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Postwar British/European

Franco-British TV Will Make History

World's First International Television Hook-up Gives Industry Big Sales Opportunity



Cameras on the Eiffel Tower will bring this bird's eye view of Paris to television screen throughout Britain on July 8, when the series of programmes from the French Capital commences. In the foreground can be seen the buildings in which the recent General Assembly of UNO was held.

The series of Franco-British joint television programmes to be broadcast from July 8-14 will focus public interest on television to a degree that has not been experienced for many months. They give the industry, and dealers in particular, an opportunity to stimulate sales not only during the quiet season when demand naturally drops, but to build up new prospective purchasers who will buy later in the year.

Many dealers will already have planned to make the most of this opportunity. Those who have not will find that there is just time if they act without delay. No retail shop selling television in any of the areas served by one of the BBC TV transmitters should be without a special window display and special demonstration facilities during the July 8-14 period, preferably backed by suitable local publicity and advertising in the local press and by other means.

The national newspapers, too, will be helping to build up public interest. For not only will the appeal of live pictures from the French capital catch the public imagination; but this first exchange of programmes is the first step towards international TV which will open up new horizons to every owner of a vision receiver.

In this feature the Trader has collected together all the facts about the Paris-London programmes so that dealers have as much information at their disposal to help in planning their own sales campaigns.



Bush Radio show how to Tie-up with "television's thrilling week." This half-page advertisement featuring the programmes appeared in the "Daily Express" last week. It included a coupon for details of the set and the name of the nearest Bush dealer. Bush radio have also put in a special window display in the Keith Prowse premises in Bond Street, London. Carried out in a light and airy style, it depicts a café scene. It has already aroused widespread interest among the London crowds of shoppers and visitors.

New Techniques

Techniques and equipment never used before will contribute to the series of relays. The programmes, to be introduced by the French Ambassador in London, and the British Ambassador in Paris, end with the celebrations in Paris on July 14, France's national day. They will be the first programmes to come from Paris to London. With the exception of a BBC outside broadcast from Calais to England in 1950, they will also be the first to be picked up in one country and broadcast "live" from another and the first ever to be transmitted simultaneously by two countries working on different television systems.

Thanks to months of work by engineers of the BBC and Rediodiffusion et Télévision Françaises and the British and French radio industries, viewers throughout the four television areas in Great Britain will see what French viewers are seeing – 17 programmes in all, showing Paris, Paris people and Paris life in all its aspects. Later it is intended to reverse the process and let Paris see British television programmes.

Only the Beginning

"This first international sharing of programmes is only the beginning," a Radio Industry Council spokesman said. "It will show that even countries using different television systems – in this case France on 819 lines and Britain on 405 – can interchange programmes.

"Programmes are the most expensive part of television and ability to share them will reduce costs and may bring TV within the means of countries so far hesitating to adopt it.

"All Europe could eventually be linked – an ideal which seemed impossible a few years ago when the countries failed to reach agreement on a standard system."

The television signals will come from the Eiffel Tower in Paris to Senate House, University of London in eight hops. There are two radio relay stations between Paris and Lille, where there is another TV transmitter. The route is then to Cassel, well known to British troops in two wars and the site of Field Marshal Montgomery's famous "No. 10 set" wireless headphone in the later stages of the last war. Here a British television camera will convert the picture to the BBC 405-line system.

The channel is crossed by radio relay between Alembon and Swingate, near Dover, a distance of 40 miles, and then to Wrotham and London. The longest jump is from Swingate to Wrotham, a distance of 49 miles.

Counting the two TV transmitters in Paris, one in Lille and four in Britain, the programmes will be transmitted simultaneously from seven stations – Europe's biggest TV "hook-up" yet. More countries want to be included next year, when the BBC have offered to take pictures of the Coronation as far as the English Channel for anyone to pick up on the other side.

Programme Details

The BBC's Television Service and Rediodiffusion et Télévision Françaises have planned close on a score of programmes from Paris. As a curtain raiser RTF will show French viewers six films about London, based on Stephen McCormack's "London Town" programmes.

The week will culminate in the Quatorze Juillet programmes, on France's National Day, July 14. The programmes which lead up to July 14 will show Paris in her many aspects, as a centre of the arts, as a centre of elegance, as a centre of gaiety. Viewers will see aspects of French sport in a soccer match and in a film of the Tour de France; they will join typical Parisians in a day's outing on the Marne at Joinville, they will go with the children to see the animals at the Jardin d'Acclimatation. The subject of all the programmes is Paris, and the people of Paris.

The main burden of the Franco-British Week will rest on the mobile camera units of RTF. BBC producers will assist their French colleagues, as will BBC commentators and engineers.

