informed of the events at home. As tensions rose in Europe in the late 1930s, the British Government began to fund BBC broadcasts in languages other than English designed to counter anti-British broadcasts from Germany and Italy. The first BBC foreign language broadcasts were in Arabic, in January 1938, followed by Spanish and Portuguese to Latin America in March. Persian broadcasts followed almost three years later, in December 1940 (Walker, pp. 32, 66).

During the War, the foreign language services were supervised by the Ministry of Information. Afterwards, the Foreign Office was put in charge, funding the BBC's External Services through the "Grant in Aid," a part of the national budget. The degree of control exercised by the Government varied from one language service to another, with the European services having more freedom

of operation. The BBC's international satellite television station, BBC World, is run as a commercial company, which buys its output from the BBC. The BBC's domestic services are funded differently, by the "license fee" that is paid by each household in possession of a television set. Before the introduction of television, a license fee was paid for the use of a radio set.

The BBC, including the World Service, operates under a Royal Charter that sets out its public obligations. The Charter is renewed periodically, with the current one valid until the end of 2006. Members of the Board of Governors are nominated by the government and endorsed by the Monarch, for periods of up to five years. The Governors appoint the BBC's Director General, and (with the Director-General) the most senior management. A separate document, the Agreement, currently also running until the end of 2006, sets down the nature of the BBC's relationship with the government. (BBC Charter and Agreement Homepage: http://www.bbc.-co.uk/info/bbc/charter.shtml). The BBC's editorial decisions are made by is managers, but they can be, and have at times been, overruled by the Board of Governors.

The BBC gained its international reputation as a reliable source of news thanks to its coverage of World War II, when it carried reports of Allied failures as well as successes. Its status was also enhanced by the fact that it was seen as a voice of liberation in countries occupied by Nazi Germany. During the War, the BBC's foreign language services also began their move from their disparate locations to their now famous home, Bush House, in central London.

During the Cold War, when international broadcast-ing became an important weapon of diplomacy, Britain decided not to follow some other overseas broadcasters in making political propaganda its priority and "Bush House was allowed to maintain the BBC tradition of accuracy and impartial analysis" (Leapman, p. 17). This "impartiality," however, has been questioned on numerous occasions by individuals and political parties both at home and abroad, and by foreign governments including that of Persia (West, passim).

THE PERSIAN SERVICE

The BBC Persian Service was launched on 28 December 1940 (BBC Written Archives Centre (WAC), "BBC PERSIAN SERVICE – General Background, and specific notes on the operational, abdication and post-abdication periods – Confidential," no date, p. 1) ten months after Radio Iran had gone on the air – with German assistance (Sepantā, pp. 301-3). The first broadcast was made by

Ḥasan Mowaqqar-Bālyuzi, whose station call: “Injā Landan ast” (This is London) became familiar to thousands of Persian-speaking listeners in the region. He also presented the BBC’s “friendly greetings” to all “guš-dahandagān-e Irāni (Iranian listeners) and Persian-speakers, wherever in the world they may be.” The cumbersome term “guš-dahandagān” was later replaced with the more familiar “šenavandagān” (The BBC Persian Service, History of the Persian Service of the BBC on tape, hereinafter referred to as History).

Another founding member of the Service was the leading Persian intellectual, Mojtaba Minovi (Figure 1), who had gone to Britain on a study visit, but had stayed on for fear of political persecution by the regime (Māh-Monir Minovi, pp. 135-36). Minovi’s decision to join the BBC was considered so important that it was reported at the beginning of a confidential memo which concluded that “we are now ready to go ahead with the Persian broadcast,” (WAC, Confidential BBC Memo, 12 December 1940). By mid-September 1941, well before the end of his first year with the BBC, Minovi had delivered the broadcasts which were “reputed to have driven the Shah from his throne” (BBC Memo, Miss E. Burton to Miss Edmond, Secretariat, 23 September 1941).

Minovi was joined at the BBC a few years later by Masʿud Farzād, who had been his fellow-member, along with Ṣādeq Hedāyat and Bozorg ʿAlawi (qq.v.), of the *rābaʿa*, or “Group of Four,” a title they had chosen in mock rivalry to a circle of established literary figures known as the *sabʿa*, or “Group of Seven” Yet another member of the BBC Persian language was a British scholar, Laurence Paul Elwell-Sutton (q.v.). Having worked for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the AIOC (Elwell-Sutton, 1997, p. 13; Safiri, 1984), Elwell-Sutton wrote *Persian Oil, A Study in Power Politics* (London, 1955), a passionate defence of the movement for the nationalization of Iranian oil.

The first broadcasts were 15-minute news bulletins, four days a week. Under the guidance of the British Embassy in Tehran (WAC, Ministry of Information to BBC, 17 January 1941; A. K. S. Lambton, British Legation, Tehran, to Ministry of Information, 17 February 1941), there were soon daily transmissions, consisting mostly of commentaries about the war. There was also music, and readings from classical Persian poetry (WAC, BBC Persian Service, “General Background,” p. 1). With Iranian oil fuelling the Royal Navy and much of the British economy, oil was also among the topics that the Embassy wanted the BBC to cover in its commentaries. As the Service expanded, it recruited other staff, including ʿAbbās Dehqān, Mehdi Farroḵ, Moḥammad Yazdāniān and

Abu'l-Qāsem Ṭāheri.

BBC and the Fall of Reżā Shah. While the BBC's Persian Service is remembered for its part in undermining Reżā Shah, the early programmes were criticised as being too sympathetic to him. Less than two months after the Persian broadcasts had begun, officials of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company warned the BBC "against the dangers of excessive flattery of the Shah" whom many Iranians blamed for the restrictions placed on their liberties, "hordes of officials who surrounded them, and the ris-ing cost of living" (WAC, Confidential BBC memo, 4 March 1941, on a meeting with E. H. O. Elkington and Clegg). The turning point came in June 1941, when the German attack on the Soviet Union raised the possibil-ity of Germany's access to the oil fields of the Caucasus and Persia (WAC, BBC Near East Department, confidential Monthly Intelligence Report Supplement No. 1, Broadcast Propaganda to Iran, 21 August 1941). In August, British and Soviet forces occupied Persia, although it had declared neutrality in the War. During the three days of 25-27 August, while the invading troops were fighting the Persian forces, the BBC's Persian staff protested by refusing to go on the air. They did, however, assist in translating the news, which was read by Elwell-Sutton (WAC, Confidential handwritten memo from L. P. Elwell-Sutton to the Head of Eastern Service, November 1950). The 1951-53 oil dispute between Persia and Britain was the cause of a second strike in the Persian Service.

