A Life Rewound

Part Two

Chapter 11

I had now teamed up with Cyril Bennett, and for the next few years we collaborated on several programmes, and we became known as A-R's writer/director team. I first met Cyril on *Conflict* and we hit it off straight away, sharing similar ideas about the sort of programmes that would be exciting to make. He came to television from journalism, writing for 'Illustrated' and other papers, and the reason we got on so well was that we readily accepted each other's strength and weaknesses – journalism and film-making. His repertoire of hysterically funny Jewish jokes became a byword in Television House. We became good friends.

We came up with the idea to do a full-length programme on Adolf Hitler. The motivation was to remind those who had forgotten, or were too young to remember, of the events of the recent past; to try to find out how it was possible for an enlightened nation to be seduced by this monster.

The opportunity came when, early in 1959, I was asked to choose a subject for the next major project for A-R's Features Department. Cyril and I went to John McMillan, Controller of Programmes, with the idea of making a Hitler programme. At that time it was a novel idea for ITV to tackle such a large subject. We asked for and were given a one-hour slot, and it turned out to be ITV's first documentary of that length. We had the naïve notion that we could tell the story of the rise and fall of Hitler in 60 minutes, and soon learnt that there were limitations to how much one could crowd into one hour. But we had a go – and it became frantic when we realised that transmission was only four weeks away.

By the end of that day, we had blocked out the ingredients for the programme and set the production in motion. We called it *Tyranny - the Years of Adolf Hitler.* We recruited Kenneth Harris, from the 'Observer' to be the presenter, met him for dinner that night to discuss his role, and also to select an authoritative historian/consultant plus potential experts or eyewitnesses to take part in the programme.

We were lucky to recruit historian Alan Bullock (later Lord Bullock) to be the consultant. Author of the internationally renowned biography, 'Hitler: A Study in Tyranny', he also agreed to appear on the show and helped us to persuade Lord Strang to take part. He had been Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, and had accompanied Anthony Eden and, later, Neville Chamberlain on their missions to Germany, and had observed Hitler at close quarters. He raised the interesting point in the programme of whether the presence of television in the thirties might have altered the course of history. Sefton Delmer also agreed to take part. As a young man, he became the 'Daily Express' Bureau Chief in Berlin. In Germany's 1932 general election, Delmer travelled with Hitler on his private aircraft. He was also with Hitler when he inspected the 1933 Reichstag Fire, and in his presence heard Hitler say: "This is a God-given signal! If this fire, as I believe, turns out to be the handiwork of Communists, then there is nothing that shall stop us now crushing out this murder pest with an iron fist."

Archive film research for the programme now became a priority. I wanted to use as much German footage as possible and was surprised at the avalanche of material. It was fascinating to see how the German film industry had been geared to Hitler's propaganda

machine. Leni Riefenstahl (personally appointed by Goebbels for the production of documentary films, and still sitting pretty in Germany at the time, with all the rights to her films restored to her) was responsible for the epics that made such sickening viewing for us. Technically, these films were brilliant. Twenty sync units were under her command for the 1934 Nuremberg Rally *The Triumph of the Will*. I tremble to think of the shooting ratio. Copies of these epics were lodged with the Imperial War Museum, and as all that material was classed as war booty, no fees were paid to Riefenstahl. So, with all this footage, German newsreels, film from the War Office, Movietone and Plato, we set to work. I learned from the archivist in the Imperial War Museum that throughout the war there was a weekly exchange between British and German newsreels, which was orchestrated in neutral Lisbon.

Cyril Bennett quickly produced a script outline, and from this it became clear that we had to find some personal testimony, as all the millions of feet of film failed to reveal anything of the man behind the public image. A quick telephone call was made to a young Austrian journalist in Innsbruck who had unique contacts with all sorts of famous and infamous people in Europe. I made a date to meet him in Munich the following day. Reg Courtney-Browne, our chief researcher, came with me as a 'strong man' because I was unsure of what I was letting myself in for. Also, this was my first visit to Germany since my army days; twelve years had elapsed and I was intrigued to find out how I would react on seeing Germans of my age or older, especially those in uniform such as customs officials and police – speculating what their role might have been in the war. It became a preoccupation which was to last for several years.

We arrived in Munich on the last day of 'Fasching', a six-week carnival ending in a day of national merrymaking – people went about their business wearing false noses, funny hats, and grotesque make-up. (The mechanic refuelling our aircraft in Frankfurt wore a bandaged false nose dripping with 'blood'). In this bizarre atmosphere of beer and sausages we met Gunter Peis, our Austrian contact, and through him an extraordinary collection of Hitler's 'nearest', who were to make their public debut on worldwide television.

I hired a preview theatre and turned it into a studio, complete with a German cameraman and sound recordist, both sworn to secrecy, and I spent six days coaxing, persuading and finally filming Hitler's sister, pilot, chauffeur, and his adjutant together with his wife. They were secretly smuggled into the preview theatre by Peis, and had agreed to cooperate provided I restricted the interviews to personal questions about Hitler. I did not expect to hear anything new about him, but what really surprised me was that they were willing to talk at all – and fourteen years since their defeat, they showed undiminished respect and adoration for him. His sister referred to him simply as *mein Bruder* and the others as *der Chef* or *der Führer*. These are extracts from the interviews – they don't amount to much today – but in 1959 they grabbed the headlines:

Paula Wolf (7 years younger than her brother Adolf**)**

"When my brother, Adolf, was about two years old he once climbed up a ladder to the top rung. Mother heard that he was up there on the ladder and was frightened to death. She coaxed him to come down. She said: "Be a good boy, come down." He didn't move but stayed up and was very pleased with himself that no one could get at him.

We had a very good mother. My brother loved mother especially. When mother said anything, he obeyed, and when father said anything, he always went against it.

He had a real dislike of the female sex, up to the moment when he was grown up. And when mother wanted him to get up in the morning, she only had to say to me, "Go and give him a kiss." She said it not very loud but still for him to hear, and as soon as he heard the word 'kiss' and that he was to get one from me, he was out of bed in a flash, because he just couldn't stand that.

When we children played 'Red Indians', my brother Adolf was always the leader. All the others did what he told them, they must have had an instinct that his will was stronger than theirs. I next saw my brother Adolf in 1921, after twelve years, and there I was face to face with a man who knew exactly what he wanted."