The Franco-British week will be inaugurated on July 8 by H.E. the French Ambassador and Mme. Massigli, who will speak from the gardens of the French Embassy in London, welcoming British viewers to Paris, where H.E. the British Ambassador and Lady Harvey will be waiting to greet them.

"Paris of the Arts" (July 9). – Four programmes on July 9 will form a composite picture representing Paris as a centre of the Arts. First comes a short French film, showing the artists' quarters in Ternes, Denfert-Rochereau and Montmatre. This is followed by a visit to the studio of the artist Gromaire. He is already known for his fine engravings, water colours and tapestries, and as his work is bold and full of contrast it should show up well on television.

From the artist's studio viewers will be introduced to one of the existential clubs, the Caves of ST. Germain des Prés, now popular with the intelligentsia and visited by tourists. One of these clubs will be reconstituted in a studio, and a selection of acts and turns, given by well-known figures from the various Caves will be brought into the studio for this programme. Finally, the mobile cameras will visit the Louvre, famous treasure-house of works of art.

Paris as a Centre of Elegance (July 10). – The Bateau Mouche is a Paris pleasure craft which plies up and down the Seine, and for this programme it will be anchored at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. A fashion parade will take place on the open decks of the Bateau Mouche; and on various small bedecked river craft which will be in the immediate neighbourhood of the Bateau. The parade will be watched by the cameras and described by the commentators and will also be overlooked by the public on the Pont du Trocadéro.

Mannequins from the famous fashion houses of Paris will show clothes for various river and sporting occasions as well as other fashions. At the base of the tower on the shore of the Seine, near which the Bateau Mouche is anchored there is a podium and part of the show will be televised from that location.

Mannequins of Paris have recently formed themselves into a club called the Cercle de Mannequins de Paris. The Cercle plans to give a party that night on the Bateau Mouche, and as the programme ends, viewers will say farewell to a gay scene of music and dancing.

Paris at Play (July 12 and 13). – Among the programmes reflecting the way the Parisian takes his day off will be a visit to Joinville sur Marne on July 12. Cameras and commentators will join the crowd enjoying itself on the riverside on a Saturday afternoon on the terrace of the café, "Chez Berretrôt," whose "patron" is one of the best-known sporting personalities in Paris.

Only July 13, a children's programme will be televised from the Jardin d'Acclimatation, Zoological Gardens in the Bois de Boulogne, which are approached by a little railway from the Port Maillot.

Paris as a Centre of Gaiety (July 8 and 12). – Among the programmes reflecting the "gay life" of Paris will be a cabaret from a studio on July 8 and from an outside location on July 12. These programmes are expected to be sophisticated and fast moving. The first will come from the second platform of the Eiffel Tower, and from time to time the cameras will pan around to show the city of Paris twinkling below. The second, which will come from one of the leading night-spots, will possibly include among the audience stars and celebrities who will be seen by the cameras and introduced to viewers.

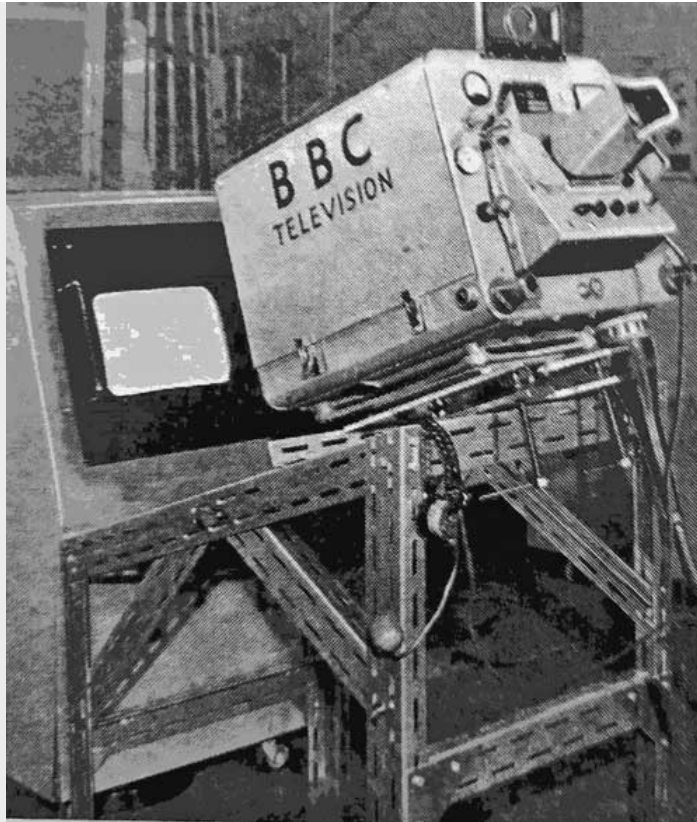
Paris on Quatorze Juillet (July 14). – Quatorze Juillet, ever since the fall of the Bastille, has been the great day of Liberté, Egalité and Fraternité. In the morning, viewers will see the annual march past of [sic] the French Services. The magnificent avenue of the Champs Elysées will be gay with flags and bunting, and the various units will come marching down from the Etoile and the Arc de Triomphe to the statue of Geroges Clemenceau where a wreath is laid and the President of the French Republic takes the salute.