The BBC's campaign against Reżā Shah, "based strictly on despatches from [the British] Ambassador in Tehran" began on 12 September (Confidential, Elwell-Sutton memo, November 1950), with the bulletins speaking of the Iranian people's desire for freedom, democracy, and the full implementation of Persia's constitution. A few days later, the BBC said the Crown Jewels were reported to have been removed from Tehran, adding that "it is assumed that the object is to safeguard the jewels, and not to remove from Iranian territory this valuable State possession." There then followed direct charges against Reżā Shah, including the use of forced labour in his textile mills, and the allegation that he had caused water shortage in Tehran by diverting the capital's water supply to "properties on which the Shah grows vegetables for the Tehran market" (WAC, BBC Persian News Bulletins, 6-17 September 1941).

The occupation of Persia. Following Reżā Shah's abdication in favour of his son on 16 September, the BBC aimed to dampen Iranians' expectations for political reform. They were warned that the transition from "despotism" to "a truly constitutional government must of necessity be gradual and will demand

considerable patience." "The return of constitutional government," the BBC said, "must be based on co-operation, constructive – not destructive – criticism, and, above all, unselfishness." Otherwise, "there may easily be a return, in one form or another, to the despotism which it has been so difficult to remove" (WAC, BBC Persian News Bulletin, 19 September 1941).

In its early months, the BBC's Persian Service had been no match for Berlin Radio which attacked Britain and also criticised Reżā Shah. Broadcasts by the German station's star announcer, Bahram Šāhroḵ, were thought to have led to the murder of his father, the Zoroastrian businessman, Arbāb Kayḵosrow Šāhroḵ, by government agents (Tehran daily newspaper, *Iran*, 11-12 Mordād 1378 Š./12-13 August 1999, p.7). But with the fall of Reżā Shah, the BBC, known in Persia as "*Rādio Landan*," reached such a status that even the Prime Minister, Moḥammad-ʿAli Foruḡi (q.v.) used it to broadcast a statement, albeit anonymously, "attributed to a distinguished Iranian student of foreign affairs who is also a friend of Great Britain" (WAC, Controller, Overseas Services, to Director General of the BBC, Secret BBC memo, 14 November 1941).

Five years on, the War had come to an end, but increasing political turmoil had led to strikes and food riots; many political organisations had emerged, the Tudeh party being the largest and the best organised; and there had been centrifugal tendencies in the provinces, notably in Azarbaijan and Kurdistan. The Soviet Union's request for an oil concession in northern Persia had led to opposition from Iranian nationalists who were also very critical of the Anglo-Iranian oil agreement of 1933. In the oil producing regions, Iranian oil workers were in protest against the AIOC over pay and working conditions. In July 1946, a general strike by the oil workers ended in violence and British forces were deployed near Ābādān (q.v.; Elwell-Sutton, 1955, pp. 104-49).

The Azarbaijan crisis of 1946 (see Azarbaijan v) was the first important post-war crisis to receive a wide coverage from the service. Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda's speech to the UN General Assembly describing how Persia had done its utmost to resolve the problem bilaterally and amicably, was broadcast directly from the conference hall in Church House, London. Taqizāda was also heard in February 1947, congratulating the section in his capacity as ambassador to London, in view of an additional 15 minutes of broadcast in Persian (History).

Battleships and broadcasts. In June 1946 British warships anchored in Iraqi waters, the BBC was informed by the British Government that "once again" the

Persian Service may be called upon "to take direct action in the way of power propaganda." Information provided by the Foreign Office had made it "quite apparent" that the situation with regard to Britain's oil interests in Persia "may become critical before the end of the summer and the protection of those interests" would be "secured by whatever means may prove necessary" (WAC, Private and Confidential memo, from the Director of Eastern Services, D. Stephenson, to Controller (Overseas Services), J. B. Clark, 20 June 1946).

A Foreign Office document entitled "Publicity in Persia" explained that should it be "decided to put pressure on the Persian Government by reducing its royalties in retaliation for stoppages or by threatening intervention or by any other measures, our propaganda machine should be ready to support our actions by seeing to it, when required, that the facts and implications are widely known." The BBC, the document said, "can be brought into action at a few hours' notice. The rest must be done on the spot. If the local machine is not adequate for the purpose or if the necessary publicity material is not available H. M.'s Ambassador should make immediate recommendations with a view to remedying the situation."

The line of publicity, said the Foreign Office paper, "must depend on the policy which is to be adopted. Thus, for example, it would be harmful publicity to attack the whole Tudeh party so long as there is any hope of splitting it; or to attack the Prime Minister [Qawām] for the failure of the Government [which included three ministers from the Tudeh Party] to introduce reforms until we have abandoned hope of working with him."

However, the paper recommended that efforts be made to "rebut the vague general accusation that we favour reaction" and to point out "that in September 1941, it was the BBC, not Russian broadcasts, which gave the call for reform" in Persia. "Maximum publicity" was to be given to the social reforms introduced by Britain's Labour government, and there was a recommendation to "openly attack Communism, emphasizing its oppressive character, its foreign inspiration and its indifference to any humanitarian consideration" (WAC, Draft Foreign Office Paper, Publicity in Persia, attached to Stephenson's 20 June 1946 memo).

The BBC only expressed concern over the style in which such broadcasts were to be made, and these concerns were easily resolved. The Foreign Office "readily accepted" the BBC's request that "anything in the nature of ultimative [sic] demands on Persia should be attributed to [the British] Government as

such and not diluted by the formulae such as ‘authoritative quarters’, ‘an informed correspondent’, etc.” The Foreign Office also acknowledged the concern raised by the BBC managers that in the immediate post-war conditions “most people – and BBC editorial and production staff are no exception – are extremely sensitive to any special directive which they feel might be attributable to reactionary antipathy to the Soviet [sic]” (Stephenson to Clark, 20 June 1946).

A few weeks later, the Foreign Office asked the BBC to broadcast as anonymous “open letters” two telegrams from the British embassy in Tehran, which criticised some Iranian newspapers for their “violent and sustained anti-British” campaign. The first “letter” was broadcast in circumstances, the BBC said later, “which had offered no time for discussion” (WAC, Stephenson to Clark, 15 August 1946). However, the BBC declined to broadcast the second “letter,” which suggested that the anti-British Persian newspapers were inspired by the Soviet Union, with “one specific end, namely, the liquidation of Brit-ish interests” in Persia. This, warned the “open letter,” would only lead to a vacuum which “would immediately be filled by a new and sinister form of imperialism.” The Embassy’s cable also denied that Britain was opposed to the Tudeh Party “whose ostensible proclaimed ideals bear a striking similarity to those of the British Labour Party” which was in power at the time (WAC, Telegram from the British Ambassador, Le Rougetel, for Cabinet Distribution, 15 August 1946).