Frau Wilma Schaub (wife of Hitler's Adjutant)

"Those rumours that Adolf Hitler was supposed to be abnormal over women are false. As the wife of the man who was his Adjutant for twenty years, I often had occasion to watch him in private and when in the company of ladies. I can assure you that he was definitely a very normal man. He loved women and loved to be in the presence of feminine beauty. I knew all about the relationship between him and Eva Braun from 1931 right up to the end. I also knew about many other love affairs."

Obergruppenführer Julius Schaub (Hitler's Adjutant)

(1924) "*While we were prisoners together at Landsberg, Adolf Hitler spent the mornings working on his book 'Mein Kampf'. After supper he used to read out several chapters from his book. There were discussions; for us that was an education, because at that time we hadn't realised just what AdoIf Hitler was planning to do."*

(1933) "*Adolf Hitler came in and joined us in the room in the Reich Chancellery. He came from seeing the President. And of his own accord, he said, "Friends, no power in the world will ever get me out of this place alive." Maybe it was a premonition of the bitter end in 1945. He also said, 'There's no more private life for me. From now on, all my work is going to be for my people.' And that was the reason why he never entered into matrimony."*

(1938) "I *made a lot of journeys with the Führer in the car. I never saw Adolf Hitler moved like he was on our triumphal entry into Linz. The crowd went mad with joy. As we entered the Town Hall he said to me, 'And now a lifelong dream has been fulfilled*."

(1943) "*Adolf Hitler's state of health got a lot worse because of the set-backs on the front, especially after the battle of Stalingrad. He couldn't sleep, his nerves got worse and he had to take to medicine. But I must kill all those rumours - his brain was clear right up to his death."*

(1945) "I *entered his bedroom in the Bunker with him. On the table there was a 7.5mm pistol. He went up to it. I got a terrible shock. He cocked the gun – but no, it wasn't the last hour yet. He was only making sure it was loaded."*

Flug Kapitän Hans Bauer (Hitler's personal Pilot)
(1945) *"Approximately one-half to three-quarters of an hour before Hitler's death on the 30th April, he sent for me. When I reported, he took both my hands in his and said to me, 'Bauer, I want to say good-bye to you.' I was so stupefied I could not speak. This parting took twenty minutes. He said 'Bauer, I have two more orders for you. The first is: I make you personally responsible for burning the corpses of my wife and me. The second is: see to it that Bormann gets through to Doenitz. Doenitz will become my natural successor. I have given Bormann large numbers of orders and documents to take with him to Doenitz.' All the time I was struck by Hitler's clear way of speaking. I couldn't believe that this was to be the finish."*

Obersturmbannführer Erich Kempka (Hitler's Chauffeur)
(1945) "W*hen I saw the Chief for the last time, I definitely had the feeling that the end was near. But there was no change in him that you could see – not in his character, nor anything else. He said goodbye and dismissed me. Next day, when the Chief was dead, I went to the Bunker just as they were carrying out the corpse. Then came Martin Bormann with Eva Braun in his arms. I took her body away from him and carried her along behind Adolf Hitler. We placed these two bodies side by side in the garden. I had placed on me the exceptionally difficult, moral duty of pouring petrol on them and setting fire to them. The corpses burnt from half-past-one until half-past seven in the evening."*

This last sentence sounded like a well rehearsed, if rather bizarre statistic. But it was during the preliminary softening-up discussions with these people, that I heard some unfamiliar stories about Hitler. How, for instance, he learned to mistrust his own press soon after becoming Chancellor. Once he ordered a certain article to be suppressed. When he went through his own editions of the morning papers he saw that his order had been obeyed. But, by pure chance, he later picked up his chauffeur's paper while he was being driven to a reception. This happened to be a later edition and it carried the banned article. From that day onwards, he cancelled the Chancellery's subscription for papers and magazines. Instead, he ordered that they should be bought in the street from different newspaper kiosks each morning.

I was told that he was a great believer in England and her Parliamentary system, and that he was convinced that the future of Germany and Britain was closely linked; together they would be the world power bloc and dictate to the other nations. He had, in fact, completed a manuscript of a new book, which he had called, 'My Alliance with England'. But on the day our Ambassador handed him the note declaring war, Hitler, in a blind fury, stormed out of the room into his private study, threw his manuscript on the carpeted floor and set fire to it.

One of his habits, I was told, was that during the War he only went to bed after the last Allied aircraft had left German air space. He must have had many sleepless nights. I also learned that he was the 'Dictator without a bank account'. He did not draw one pfennig from the State in the form of salary or expenses, but lived entirely on the royalties of *Mein Kampf.*

The Ehe Verlag, publishers of the *Volkischer Beobachter,* handled this book and his royalties. Whenever Hitler required cash, his adjutant, Schaub, rang up this publisher and drew out the necessary amount. They, in turn, made a huge profit from the interest

on Hitler's money, which grew to a big fortune. In fact, when he killed himself he was worth five million marks.

For me, those six days in Munich were both fascinating and nauseating. Fascinating because of these new stories I heard, and nauseating because I heard them from the mouths of people who revered Hitler as much then as they had ever done. It was hard having to suppress my thoughts. I forced myself to concentrate solely on the end product – an interesting, and hopefully, worthwhile programme.

Back in London, the physical work of getting the programme on the air was in full swing. I had brought back a case full of original photographs, documents and gramophone records – in fact, we were embarrassed by the abundance of good material, but now had to face the agony of deciding what to exclude.

Then the midnight sessions started, writing commentary, translating the German dialogue, editing the film elements to be inserted in to the live programme, and recording and dubbing the final soundtrack.

Cyril and I frequently met Kenneth Harris to tie up the contents of the studio side, and with my PA, Joan Jarratt, feverishly typing the camera script (which she got far too late from me, as usual) we were ready to move to Wembley Studios. The twelve-foot blow-up of Hitler's face dominated Studio 2, and his baleful, piercing eyes followed us everywhere.