In the evening there are torchlight processions, dancing in the street, buskers, and every form of popular entertainment. A Bal Populaire will be televised from a small square in the Bastille district, which was at the Revolution a haymarket, and from which, it is said, the hay and straw were taken to fire the Bastille. The scenes of gaiety will be televised until nearly midnight on the last day of the Franco-British programmes.

Technical Arrangements

Technical details of some of the equipment which is to be used to bring the programmes from Paris to London are of considerable interest and are summarized below. Preliminary tests were carried out some time ago and there have been continual discussions between engineers of Rediodiffusion et Télévision Françaises and the BBC.

Paris. - From the OB points vision signals will be conveyed to a receiving point at the Eiffel Tower by radio link. Three 9,000 Mc/s radio link units will be used, manufactured by the Campagnie des Compteurs. The programmes will be broadcast to French viewers in the Paris Region from the two RTF transmitters in Paris, one operating on the 819-line system and the other on the 441-line system (the old French standard). The RTF converter developed by the French firm Radio Industrie will be used to convert the 819-line pictures to the 441-line standard.



Courtesy of Dave Hills

Paris-Lille (136 miles). - The 819-line vision signals will be carried by the RTF experimental radio link with intermediate stations at Villers-Cotterets (44 miles north-east of Paris) and Saillly-Saillissel near Peronne (50 miles from Villers-Cotterets and 42 miles from Lille). This radio link works on a frequency of 900 Mc/s approximately and was manufactured by Campagnie Française Thomson Houston. This link is used by RTF to supply programmes to the Lille television transmitter until the permanent radio link now being installed by the French Post Office is ready.

Lille. - The programmes will be broadcast from the RTF at Lille for the benefit of viewers in that area.

Cassel. - The Lille transmissions on 180 Mc/s approximately will be picked up at Cassel by a special receiver manufactured by Société Desmet. RTF will also install a temporary radio link working on 9,000 Mc/s approximately, manufactured by Campagnie des Compteurs. The signals thus received will be fed to the converter developed by the BBC Research Department, for changing pictures from French standards to British standards (819-405 lines).

Cassel-Alembon (18 miles). - BBC radio link on 7,000 Mc/s approximately. Equipment manufactured by Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co., Ltd.

Alembon-Swingate (Dover) (40 miles). - BBC radio link on 4,500 Mc/s approximately. Equipment manufactured by Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd.

Swingate-Wrotham (49 miles). - BBC radio link on 4,500 Mc/s approximately. Equipment manufactured by Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd.

Wrotham-London (23 miles). - BBC radio link on 4,500 Mc/s approximately. Equipment manufactured by Standard Telephones and Cables, Ltd.



Sketch map of the route by which the TV signals will be taken from Paris to London and thence to the four British Television Transmitters.

Work on the installation and testing of the converter at Cassel and of the temporary links between Cassel and London started on June 19 and this work will continue up to the date of the first programme transmission.

Technical responsibility for the camera equipment and for the picking up of programmes in Paris will be in the hands of RTF. At various times during the week July 8-14, four different types of camera equipment will be used, namely: Pye, Ltd. (Image-Orthicon); Radio Industrie (Image-Orthicon); Campagne Française Thomson Houston (Photicon); and Radio Industrie (Image-Iconoscope).

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EUROPEAN TV NETWORK

Microwave-relay or coaxial-cable runs thousands of miles long are impossible in Europe. In a scant 750 miles, the engineer has to contend with problems of national boundaries and differences in definition standards and systems of transmission, and even different national tastes in programs! This international network was therefore considered a mild triumph in the European television world. Problems of changing standards and systems were solved optically at one blow, by simply rephotographing the programs from a television receiver screen. Thus at Paris, a 441-line TV camera was focused on an 819-line receiver kinescope screen to change the 819-line picture to 441 lines for the older Paris transmitter, and again at Cassel, where the program changed over to the British 405-line standard. Besides being picked up by televiewers in France, England, and Scotland, the programs were received on numbers of Belgian TV sets direct from the Lille Transmitter.

The original artwork and description of the system from which this material was prepared was created and supplied to us by our friend and contributor A. V. J. Martin, editor of *Television* (Paris, France).

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