The BBC argued that “purely on grounds of effective broadcast standards” it “could not accept a further anonymous effusion of this kind” and asked the Foreign Office “whether this kind of demarche could not be issued, on modified form, under some official and quotable source of origin.” In the meantime, the BBC offered to edit the “letter” “at the BBC’s absolute discretion and for attribution to ‘a correspondent’ (specifically not to ‘our Correspondent’)” to be broadcast as “an end-of-bulletin-item” WAC, Stephenson to Clark, Confidential memo, 15 August 1946).

In further communications with the Foreign Office, the BBC acknowledged that, legally, it could be asked by the British government to broadcast anything for which the government would accept full and open responsibility, although this was “an eventuality to be avoided if it is possible to do so by fair negotiation.” Thus, the BBC would “accept special communiqués or comments for broadcast, to be attributed in all cases to ‘a British official course.’” The Foreign Office was warned, however, that if such statements were “excessively

provocative in nature or excessively violent in tone," they would "almost certainly evoke equally violent refutation or other reaction" which the BBC would have to cover, in order to demonstrate the "objectivity and reliability" of its news service (WAC, Stephenson to Foreign Office, Confidential, 28 August 1946).

The Dear Listeners. On a visit to Persia in 1949, the head of the Persian Service, L. A. Woolard, found the BBC in "very high" regard and reported that the BBC news service's war-time "reputation for integrity" had been "fully maintained in the strained years of peace" (WAC, L. A. Woolard, "Report on Tour of Iran," hereinafter referred to as Report 22 December 1949, p. 1). Many listeners said they often heard the first news of events in Persia from the BBC (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 5). Some Persians, "notably" the journalists in Tehran, did suspect that the Persian Service was "regarded by the British government as a convenient channel" to influence the Iranian public opinion. But most people regarded "the mere existence" of the Persian Service "as a gesture of friendship and co-operation on the part of Britain" (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 1).

The audience included "doctors, teachers, journalists, civil servants, students (especially those working in the AIOC), shop-keepers, merchants and artisans." Most listeners lived in provincial cities and small villages. With few radio sets around, most listened in cafés (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 2). On a tour of Isfahan, Woolard found people in "30 to 40 cafés (some of them crammed to the doors) contentedly listening to a talk by Minovi" – whose "intellectual vigour and bellicose style" had earned him the reputation of the best Persian broadcaster on any station (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 7).

However, many listeners found the programmes "too academic and 'literary.'" Several listeners in Rašt said that "all this poetry and literature" was "very well for Isfahan and Shiraz, but we are practical people" (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 6). Even Minovi had his critics, with young listeners complaining that he went "too deeply into the literature of the past." When he did deal with the present, with "attacks on contemporary writers," some of the targets would complain of his "bad manners."

The "graver issues" about Minovi, said Woolard, were his "occasional broadcasts on political themes." These were invariably reported to the Shah, who would then complain to the British ambassador. Woolard suggested that Minovi should devote more attention to contemporary themes, and "exercise

greater tact in handling subjects which are directly or indirectly related to Persia's internal politics" (WAC, Woolard, Report, p. 7). Soon after Woolard's return from Persia, Minovi left the BBC with an offer to teach at Tehran University (Minovi, p. 137). Masʿud Farzād left the following year (WAC, BBC Persian Service Staff List, April 1951), after the BBC had become deeply involved in the oil dispute.

Radios against Communism. While in Persia, Woolard also met the former pro-Nazi broadcaster from Berlin, Bahrām Šāhroḵ, who was now Director of Tehran Radio. Šāhroḵ praised the BBC's Persian Service, and arranged to relay some of its programmes on Tehran radio (WAC, Woolard, Report, pp. 12-13). Visiting London in the spring of 1950, Šāhroḵ agreed to have BBC's Russian transmissions, which were being jammed by the Soviet Union, relayed from Persia. He also asked the BBC for anti-communist material, including "a supply of seditious jokes." The BBC agreed to help (WAC, Assistant Head of BBC European Services, D. M. Graham, to Šāhroḵ, 1 May 1950).

Šāhroḵ also met senior AIOC officials, Neville Gass and Archibald H. T. Chisholm, to discuss a propaganda campaign in support of the Supplemental Agreement on oil, which had been concluded between AIOC and the Iranian government, and which Britain was keen to be passed by the Majles (Elwell-Sutton, 1955, p. 175). A BBC news report about the meeting led to Šāhroḵ's dismissal in June (WAC, British Embassy, Tehran, to Foreign Office, Confidential, 20 November 1950) on charges of treason (WAC, Graham to Head of European Presentation, 27 June 1950). However, he was reinstated in November, when the Prime Minister, General Raz-mārā, decided that he needed "a clever man to help get the Supplemental Oil Agreement passed through the Majlis" (WAC, British Embassy, Tehran, to Foreign Office, 20 November 1950).

Šāhroḵ's first act upon return to office was the suspension of both the BBC and the Voice of America relays by Tehran radio (WAC, Tehran Radio, 15 November 1950, monitored by the BBC). The decision followed a VOA attack on the Soviet Ambassador to Persia, Ivan Sadchikov, who had taken a leading part in the conclusion of a trade agreement with Razmārā's government. The agreement had been "universally praised" in Persia as "heralding new and friendlier relations between the two countries." Referring to Sadchikov's 1946 negotiations with Qawām, which led to the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Persia, and the bloody suppression of the leftist "Azarbaijan Republic," the Voice of America commentary had described the Soviet Ambassador as "the

Butcher of Azarbaijan" (WAC, Associated Press report from Tehran, 16 November 1950).

Responding to the British embassy's protest against the suspension of the BBC relays, "which had recently given no cause for complaint," Šāhroḵ said he could not ban the VOA and retain the BBC without giving his opponents an opportunity to call him "a British spy." He further explained that his first and most important task, as instructed by Razamārā and the Shah, was to turn public opinion in favour of the Supplemental Oil Agreement. To this end, Šāhroḵ said, "his first tactics would be to be more nationalist than the patriots of the National Front" – an approach which the British Embassy considered "very dangerous," as "once nationalist sentiments are aroused it is difficult to keep them under control" (WAC, British Embassy, Tehran, to Foreign Office, Confidential, 20 November 1950).

The British embassy was soon proved right. The Supplemental Agreement was withdrawn form the Majles on 26 December 1950. Prime Minister Razmārā was assassinated on 7 March 1951. A bill to nationalise the oil industry, introduced by the National Front, was passed unanimously by the Majles on 15 March and by the Senate five days later. By 1 May, both houses of parliament had passed the Nine-Article Bill for the Implementation of Nationalisation, and the National Front's leader, Dr. Moṣaddeq had become Prime Minister (Elwell-Sutton 1955, pp. 201-17, Katouzian, 1990, pp. 92-94, Elm, pp. 72-93).