I thought up a technique of integrating the live studio elements with the film clips, to make these transitions both logical and seamless. I asked the set designer to make large photographic blow-ups of the very first frame of each of the film clips. These were framed and hung from the lighting gantry – it made the studio look like an art exhibition. When Kenneth Harris turned to camera, after a live studio interview, to introduce the next bit of film, I would cue the camera to track past him to the appropriate picture frame, cue the operator to start the telecine machine, and as the film started, cue the vision mixer to cut to the clip – making the still picture come to life. All very primitive, but it worked. Looking back on it now, it is a graphic reminder of the many opportunities we were able to exploit in those early days by trying something which had never been done before.

And on March 4th 1959, with headlines from the tabloids screaming *"Hitler's Sister Breaks Her Silence On ITV Tonight"* we went on the air, and *Tyranny - the Years of Adolf Hitler* attracted a huge audience. It was No.2 in that week's top ten with close to ten million viewers. It also sparked off an avalanche of press cuttings – this is a small selection:

James Thomas - *Daily Express*:
As a TV documentary on Hitler – it was one step ahead of anything before – documentary which did not rant, which did not spark off phoney argument, which handled its subject with sober authority and careful good language.

Peter Black - *Daily Mail*:
The editing was brilliant. The programme stands comparison with any of the similar films made by the N.B.C. Twentieth Century series.

Television Today:
More documentaries like this from A-R and they will well rival the BBC in this important field.

Most live programmes like *Tyranny* were not telerecorded 'off-air, but were sadly lost into the ether. By 1959, A-R had acquired the first two Ampex video recording machines from the States, with its extremely costly 2-inch Quad videotapes, and they were mainly used for recording programmes in advance of transmission, and then for their playback. But the film elements of these programmes, clips as they are called, which would have been simple to archive, were also disposed of. Nevertheless, I had had always assumed that the interviews I made with Hitler's cronies had survived, because I was told that they had been sold to American Television soon after our transmission.

Twenty-seven years later, in 1986, a curious event happened. A seminar was about to be staged at BAFTA, the subject being Programme Preservation, and I was on the panel. This caused me to have a belated search for my German footage, being the only remains of the *Tyranny* programme. But I failed, and came to the sad conclusion that this historical material had really disappeared. A-R had lost its franchise in 1968, and I could not find a survivor from the rump of the company who might have had some knowledge of where to look for long forgotten records to help trace the missing film.

I told my story of this lost material to the assembled audience, and at the end of the afternoon session, Richard King came up to me with some news. He was a Regional Executive of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, but a mere schoolboy when *Tyranny* was transmitted twenty-seven years earlier. That year, 1959, he had been given an open-reel quarter-inch audio tape recorder, and with a growing interest in history, he decided to record the programme. He graphically described his method. He tied his microphone to the back of a chair and pushed it up against the side of his television set that housed the loudspeaker. He had to ask his mother to put down her knitting, as his mike was picking up the clicks of her needles. He then made a remarkably good audio recording of the whole programme – including, of course, the German interviews. He let me make a copy from his master tape and I was able to marry up the audio of the interviews with stills taken during the filming sessions in Munich all those years ago. I have put this to good use as part of my portfolio of programmes when I have presented them at seminars, colleges and museums.

And just now – surprise-surprise – in January 2005, as I was gathering the photographs for these pages, and as Jane was proof-reading this chapter, a call came out of the blue from a Munich-based documentary film company making a programme on Hitler's private life for the German ZDF Television network. Apparently, they had scoured the world's archives for footage of Paula Wolf and their research had led them to a documentary made in the United States in 1960 called *Family Hitler,* containing all the material of Hitler's cronies as they had appeared in *Tyranny* the year before. They invited me over to Munich to identify the lost material, and it was quite spooky to view it again after forty-six years. They interviewed me, then and there, for their film, recalling my impressions, especially of Paula Wolf. It just goes to show that one must never give up looking for lost treasures.

* * * *

Immediately after *Tyranny,* we were given the opportunity to make another 60-minute documentary. This time Cyril Bennett chose the subject – a programme we called *Israel Rises - The Birth of a Nation*. The link between this and our last documentary became even more obvious the moment we started our three weeks location filming, as we met many people who were tragic witnesses to Hitler's regime of extermination.

As we travelled from the Galilee in the north to the Negev in the south, we never ceased to be amazed at the surprisingly arrogant confidence, happiness and sense of achievement written on the faces of the younger Israelis. Although it is no larger than Wales, Israel is a long, narrow country and our two camera cars travelled over 3,000 miles to many fascinating locations. But this was, first and last, a story about people. Instead of handling the programme as a straight objective historical analysis as in *Tyranny,* we were faced with a wealth of human material to capture and record.

I enjoyed hearing the story of the Canadian reporter who, after touring the country for several weeks, told his guide: "Fine! Now take me to the Jewish quarter." This shows the impact that Israel makes on the first-time observer – transforming the Jew into an Israeli, adding to the traditional ethnic and religious awareness a new national identity. Filming in a Kibbutz brought this home to this first-timer. I became aware of the many cultural problems stacking up, and having to be solved, for the successful integration of the many Jews seeking a home in Israel from places, diverse as Yemen and Morocco. At that time, one was barely aware of the build-up to the continuing strife the future had in store for this new nation.

We managed to arrange an interview with Prime Minister Ben Gurion, who led the struggle to establish the State of Israel in 1948. We were to be ready for filming in his office at eight in the morning; Cyril and I and the crew, rose very early in the apartment we had rented in Tel Aviv, and motored to Jerusalem. As the Prime Minister's office was lit by seven-thirty with the camera in position, we went to a café opposite his office building for breakfast. It was a beautiful sunny morning and we occupied a long trestle table on the pavement, with benches on each side. I sat on a stool at one end, when a small elderly man with flowing white hair and open-necked shirt came up and spoke:

"You must be the television team from England who have come to see me. Can I join you for coffee?"

Ben Gurion swung his legs over the bench next to me. I ordered some coffee, and we had an interesting conversation:

"What sort of things do you show on television?"

I told him that we had just transmitted a programme about the rise and fall of Hitler.

"Surely people in England wouldn't be that interested to look at such a thing?"

I explained that it happened to be the second most popular programme that week. In fact, nearly ten million people viewed it.