The Post-bag. In April 1951, the BBC was asked by the British embassy in Washington whether a suggestion by *The Economist* magazine, that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company should "enlist the help of the BBC overseas services" was being considered. The aim, *The Economist* had said, would be to explain to the Persians what the Company was doing for them, and "what would happen if 'nationalisation' took place." Unless the Iranians received such information, *The Economist* had said, "these illiterate people" would "become the helpless tools of nationalist and Russian propaganda" (WAC, British Embassy, Washington, to Foreign Office, 23 April 1951).

The BBC said that although the AIOC had been "surprisingly inactive with regard to publicity," the Corporation had "worked out a line taking into account the Foreign Office briefing meetings." The BBC had "concentrated on getting information over to the Persians by answering queries about oil and the Oil Company contained in letters from Persian listeners." The programmes, said the BBC, had shown that the AIOC was "the best employer" in Persia, and

that its “greatest service” had “been to give value to the country’s most important natural asset by extracting it from the ground, where it was worthless” (WAC, Head of Eastern Service, Gordon Waterfield, to Foreign Office, Confidential, 4 May 1950).

In 1946, the BBC had received 17 letters from its Iranian listeners (WAC, “Audience for the BBC Persian Service, 1950-51, Confidential report, 3 January 1952, p. 1). By 1951 there were more than 4,500 (WAC, Confidential “Bi-Monthly Service Report – Persian Broadcasts,” 15 March 1952, p. 1). The Head of the BBC’s Eastern Service, Gordon Waterfield, reported that the letters came from a wide range of listeners, from “Government employees, students, doctors, merchants, farmers, and landlords” (WAC, Waterfield, “Letters from Persia,” unpub-lished article, hereinafter referred to as “Letters,” 17 May 1951, p. 1). The letters, he said, gave “a more comprehensive idea of opinion throughout Persia than any other intelligence received in London.” The letters had been considered so important, said Waterfield, that the Foreign Office had wanted “to have them replied to individually by letter (possibly signed by the Secretary of State!)” (WAC, Waterfield to Controller, Overseas Services, Confidential, 6 June 1951). Waterfield himself wrote an article about the letters for the influential, conservative British newspaper, *the Daily Telegraph*, but his superior did not approve the article for publication (WAC, Waterfield to Head, European Talks & English Lang. Dept., 20 June 1951). None of the letters quoted in Waterfield’s draft article supported Britain or the AIOC.

One listener had asked how England could call “herself the ‘Mother of Democracy’ and upholder of law and order and deny the same things to us?” Another had wondered why Britain, which had “nationalised her own coal and steel industries,” considered it illegal for Persia to nationalise her oil, which was “the property of the people?” Yet another said Britain’s oil concessions in Persia were not valid, “just like a contract signed between a child and an adult,” because the previous Iranian rulers had been “political sucklings, particularly in their business dealings with the English.” Another correspondent suggested that, “if Great Britain wished, she had enough influence to make [Persia] a progressive country and enable the [Iranians] themselves to exploit their own” oil, adding that Persia did “not get one thousandth of the profits” (WAC, Waterfield, “Letters,” p. 4). “There are plenty of answers to these questions,” Waterfield said in his draft article, “which we have given in our Persian broadcasts, but I doubt if logical argument is very effective to the Persians in their present mood” (WAC, Waterfield, “Letters,” p.

2).

When the AIOC's Iranian employees complained of discrimination, many of them saying they lived in slums, the Foreign Office suggested that the BBC should report the conditions of the Persian workers at a Russo-Iranian company producing caviar in the Caspian Sea. "It seems," said the Foreign Office, "that the houses of the workers are mud hovels, unlike the brick buildings with porcelain sanitary fittings at Abadan and the fields. There is one small, inadequate hospital, and the pay of the fishermen is below the minimum wage introduced by the Persian Government" (WAC, Foreign Office) to Waterfield, 11 May 1951). A BBC listener in Golpāyagān argued in his letter that, "If Britain had treated us fairly over the oil, the Russians would not have been able to confiscate our gold reserves and plunder out fisheries as the English plunder our oil." WAC, Waterfield, "Letters," p. 4).

In June 1951, while Dr. Moṣaddeq's government was preparing to take control of the Persian oil industry and Britain was once again deploying military forces in the Persian Gulf, the Foreign Office informed the BBC that the situation in Persia "might at any moment within the next few days become very serious, and we might have to send Parachute troops into Persia to protect lives." In such a case, "it would be very important to tell the Persians and the rest of the world why we were doing this and the problem that it involved." The BBC was asked if it could "arrange for an extra half-hour of Persian broadcast to Persia, preferably in the morning." The British embassy in Tehran had also asked for an immediate 15 minute increase of the Persian broadcasts (WAC, Waterfield to Controller, Overseas Services, Confidential, 18 June 1951), which at the time consisted of a 45-minute daily transmission starting at 1615 GMT, the same as the Persian Service's main, early evening, transmission today.

The Head of the Eastern Service announced that he could only afford to offer a full-time contract to a part-time Persian language typist who also had "a Supplementary Contract for announcing, news-reading and taking part in features" and also did some translation "under supervision of one of the senior Persian staff." With an expenditure of "something in the neighbourhood of 5 pounds weekly" for these purposes, the BBC would be able to broadcast an extra 15-minute news bulletin, to go out at 1000 GMT, mid-afternoon Tehran time, for "an emergency period which might last a week or a fortnight." broadcasts (WAC, Waterfield to Controller, Overseas Services, Confidential, 19 June 1951).

However, a day after the new broadcast had been launched, the Foreign Office wrote to the highest authority in the BBC, the Director General, General Sir Ian Jacob, to say that the Government was "most anxious" to increase broadcasts in Persian and that the Secretary of State, Herbert Morrison, had said that this "should be 'intensified.'" The ministerial order was coupled with vague promises of Foreign Office funding for a further extension of the broadcasts, if the BBC could prove "up to the hilt that funds could not be found elsewhere without sacrificing something which the Government considers essential" (WAC, Foreign Office to Jacob, 21 June 1951). A week later, a 15-minute dawn transmission had begun. The mid-afternoon transmission was dropped on 27 August (WAC, BBC note on duration of Persian Service transmissions, 26 January 1973), after Britain had given up plans for military invasion of Persia.

News, Views and Propaganda. The BBC Foreign News Department instructed its staff to provide the new transmissions with "a general world news bulletin – although obviously news about Persia will occupy a considerable portion of its total space as long as the present crisis lasts." At all times, "major news from other parts of the world" would have to be included, "even if we can do no more than briefly summarise it at the end." News about Persia itself had to "be objectively written, and should not differ fundamentally from the stories put out by other BBC news services" (WAC, Assistant Head of Foreign Services News Department, circular memo to the news staff , 20 June 1951).

At the same time, the Foreign Office was issuing instructions to the BBC on what line it was to take in broadcasts, and was also supplying the BBC with scripts for transmission and confidential documents to be used as background information. Among others, on 12 July the Foreign Office sent the BBC "a copy of a set of papers which were originally prepared for the use of the Oil Company delegation which went to Tehran last month." The BBC was advised that "except for the purely historical material, these should be treated as confidential. They may however, even at this stage, help fill in the background" (WAC, Foreign Office to Waterfield, Confidential, 12 July 1951). The BBC replied that the papers had been "passed on to David Mitchell," a writer of commentaries, "and will be useful to him" (WAC, Waterfield to Foreign Office, Confidential, 13 July 1951).

On the same day, the BBC was informed in another letter that British "publicity towards Persia" should aim to "destroy Persian confidence in the present policy of the Persian Government on the grounds that" it would "ruin Persian economic, political and social structure," "alienate British friendship"

and “play straight into the hands of the Russians by whom it may even be inspired.” Iranians were also to hear of “British disgust with the composition and conduct of Persian Governments since 1941 on the grounds that: they have been unrepresentative of the people; they have been indifferent to the people’s needs; they have encouraged the idea that they had the support of Britain; they have not made proper use of the revenues received from the oil; they have failed to manage properly such State industries as railways, textiles, silk, canneries and cement. These have either failed to show a profit or have been closed.”

Referring to the decision by the International Court of Justice at the Hague ordering Persia to suspend its decision to repossess the oil industry, which Persia had rejected arguing that the case was not within the Court’s jurisdiction (Elwell-Sutton, 1955, pp. 233-44, Elm, pp. 122-23), the Foreign Office said that it “should like to stress that: (1) No reasonable country or concern is going to buy from the Persian Oil Company oil which should, under the terms of the Hague Court injunction, be sold only by the AIOC; (2) Persia can hardly expect sympathy from the United Nations Organisation if it flouts the ruling of one of its organs; (3) It is odd that Mussadiq should have said on his accession to power that he adhered to and supported the United Nations Organisation” (WAC, Foreign Office to Waterfield, Personal and Confidential, 12 July 1951).

Some ten days later, the British ambassador in Tehran, Sir Francis Shepherd, cabled a long and detailed “publicity directive” for the BBC, which aimed “to convince the Persians that however natural and praiseworthy their desire for nationalisation may be, the policy of the present Government can only result in: (a) the collapse of the oil industry and thus of the Persian economy; (b) the destruction of Anglo-Persian friendship and thus of Persian independence; (c) the relapse of Persia into anarchy and communism.”

Having prescribed that “all publicity must contain a positive as well as a negative element,” the ambassa-dor then offered two sets of “General Themes.” The “positive” themes included the assertions that “without Britain’s constant support, Persia would not now be independent,” and that “Britain has always been on the side of the people as opposed to the selfish and reactionary governing class. The latter has for obvious reasons always claimed to have British support.”

The “negative” themes described the nationalization of the Iranian oil as an

action “contrary to international custom” and warned that the Iranian Government’s policy would “result in the permanent alienation of Britain,” which could “only end in the destruction of Persian independence.” The Iranian Government was also described as having followed a “purely negative” policy that had resulted in “stopping the output and distribution of oil, disgusting the British technicians by the interference and discourtesy of government agents and infuriating British public and world opinion.”

Another “negative” theme portrayed the Iranian government’s policy as being encouraged by the Soviet Union, with the aim of “removing the two principle obstacles to Russian designs, namely British friendship and Persian economic and political stability.” And, finally, the BBC was to “deplore the evident indifference of the Persian Government to the dangers of communism,” and to warn the government that “if they persist in this indifference to the Soviet menace it is Persia and the Persians who will suffer far more than Britain and the West.”

As far as style was concerned, personal attacks on Dr. Moṣaddeq were to be “avoided altogether” because of “the emotional state of public opinion” in Persia and Dr. Moṣaddeq’s “widespread acceptance” as a national hero. “Castigation of present Government policy and of the self-seeking elements who are behind it” had to “be accompanied by appreciation of the sufferings, courage and genuine nationalist spirit of the Persian people.” There was also advice on the style of writing, with the ambassador suggesting that “British official statements directed towards world as well as Persian opinion often appear as equivocal when translated into Persian. They should therefore invariably be followed by paraphrase and commentary in clear and unequivocal Persian” (WAC, Shepherd to Foreign Office, Confidential, 23 July 1951).

Similar advice came in a covering letter from Colonel Geoffrey Wheeler, the recently arrived counsellor at the British embassy, to the Head of the Eastern Service, Gordon Waterfield. Wheeler said he had found that “Mussadiq still remains a popular hero to a degree which I had not myself realised in London” and suggested that personal attacks on such a figure who had “undoubtedly captured the Persian imagination,” could isolate his potential opponents. But this did not mean that “we should not attack the adventurers who are manipulating Mussadiq for their own advantages.” Wheeler also suggested to Waterfield that “it may be useful for you to have more regular guidance from us in which we can indicate what themes should be reiterated

or soft-pedalled" (WAC, Wheeler to Waterfield, Confidential, 23 July 1951).

In internal BBC comments, Waterfield said he had found the contents of the cable and the letter "unobjectionable" but was not happy with the use of the word "directive" as "the BBC did not receive directives" (WAC, Waterfield to Controller Overseas Service, Confidential, 27 July 1951). Writing to Wheeler himself, Waterfield said the use of the word "directive" would involve "all sorts of constitutional problems, and if it could be changed to some word like 'suggestions', everything would be fine (WAC, Waterfield to Wheeler, Confidential, 3 August 1951). Wheeler agreed to "refrain from using it in future" (WAC, Wheeler to Waterfield, Unclassified, 18 August 1951).

Occasionally, there were disagreements over substance between the two sides. One notable case concerned yet another fabricated "open letter," this time against the nationalisation of oil, written at the British embassy in Tehran, and forwarded to the BBC by the Foreign Office in London. The "letter," purportedly written by an Iranian student "in England, the home of world democracy," argued that because of high distribution costs, the Persian government would have to raise the price of kerosene, and then "the bakers will have to charge more for bread." There could also be "irregularity in the distribution of oil," said the writer, resulting in "discomfort to the people" and "their lack of confidence in the Government's promises" (WAC, Draft letter attached to "Personal and Confidential" letter from C. F. R. Barclay at the Foreign Office to Waterfield, 12 July 1951).