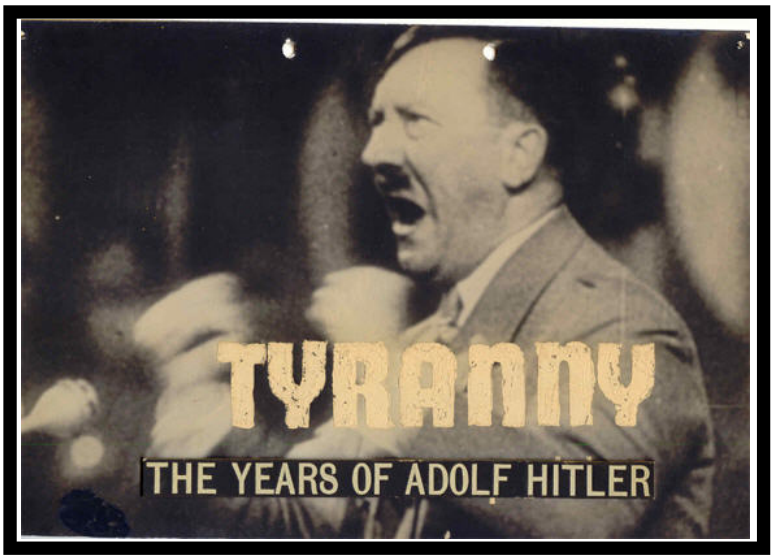
"Nearly 10 million people?" asked the Prime Minster of an eleven year-old country with a population of under two million – and without a television service. "Nearly 10 million people? Have they nothing better to do?"

Just as with *Tyranny,* this was a live studio-based broadcast, and Kenneth Harris once more was the Presenter. With him in the studio were experts on Israel: Ambassador Abba Eban, Lady Megan Lloyd George, whose father had signed the Balfour Declaration, and Professor Laurence Rushbrook Williams.

The ‘morning-after press’ was mixed:

> Maurice Wiggin - *The Sunday Times*:
> *In the not-overcrowded field of solid information, ITV had a very good week with Associated-Rediffusion's massive, searching study of a nation nascent, “Israel Rises”.*
>
> Peter Black - *Daily Mail*:
> *The director, and scriptwriter compiled a picture, which despite some curious omissions gave a stirring impression of a country vibrating with a sense of purposeful destiny. The historical record, the interviews, the final analyses were cool and informative. The programme most commendably kept a level head amid emotional tugs.*
>
> *The Jewish Chronicle*:
> *Israel Through A Clouded Lens. Mr. Morley’s Mistake.*
> *Are Israelis to be simply divided into the category of pathetic immigrant, bearded rabbi or trigger-happy youth? Is Kenneth Harris gleefully looking forward to Israel's early demise? Was this the best that producer Peter Morley and his ITV team could do?*
> *Using nearly every technical trick in the box, the production mixed film shot with studio interview to the point of irritation and irrelevance. But, basically, the major mistake was the attempt to stuff the history of Israel into one hour, less several minutes of commercials.*
> *The programme was rescued from complete inconsequence only by the interview with Ben-Gurion and the display of diplomatic patience presented by Abba Eban under a barrage of loaded questions delivered by Kenneth Harris with the bite of a prosecuting counsel. And yet it was the same ITV team, which only recently dealt so magnificently with the story of Hitler's Germany. Perhaps; Mr. Morley should be given the benefit of the doubt, and "Israel Rises" set aside as "just one of those things."*

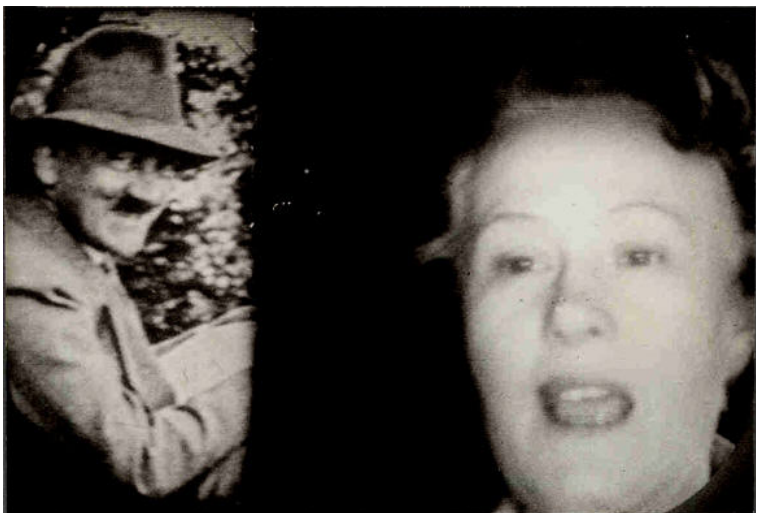
This rather skewed view in *The Jewish Chronicle* at least highlighted the limitations of television as a purveyor of detailed information. In order to hold an audience with its notoriously short attention span, there is just so much one dare pile into 60-minutes. The conflict, as I have said before, between what to include and what to leave unsaid is frustrating. If one were to print out every word uttered in a non-fictional film or programme, it would result in the thinnest of pamphlets. *Israel Rises,* in spite of these limitations, was appreciated by a large television audience, which stayed with it to the end. But the contribution it made to a deeper understanding of Israel’s role in the Middle East, and what the future might hold for the country, was modest.



Main title caption card used in 1959 live transmission

Warming up Hitler's sister, Paula Wolf

"When we children played Red Indians, my brother Adolf was always the leader. All the others did what he told them, they must have had an instinct that his will was stronger than theirs."



Frau Wilma Shaub (wife of Hitler's Adjutant)

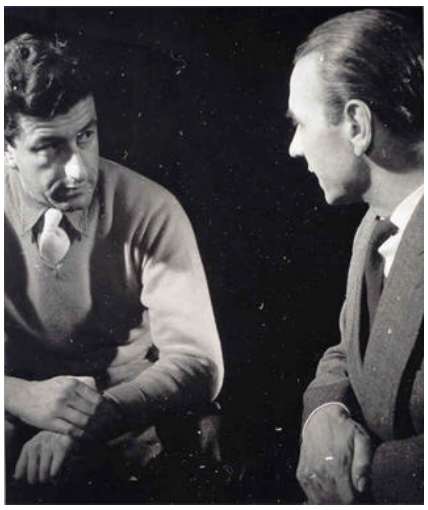
"Those rumours that Adolf Hitler was supposed to be abnormal over women are false. As the wife of the man who was his Adjutant for over twenty yeas, I can assure you that he was definitely a very normal man."

Obergruppenführer Julius Schaub. Hitler's Adjutant proudly shows me his photo collection with pictures of himself with "der Führer".

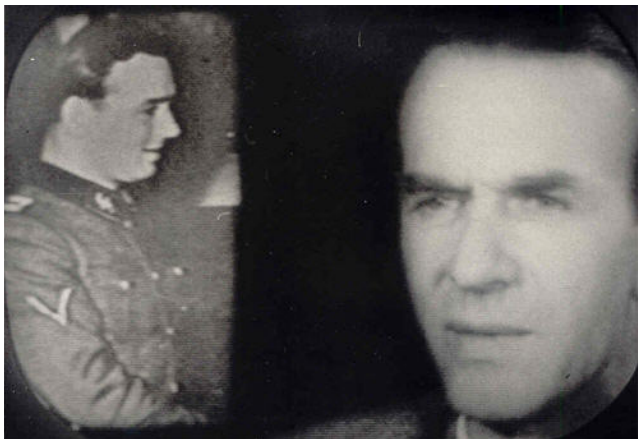
"I entered his bedroom in the bunker with him. On the table there was a 7.5 mm pistol. He went up to it. I got a terrible shock. He cocked the gun but no, it wasn't the last hour yet. He was only making sure that it was loaded."

Flug Kapitän Hans Bauer, Hitler's personal pilot

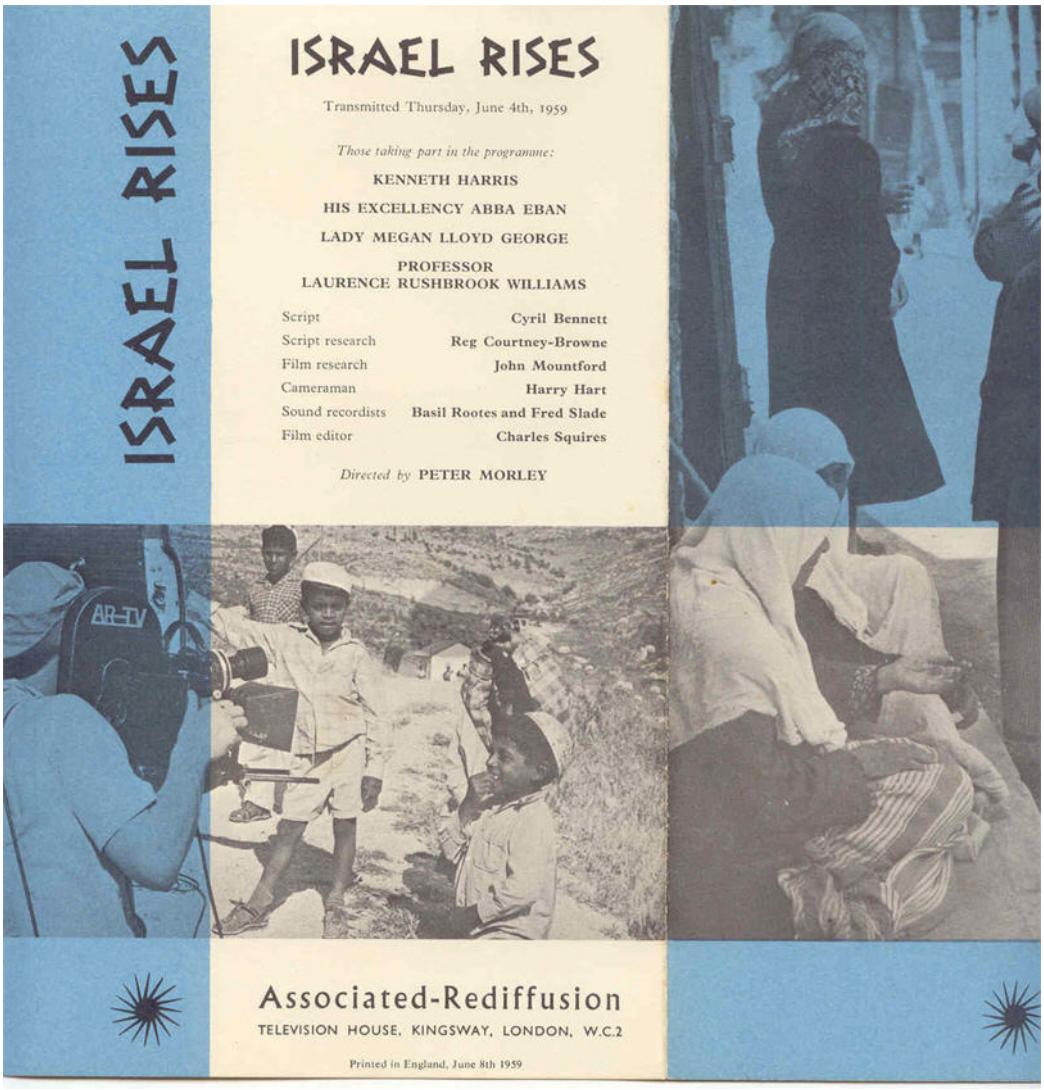
"Bauer, I want to say good-bye to you. I have two more orders for you. The first is: I make you personally responsible for burning the corpses of my wife and me."



Erich Kempka, Hitler's Chauffeur, sharing some grisly statistics with me



"I had placed on me the exceptionally difficult, moral duty of pouring petrol on them and setting fire to them. The corpses burnt from half-past one until half-past seven in the morning."



With Cyril Bennett interviewing Prime Minister Ben Gurion

Chapter 12

What with *Tyranny* and *Israel Rises,* the first half of 1959 had been pretty hectic – now the next six months would turn out to be an adventure of a totally different kind.

In 1954, Benjamin Britten had completed his opera *The Turn of the Screw*. It is based on Henry James's novella, written in 1898, and together with the librettist Myfanwy Piper, Britten created, what some connoisseurs now consider to be his finest opera. It had its inaugural performance at the Teatro la Fenice in Venice in September 1954 and opened at London's Sadler's Wells Theatre three weeks later.