"I would be grateful," Waterfield said in his reply to the Foreign Office, "if you could tell those concerned at the British Embassy in Tehran that we do no think it is a good thing to put out this sort of letter. We have so many genuine letters to answer that it is unnecessary, and I consider would be very unwise. I seem to remember that they have already sent a previous letter on similar lines and it is a pity that they should spend time drafting such letters, when they must have so much to do" (WAC, Waterfield to C. F. R. Barclay, Confidential, 13 July 1951).

There were also a number of protests from the British Embassy in Tehran against the BBC. Some protests concerned the reflection of Britain's puzzling, if not self-contradictory, argument that while it accepted "the principle of nationalisation" of the Iranian oil industry, "the transfer of ownership and ultimate authority" to the Iranian Government did "not involve the day to day interference with the management of this highly complicated industry" (WAC,

British Embassy, Tehran, to Foreign Office, Confidential, 29 July 1951). In its reply, the BBC said the Embassy must have misheard the commentary (WAC, Waterfield to Foreign Office, 30 July 1951).

In another serious case, the Embassy asked why the BBC Persian Service had reported, incorrectly, that Ayatollah Sayyed Abu'l-Qāsem Kāšāni had been arrested on premier Qawām's orders, during the latter's brief appointment as Prime Minister. Being untrue, said the embassy, the report could only be taken as an expression of what Britain "would like Qavam to do. It would thus be more difficult for Qavam to arrest Kashani, while if Kashani was not arrested, this could be claimed as another victory for the National Front and a blow to the British" (WAC, Foreign Office to Waterfield, Confidential, 23 July 1952).

Waterfield reported that the English text of the news item had said that, "Among those arrested was the right-hand man of the religious leader, Ayatollah Kāšāni, who is Dr. Moṣaddeq's main supporter" but "the translator unfortunately left out 'right-hand man.'" Waterfield went on to say that the BBC was "tightening up on the checking of news translation. I am quite sure it was a mistake on the part of the translator and nothing sinister" (WAC, Waterfield to Foreign Office, Confidential, 25 July 1952).

In general, however, throughout the conflict between Britain and Persia over oil, the embassy was happy with the BBC broadcasts and would provide their texts for publication by Persian newspapers. In July 1951, when a headline in the Iranian newspaper, *Dād*, said "The BBC is threatening us and talking of explosions in the [Abadan] refinery," the embassy described the broadcasts as "admirable" (WAC, Foreign Office to Waterfield, 7 July 1951). When a series of commentaries against the nationalisation of oil caused strong protests in Persia, the embassy said the broadcasts "have shown that we are thoroughly angry and have done more than a little to emphasise the danger of alienating Britain." The embassy did, however, express doubt as to whether the broadcasts, under the pen-name Moḥammad Irānjāh, "should continue on the same aggressive note" (WAC, Wheeler to Waterfield, 7 July 1951).

By this time, the broadcasts had already led to attacks on the BBC by Tehran radio, which was now in the hands of Moṣaddeq's government. On 10 July, a Tehran radio commentary described the staff of the Persian Service as "anonymous so-called Iranians who are really of British origin." The following day, the radio quoted a cable from "many people in Shushtar," who had expressed "hatred against the slaves of the former Oil Company, that is the

BBC, and extreme hatred [for] those few Persian-speaking announcers like that man who introduces himself as Moḥammad Irānjāh." And on 13 July, another commentary described the BBC broadcasters as "barefaced traitors," similar to Lord Haw-Haw – William Joyce, who broadcast Nazi propaganda from Berlin and was hanged for treason after the War (WAC, Tehran Radio, monitored by the BBC).

However, a week later, Iranian media quoted the Iranian embassy in London as saying that the Iranian staff of the BBC had had "nothing to do" with "the pungent remarks" broadcast under the name Irānjāh. The BBC's Iranian staff, said the embassy, had "favourable feel-ings towards Iran"; they had protested against the broadcasts and had even "threatened the administration of Radio London with resignation." The Embassy named the broadcaster as "a certain Hakim-Elahi" who had been teaching "Persian at the School of Oriental Languages [the present School of Oriental and African Studies] since a year ago and who had no official post with [the BBC]." The Embassy also said that necessary steps had been taken "to put an end to his remarks"(*Eṭṭelāʿāt*, 29 Tir 1330 Š./19 July 1951, p. 7). Later on, the Persian Section staff announced that they had "unanimously declared" to the BBC management that they would no longer "broadcast the talks of the political commentators, the analysis of the day's news or any other talk related to oil or Dr. Moṣaddegh's Government," (*Eṭṭelāʿāt*, 6 Mordad 1330 Š./28 July 1951, p. 7) a threat which they carried out on several occasions (Elwell-Sutton, 1955, p. 242).

Another declaration of patriotism came from Abu'l-Qāsem Ṭāheri, one of the longest serving Iranians on the BBC's staff. Ṭāheri's weekly programme, "The Listeners' Period," with its clear and witty replies to the listeners' questions, was hugely popular everywhere – and he was described as having "his finger unerringly on the people's pulse" (WAC, Woolard, "Report," p. 8). As early as 1944, with theWorld War still on, he had caused controversy in the BBC by broadcasting a series of talks on dancing.

Expressions of doubt by a senior BBC manager "both to the suitability of the subject and Ṭāheri's claims to a knowledge of it" (WAC, Near Eastern Programme Organsier, E. H. Paxton, to Persian Editor, V. H. Glendenning, 2 October 1944) led to a strong memo from the editor of the Persian Service, saying that he had approved the talks. Ṭāheri, said the editor, "has done several talks and features in the past which have been favourably received. He is a contributor who should, in my opinion, be encouraged" (WAC, Glendenning to Paxton, 4 October 1944.)

Now, in 1951, writing to Dr. Ḥosayn Fāṭemi, Dr. Moṣaddeq's close confidant and advisor and editor of the daily, *Bāḵtar-e emruz*, Ṭāheri recalled that he had been "the first member of Tehran radio," and said he was writing because "two nights ago, I heard Tehran radio calling every [Iranian] member of the BBC staff a traitor." He then went on to say that neither he nor "any other permanent member of the BBC" had been the "person who shamelessly calls himself Iranian and still attacks the interests of Iran." Those "meaningless words," said Ṭā-heri, had belonged to Mr. Ḥakim-Elāhi.

"On behalf of two or three of my colleagues," Ṭāheri said, "I declare openly that we shall follow our government's attitude, whatever it may be. No matter how backward our homeland is compared with other countries, we still love even its ruins and graveyards." He ended his letter by saying, "The traitors are those oppressive ruling classes which have dragged our homeland to the present state of affairs and have brought about circumstances that decree that I and people like me should live in foreign countries for nine years and be pleased with the few mouthfuls of bread we get" (WAC, Tehran Radio, 20 July 1951, quoting *Bāḵtar-e emruz*, monitored by the BBC).