I didn't know anything about opera, other than listening to the odd radio performance from Covent Garden, and I was totally unfamiliar with Britten's music. My sister, Anne, had been his ardent fan for a number of years, and now managed to drag me, somewhat reluctantly, to the London premiere of *The Turn of the Screw* – my first visit to an opera house – with Benjamin Britten conducting. I was totally captivated. So much so, that I went to the next three performances, this time standing at the back of the stalls, which was still possible at Sadler's Wells in those days. It was an extraordinary experience for me and left a lasting impression.

Five years later, with a fair amount of programme-making under my belt, it occurred to me that Britten could have written this opera for television. It is a story, which is intimate, claustrophobic, haunted and haunting, with a small cast and small orchestra. In the novella, *The Turn of The Screw*, Henry James deliberately sets out to force his readers to apply their imaginations to a number of situations, which he only indicates in a most tantalising way. Indeed, it is the individual interpretation one is compelled to make that adds to the excitement of the story. Benjamin Britten and Myfanwy Piper had transformed this into a most thrilling and satisfying experience on the stage. I was convinced that the intimacy of its atmosphere and the scale of the relationship between the characters were ideally suited to the television medium, so I harboured a desire that one day I would bring it to the small screen. I knew that many problems would have to be resolved in addition to the obvious technical ones, such as the balance between the real and the abstract, and preserving the ambiguity of who was haunting who; also, how to present the ghosts without the intrusion of the mechanics of television. The guiding principle from the outset for a television production would have to be its simplicity, so that the richness of the score and the essential conflicts of the characters could predominate.

At this point, I must recall the hoops Associated-Rediffusion had been through in its first four franchise years, having been awarded, in 1955, what was considered the 'plum' contract – London, Monday to Friday. A-R's initial investment was heavy, and by its first anniversary of going on the air, the company had lost £3 million. At that time, Associated Newspapers wanted to get out of this partnership and sold 80% of its shares to Rediffusion. The 'Associated' was soon to be dropped from the company's name. By 1959, things were very different. The annual profits had reached £2.7 million,

and senior management began to think about the company's future, girding itself for the dreaded franchise renewal, five years on in 1964. To this end they went on a mission to score 'brownie points' by backing programmes that were out of the ordinary, and that might bring prestige to the company and chalk up some plus marks on the ITA's franchise scorecard. Support of the arts was on the agenda, with both the London Symphony Orchestra and the Hallé Orchestra benefiting from this largesse, not only with financial support but also with a spate of outside-broadcast concerts finding a place in the television schedules.

When, early in 1959, I decided to put in a plea for A-R to back me in staging a television version of *The Turn of the Screw,* I was unaware of ITV franchise politics, far too busy making programmes, but with hindsight I realise that my timing was fortuitous.

I had a very good relationship with John McMillan, the Programme Controller, boosted by the success of the Hitler and Israel documentaries, which enjoyed a good press and high viewer ratings. I was, temporarily, a blue-eyed boy on A-R's executive floor and, with fingers crossed, went to see McMillan.

"John, you owe me," I said.

"All right, Pete, (the only person ever to call me that) what are you selling?"

"I want to do 'The Turn of the Screw.'"

"What is it?"

"It's a ghost story by Henry James."

"But you are not a drama director – you have never directed a play in your life."

"John, it's not a play."

"What is it then?"

"It's an opera."

He nearly fell off his chair.

"You must be out of your mind. Who wrote it?"

"Benjamin Britten."

I feared that he was going to throw me out of his office. Instead, he glanced up at the ceiling and I could see his mind ticking over fast – John McMillan was no slouch.

"Come and see me next week – I can't promise anything."

When we met again, he wanted further details. I said that there were hurdles to cross, the main one being Britten's approval and his collaboration. But there were other conditions that I knew were going to be very unpopular, but I had to clear these before I approached Britten. The first one was that I wanted to make it clear to Britten that I would not allow one note to be cut from his score. John agreed after I explained that the work was in two acts, each one lasting approximately sixty minutes. And then I stipulated the really tough one: "No commercial breaks." I thought that this would kill the whole project stone dead. To my surprise, he saw the point and said the two acts may have to be interrupted by the ITN News. As it turned out, the ITV network stipulated that the acts had to be separated and aired over two nights – possibly the longest commercial break in history!

"How about the budget for the production?" I asked.

"Leave that to me, I will take care of that," came the reply, and I thought: 'What a wonderful way to run a shop.'

This was typical John McMillan. He knew as little about opera as I did; yet he trusted me not to let him down. Tragically, those exciting times, when it was possible for a brave entrepreneur, like John, to call all the shots, disappeared a long time ago. The bean-counters were destined to take over.

The time had arrived to sell the concept to Benjamin Britten. I arranged a date with his secretary and drove to the East coast, to Aldeburgh, a journey I was to repeat several times that year. I checked in at the Brudenell Hotel, on the edge of the North Sea, and set off for the Red House, which Britten shared with Peter Pears. I had been asked to be in time for lunch, and when they both appeared, I was asked to join them for a drink; it took no time at all for the ice to break. I soon got the impression that Britten was intrigued by the idea of trying something new. Television was new, and rather foreign to him, and he said that he liked experimenting, and seemed very open to ideas and new challenges. Peter Pears, who had created the role of Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, was also excited by the thought of a television version. Sadly, this time he would not be able to take part as he had other commitments in Switzerland that would clash with the crucial production dates.

I made it very clear to them both from the start that I wished to retain the spirit, style and attitude, in fact, the very essence of the original production, but in order to achieve that for television, there would have to be adaptations. That idea was well received.

After lunch, I joined Britten on one of his constitutional walks along Aldeburgh's deserted beach. The noise of the sea breaking on the pebbles must have inspired so much of his music, and I was aware of my good fortune to be in the company of this great composer. He was probing me about ITV and the sort of programmes I had made. He asked what my opera experience was, and when I told him that I did not know anything about opera, and could not even read one note of music, he laughed and said that we would probably get on quite well with each other. The look of relief on my face must have been palpable, and I got the distinct feeling that he thought this enterprise was worth trying.

When we got back to his house, he said that he wanted to discuss the project with his publishers, Boosey & Hawkes, and suggested a date for my next visit. He also wanted to consult Stephen Reiss, the General Manager of the Aldeburgh-based English Opera Group, which would provide the know-how of the original production and crucially, the cast, the Group's orchestra, John Piper's stage and costume designs, and the consultancy services of Colin Graham, the Group's present producer. He hoped to persuade John Piper to come up to Suffolk for the next meeting and stay with him at the Red House, as there were design issues to be discussed. Piper had worked closely with Britten for a number of years, and had created the designs for most of his operas, and I was looking forward to meeting him.

I went back to London to continue to familiarise myself with the opera and to marshal my thoughts and reasoning for all the points that had to be resolved. I had purchased the Decca set of long-playing records of the original production, and they had become my bible. I spent many hours listening to these and annotating the score with some early ideas concerning visualisation. I had taken a couple of lessons to help me read the score, and that proved to be essential when, later, it came to the final broadcast.

There was one major conundrum that now had to be solved; it had been worrying me for some time. The opera is divided into two acts, with eight scenes to each act.

The end of each of these scenes is linked to the next scene by musical 'Variations', preparing you for the scene to come; the music helping you to anticipate the next turn of the screw.

For me, this is some of the most magnificent music Britten has composed. In the original stage production the stage went black, the auditorium was in darkness and one was not aware of minor scene changes; usually replacing some of John Piper's glorious gauzes that predominated the set. This device of creating total darkness achieved an atmosphere in which the audience was able to listen to this music undisturbed by stage distractions. That now was my problem. One simply could not plunge a television network, let alone a commercial one, into screen blackout – and some of the 'Variations' lasted two minutes! I was well aware that after three seconds the audience would expect a caption to come up stating that 'normal service will be resumed shortly'.

I was able to put forward a solution to this problem on my next visit to the Red House. John Piper had come up to Aldeburgh, and he, too, made me feel very much at ease. My proposal was for the cameras to explore specially created abstract paintings for the 'Variations', which would be in harmony with the music, and enhance it, without causing a visual distraction. Britten was really intrigued by this and asked John Piper what he thought. He in turn suggested that I should come and see him to take this idea one stage further. I gladly accepted.

The following week Michael Yates accompanied me for this important visit. He had been Head of Television Design at the BBC and took up this position with Associated-Rediffusion when ITV started. He was a brilliant set designer and he was now going to interpret the original stage set for television, retaining John Piper's original Venice and Sadler's Wells concept.

Fawley Bottom, near Henley-on-Thames, was John and Myfanwy Piper's home, so now I was also able to meet the opera's librettist. She acted as a very perceptive and enthusiastic sounding board as the ideas for the production evolved, and that was very encouraging.

We were given a conducted tour of Piper's huge studio – a real eye-opener. I was struck by the prolific output from this great artist, including examples of what he called 'my experiments'. One was a huge galvanised tank filled with water. He picked up some tubes of oil paint and squirted their contents on to the water's surface, and gently created a strange pattern with a stick. He then dragged a large sheet of paper across the surface and produced some stunning designs. "One day I might master this," he said.

He was also in the middle of his stained glass period, exploring the properties of stained glass and the effect of light on it and through it. He had been commissioned to create the baptistery window for Basil Spence's new design for Coventry Cathedral, which had been totally destroyed in the blitz. And there, on a trestle table was his recently completed model he had made of the window. Some years later, while filming in Coventry, I went to the rebuilt cathedral and saw the window in its full glory, and recalled my good luck, having had this masterly work explained to me by its creator.

I had brought with me to Fawley Bottom my set of Decca LPs, to try and explain to John Piper what I was after. We settled in front of his gramophone and by trial-and-

error use of the pick-up, I managed to find each of the sixteen 'Variations'. I then attempted, in a fumbling way, to find the right expressions for what I was seeing in my mind's eye – and how it might look on the screen. He listened patiently and made some notes as I was talking, and then we went into a long discussion. All this took several hours, and then he said:

"It sounds as though I will have to come up with about twenty or thirty drawings or paintings or something. When do you need these by?"

"I am due to be in the studio in six weeks from now."

"I thought that you might give me at least six months – but I will see what I can do."

In fact, one week before going into the studio, I received a huge bundle delivered by British Rail. I can't remember ever feeling such excitement in opening a parcel as – one by one – it revealed the most apt, surprising and brilliant illustrations. We had now solved the problems set by the 'Variations'. There was a note attached, which simply said: 'Sorry I am bit late with these. I hope they will do – if there are any you don't like, let me know and I will quickly send you alternatives. Good luck, John.' He has been my hero ever since. (He later presented me with the signed illustration for Act 1, Variation III, which has hung over my fireplace ever since. A prized possession.)

The contracts Department of Associated-Rediffusion had completed the necessary agreement with the English Opera Group and I was at last able to meet all the key people. The cast list included two singers from the original production: Jennifer Vyvian played the Governess, and Arda Mandikian Miss Jessel. The role of Quint (created by Peter Pears) was played by Raymond Nilsson, and Judith Pearce was Mrs. Grose, the Housekeeper. The two children, Flora and Miles, were played by Janette Miller and Tom Bevan. David Hemmings had been the original Miles, but now, five years later, his voice had well and truly broken. Charles Mackerras was engaged to conduct The English Opera Group Orchestra, and Paul Hamburger was the Assistant Conductor.

Basil Coleman, who had produced the original Venice version for The English Opera Group, had handed over the baton to his assistant, Colin Graham. For the five-year period, since 1954, he had been responsible for staging the opera in different venues here and abroad. And now, before I could start on my rehearsals, he trained the cast and made sure that musically they remained true to the original.

I had never worked with artistes before, let alone opera singers, and it was with some trepidation that I welcomed them to our rehearsal rooms in the YWCA in Museum Street. I had spent the previous day there with my two stage managers, marking out the floor areas with coloured camera tape showing the outline of the studio sets, and we were ready to go. I think everyone felt a bit awkward at first, but coffee and sticky buns procured by my PA soon broke the ice. I asked them to gather round to explain the difference between a stage and a television production and introduced them to some of the technical disciplines demanded by television. I got a very warm response from them all, and from that moment on an atmosphere developed based on hard work and friendly banter.