In a curious twist to the tale, on the very same day that Ṭāheri's letter was published in *Bāḵtar-e emruz*, ano-ther Tehran daily, *Eṭṭelāʿāt*, reported that Hedāyat-Allāh Ḥakim-Elāhi, "Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of London" had denied that he had ever broadcast anything on the BBC" (*Eṭṭelāʿāt*, 8 Mordād 1330 Š./30 July 1951, p. 5). The controversial broadcaster had in fact been Naṣr-Allāh Elāhi, an "anti-communist, British-educated agriculture specialist with an interest in literature, who had been resident in London at the time." Elāhi was later to emigrate to South Af-rica (author's phone Interview with Naṣr-Allāh Elālhi's cousin, Dr. Ṣadr-al-Din Elāhi, 18 April 2000). Although Naṣr-Allāh Elāhi appears to have started writing for the BBC in 1951 on a freelance basis, or in the BBC jargon as an "outside contributor," by April 1952 his name was officially registered as a member of staff (WAC, BBC Persian Service Staff list, April 1952). In the midst of the controversy itself, the BBC's Iranian staff were able to turn their short-term contracts into permanent employment by the BBC, arguing that they could not return to Persia in such a hostile environment (author's interviews with two former members of staff of the BBC Persian Service, Loṭf-ʿAli Ḵonji and Hažir Teymuriān, February 2000).

The moving fingers write on. As the conflict over oil escalated, Britain's friends in Persia – described by the British embassy as "members of the landlord

class" – put their faith in Britain "to rescue them from Communism" (WAC, Foreign Office to Waterfield, Confidential, 18 August 1952). Other Iranians – including those writing to the BBC – continued to support Dr. Moṣaddeq and the movement for the nationalisation of Iranian oil. One listener, writing in early 1952, described the movement as "more valuable for Persia than the Constitutional Revolution." Another listener said that, when employed by the AIOC in 1920, he and his brother had been "working like animals. What we ate was a handful of flour and a bowl of hot water. There was no house, no room, not even a tent to sleep in. We were working under burning sun, and at night sleeping in the shadows of rocks like insects. A hundred were dying everyday." The writer then said that 10 years later, on a visit to Britain, he had seen "English workers earning 3 or 4 pounds a week" and he had then understood that "there is no justice in what you [the British] do, you don't believe in equality" (WAC, Persian Programme Organiser, memo on "Questions from Persia," 3 April 1952).

Other listeners blamed the AIOC for Persia's difficulties and countered the arguments about oil that they had heard in BBC programmes. If it was true, asked one letter, that nationalisation was costing Persia more than Britain, why was "Britain making such a fuss about it?" (WAC, BBC Bi-monthly Service Report on Persian Broadcasts, Confidential, 15 March 1952, p. 2). One listener asked, "Why do all the people in the Middle East hate England?" while another expressed the hope that Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne would help settle the oil question peacefully (WAC, Persian Programme Organiser, memo on "Questions from Persia," hereinafter referred to as "Questions from Persia," 15 May 1952).

While some letters expressed sympathy towards the Soviet Union, one listener wondered "why people are not allowed to come and see the so-called 'promised paradise' for themselves" (WAC, "Questions from Persia," 15 May 1952). A listener from Sāri, near the Caspian coast, reported that he and his "friends in school" had distributed "a few books containing the truth about communism" to counter "communist propaganda" by the Society of Peace Lovers, a front for the Tudeh Party. "But alas," said the listener, "we have not got enough books. If you could send a few anti-communist books (in every possible language) we shall be very grateful," (WAC, "Questions from Persia," 15 May 1952).

Defeat and Dejection. A year after the 1953 coup the BBC's Persian Service was faced with jamming from the Soviet Union (WAC, British Embassy, Tehran,

report, 19 June 1954) and a change of attitude among its listeners. Visiting Persia in October 1955, Woolard discovered that the Service had "to all intents and purposes been blotted from the radio map of Persia by poor reception." He heard "a chorus of complaints" about the signal, "some delivered more in sorrow than in anger, others with an undercurrent of malicious satisfaction." Iranians were reluctant to search for the BBC which was often "a torture to the ear" when they could listen to the powerful transmissions of Radio Tehran or Russian stations, or even the Voice of America, which was "troubled by interference but not to anything like the same extent as" the BBC.

Once again, he was able to meet people "high and low: one evening dining with the Governor of a Province, the next sharing the humble fare of the villagers in some little chaikhaneh." "If I have to sum up my impressions of both parties," he wrote from Hamadān, "I should say: for the ordinary man, mental apathy, disillusionment and fear of tomorrow; for the governing classes, a slightly apologetic repudiation of responsibility for the present state of affairs.

"There is a total lack of trust between government and people, class and class and man and man which is quite desolating. Even two friends talking across the table in a restaurant garden have a slightly conspiratorial air, and some of the melancholy faces one sees in the streets and cafes cry aloud for an El Greco, a Rembrandt or a Goya. A portrait painter without a social conscience would find this country a paradise! For those whose approach to life is not purely aesthetic the only thing to do is to grow an extra skin and observe the Persian scene with clinical detachment" (WAC, Woolard to Waterfield, Confidential letter from Hamadan, 4 October 1955).

In the late sixties the Persian government agreed to the request for a permanent BBC corespondent in Persia. But the correspondent's report of some opposition to the Land Reform in 1966, and the coverage of the demonstrations against the Shah's state visit in Germany in the same year, brought protests from the Persian government and led to his dismissal. Relations improved towards the end of the sixties and a correspondent covered the celebrations marking the 2,500 years of monarchical rule in Persia (October 1971). Around this time, the Persian government agreed to the dispatch of a new BBC World Service reporter to Persia. The correspondent (Richard Oppenheimer) remained in Tehran until the end of 1979, and reported on the mass demonstrations before the 1979 Revolution.

Complaints over coverage of 1979 Revolution. As tensions mounted in Persia during the critical months leading up to the fall of the Pahlavi regime in February 1979, and especially with the intensification of internal censorship of the media, many people tuned into foreign radio stations, and particularly the BBC, to hear the latest news. Connecting these disturbances to a British scheme, Princess Ašraf Pahlavi (pp. 199-200) relates that "These riots took place during a steady campaign of biased anti-Shah news reports by the BBC, almost a reprise of the attacks made on my father a few decades earlier" (see CONSPIRACY THEORIES). The Persian government complained officially, through its ambassador, Parviz Rāji, about the "tone" of the Persian Service's broadcasts. In reply, the British government pointed out to the independence of the BBC and its duty to report news objectively and impartially (Radji, pp. 167, 166-68, 173-74; Walker, pp. 116-18, Loṭf-Allāh Ḵonji, in History). Anthony Parsons, British ambassador in Tehran at the time and a critic of the service, later admitted in a broadcast on Radio 4 in 1984 that the service had not been at fault and had reported fairly events in Persia (Walker, p. 118). However, perhaps due to the sheer volume of material available, the news about the opposition movement and their statements and demonstrations, appeared to dominate the service's broadcasts during these critical months. One of the points that later was used as evidence against BBC for its part in the mobilization of the anti-Shah movement was the announcement of future demonstrations, which became instrumental to disseminating the news of the revolutionary activities

The Post-revolution period and the War in Afghanistan. Within the first few months of its establishment, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran called for the withdrawal of the BBC World Service correspondent from Tehran. The new regime appeared even more distrustful of the Service than the previous one, and Tehran radio, in a commentary soon after the Revolution (May 1979), launched a scathing attack against the BBC, calling it "this mouthpiece of world-guzzling capitalism," (Walker, p. 118).

Apart from a few visits by World Service correspondents during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), there were no BBC correspondents in Persia until the end of 1990. After the death of Ayatollah Khomeini (June 1989), the Persian Service produced a program called "The Story of the Revolution," which was transmitted in 36 parts on a weekly basis. The story began with the Constitutional Revolution and continued to the year 1989, and included interviews with many important figures and is thus a valuable source of

contemporary oral history.

The World Service did, however, have correspondents in the Afghan capital, Kabul, and the Pakistani city of Peshawar, which has had large Afghan refugee population since the country's civil war began in the late 1970s. On 21st March 1989, Bāqer Moʿin, a senior producer in the Persian Service, conducted an interview with President Najibollah in Afghanistan, and this was followed by many more interviews with the dominant players in the Afghan conflicts, including Moḥammad Ẓāher Shah and various Afghan Mojāhedin leaders.

Current position. With the resumption of diplomatic relations between Persia and Britain in 1999, which closely followed the Persian government's official disassociation from Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa against Salman Rushdie, the Persian media somewhat toned down their vociferous criticism of the Service. These criticisms used to appear mostly in the form of radio, television and press commentaries and also in the state radio's "Review of Foreign Radios" weekly programs, which consistently criticized foreign Persian broadcasts, specifically the BBC – usually referred to as "rādio-ye dawlati-e Ingilis" for its supposedly biased reporting (regularly quoted in BBC Monitoring's weekly publication, *World Media*).

Currently, the BBC's Persian Service has listeners in a large region stretching from northern Iraq in the West, to Central Asia in the north, the Chinese border to the east, and Pakistan and the Persian Gulf Region in the south. Some 70 percent of the adult Afghan population are estimated to tune into the service (Moʿin, talk, 29th November 1999). In addition to radio, the Service now has an internet site, with text, pictures and (www.bbc.co.uk/persian). In addition to daily news and current affairs programs, such as the main evening program, "Jām-e Jahān-nemā," the Service carries weekly programs on art, culture and social issues.

BBC WORLD SERVICE MONITORING

BBC Monitoring, another product of the Second World War, was founded in August 1939, following a request by the British Government. The original location of the service was the estate of Wood Norton, near Evesham, in Oxfordshire. In April 1943, the Monitoring Service was moved closer to London, to its present location at Caversham Park, Reading. It has an established staff of some 400, in addition to over 120 engineering staff.

The task of Monitoring is to provide customers in Britain and abroad with reports and analysis based information gathered from radio and television stations as well news agencies, the press and the internet, from around the world, except the UK and the USA. Administratively, Monitoring is part of the BBC World Service, and is supported the annual Grant-in-aid. In addition to the rest of the BBC, the Britain's Foreign Office and its Ministry of Defense are among the major users of the output of the Monitoring Service.

Coverage and exchange of material. The Service has a number of overseas units – including East and Central Africa and Central Asia – to cover broadcasts from particular areas. It also has an exchange of monitored material with its United States equivalent, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), a department of the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA, whose dozen or so monitoring offices in Europe, the Middle East, West Africa, the Far East and the Americas are linked electronically with Monitoring worldwide. Between them the two organizations cover some 140 countries in more than 100 languages. The BBC side concentrates on West and East Europe (including Russia and the Central Asian Republics), parts of the Middle East and South Asia, North and East Africa and the Horn of Africa. FBIS covers the Far East, Southeast Asia and parts of the Middle East, including Jordan and Iraq.

Newsroom, editorial and publications. The Monitoring Service's Newsroom provides a fast 24-hour news-file in English passed by computer to BBC newsrooms, World Service foreign language sections and British Government departments. The file is also sold to outside news organizations and is particularly in demand when their correspondents are unable to report from inside a particular country due to war, revolutions and coups etc. Before the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the opening up of other countries, Monitoring often used to be ahead of other sources of news, and sometimes the only source for a particular country or region.

Each regional editorial department is responsible for compiling the "Summary of World Broadcasts" (SWB) for their respective regions. These are daily publications that carry texts of selected and transcribed foreign broadcast news, including commentaries, speeches by government and party leaders, interviews, conferences, treaties, statements, communiqués as well as important press articles newspapers. Among other products of Monitoring are the weekly *Economic Reports* and *World Media* publications. All these publications are sold to subscribers all over the world, including governments, universities, newspapers, commercial and industrial organiza-tions, and

private individuals such as researchers.

Apart from its availability in hard-copy, the SWB is now also being fed by line into commercial data bases in the USA and UK. The monitoring of satellite broadcasts came with the installation of a computer system in the late 1980's in order to meet the constant increase in radio, television and news agency output, together with advances in communications technology.

The Persian team. Persia was monitored both in Caversham by the BBC and by FBIS, from their unit in Cyprus until the early seventies, when the bulk of the operation was transferred to Monitoring at Caversham following the civil war in Cyprus. Up to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the Persian monitoring team was made up of three permanent and a number of temporary Persian staff. After the revolution, four new members were recruited to assist in the task of monitoring Iranian radio. With the collaboration of FBIS monitors in the Middle East and Cyprus, this meant that the Persian broadcasts, both official and unofficial (such as the "National Voice of Iran," broadcast from Baku, first monitored in April 1959) were being monitored on a round-the-clock basis by the BBC and FBIS, covering major events such as the hostage crisis and the war with Iraq. The Iranian media as well as clandestine and unofficial Persian, Azeri, Kurdish and Arabic broadcasts, continue to be monitored at a collaborative level with FBIS.

Current Position. Since the early nineties, the 10-member Persian team, along with the FBIS Persian language monitors and a number of contracted press translators, continue to cover all the media output of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including all major national and provincial press and publications, the Iranian news agency in Persian and English and the Internet.

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