Paul Hamburger provided the piano accompaniment, and I found it particularly rewarding working closely with Colin Graham in creating the cast's stage directions, which were quite different from those they had all mastered for the opera stage. My most important prop was my master camera script – a hugely heavy Twinlock A3 size

loose-leaf book. Each sheet had one page of the score pasted on the right-hand side, leaving the left for my annotations for the moves of the cameras, microphone booms, the artistes and all the other instructions, both for me and my vision mixer.

Halfway through the rehearsal period, Benjamin Britten came up to London to spend the day with us at the YWCA. He said that he simply couldn't stay away, and was very intrigued by the strange way that television went about portraying his precious opera. He made some very helpful suggestions and said that he would really have liked to be able to conduct the orchestra. Sadly, he couldn't spare the time, and in any case he was suffering from a painful shoulder ailment, which would have made it impossible.

It is hard to remember the technical limitations we worked under in the late fifties. It is almost impossible now, for a generation grown up in front of a television set, to realise that studio productions were transmitted 'live'; they were continuous performances – warts and all. The means of video recording were, to say the least, primitive. Videocassette recorders in the home had yet to be invented. The previous year A-R had acquired the first two Ampex studio video recorders from America. These were huge machines that required a forklift truck to move them. Heavy spools held the very costly 2-inch wide videotapes, and video editing, as we know it today, was still a thing of the future. When plays were transmitted, millions of viewers witnessed the mishaps during transmissions. If a microphone boom came into shot, or a floor manager tripped over a camera cable, let alone an actor drying up, it was seen by all. You simply pressed on, there was no going back, there was no means of 'doing that bit again'.

Plays were often recorded in advance of transmission onto Ampex tapes for studio planning reasons, but it always had to be 'take one', there was no other choice. At the time, video recording was merely a time-shift device, and we called it, 'recording as for live'. The only exception was when something really dire happened during a recording and it had to be stopped halfway through, maybe a key camera breaking down, a power failure or a scenery flat falling over. The offending bit could be physically cut out from the tape, before restarting the recording, but as the cost of the tapes was huge, this was always an emergency operation. Watching the technician carry out this procedure was nail biting. He had to spool the tape and stop on the exact frame where the cut had to be made. He then pulled that section of the tape under a microscope, and sprinkled what looked like very fine iron filings onto that section. These formed a visible magnetic pattern, and by looking through the microscope he could determine exactly where to make the cut with a razor blade. He then had to find the point on the other piece of tape, do the same to that, and join them together with some special agent. That expensive tape then became useless for future use. No wonder that 'editing' was discouraged.

Naturally, *The Turn of the Screw* had to go out 'live', but scheduling the studios presented a problem because I had to ask for two, one for the actual production and the second for Charles Mackerras and the orchestra. The only way A-R could make these available was to allow me to pre-record – 'as for live' – on two weekends, with Act I on the first and Act II on the second, using two of the largest studios in A-R's Wembley complex. On the Saturday, we would have our first camera rehearsal and a 'stagger through', and on the Sunday, a 'run through', a final camera rehearsal, and then, in the evening, the actual recording.

A camera was permanently trained on Charles Mackerras in his studio, and its output relayed to an array of tv monitors carefully placed in the main studio, where possible within sight of the artistes as they moved around the sets. They sang to a low-level playback of the orchestra coming from a set of speakers hung from the lighting gantries, with Paul Hamburger hopping around the set, repeating the conductor's arm movements, taking his cues from the monitors. I was full of admiration for the cast, who took to this bizarre discipline with gusto.

At that time, the cameras were huge and heavy; I used four of them with three on wheeled pedestals and one on a crane. Zoom lenses only came into studios in the 1960s, and tracking in or out with fixed lens cameras was always tricky, especially when I attempted camera moves on John Piper's illustrations for the 'Variations'.

In the control gallery, which overlooked the studio floor, I had my PA, Rosemary Winckley, on my left, calling the shot numbers, and Bridget Booth, my vision mixer, to my right. We faced a clutch of monitors displaying each camera's output and, of course, immediately in front of us, my mammoth camera script. Colin Graham was also present, and whenever we broke the rehearsal we went down on the studio floor to give notes to the cast.

The set that Michael Yates had realised from John Piper's original designs was quite magical. As I walked around it, I could sense the atmosphere of Henry James's ghostly novella – what a shame that we had to wait another eight years in the UK for colour television.

In October 1959, after four months' planning, five weeks' rehearsal, and now, with four days in the studios, we were about to commit *The Turn of the Screw* to videotape, including a short introduction to each Act by Lord Harewood, President of the English Opera Group. A telegram arrived, addressed to me at the studio: 'Good luck to all. Ben Britten'.

The meticulous planning of every shot, every camera move, the cues to floor managers, lighting changes and so on, were now put to the test – and all worked as planned. And then shock and horror, when halfway through the recording of the second Act, I lost one of my cameras. At a blow, all the detailed planning became meaningless, and we had to act very quickly and improvise; luckily it sprang back to life after a few long minutes. The brilliance of the camera and boom operators, floor staff and vision mixer saved the day. Through their skill, we managed to cover up so well that viewers were unaware of this disaster.

It was a huge relief when it was all done and I was able to say to the studio: 'It's a wrap'. It was the first time that I had been in charge of a major television production – and with it came my great good luck to have had the privilege to produce this opera with the help and advice of those who created it for the stage.

A-R's press office now became busy promoting the actual transmissions, which were scheduled across two evenings over Christmas of that year. A press preview was arranged for 10th December 1959, at Television House in Kingsway, and when I studied the formidable list of invitees, including Benjamin Britten, John and Myfanwy Piper, Lord and Lady Harewood, Stephen Reiss, and the cast, I clearly recall an attack of first-night nerves.

In addition to the usual roll-call of television critics and journalists, music and opera critics were present in force – Donald Mitchell, Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Edmund Tracey and many more. What a relief when the screening was over and cocktails were served. Britten and the Pipers were more than complimentary; all three were pleasantly surprised how well the translation of the opera to television had worked, and especially how the adaptation had caught the spirit of the original production much better than they had thought possible.

It was sad to say farewell to the cast, especially to Jennifer Vyvian. She was vivacious and fun loving and we met again at the following year's Aldeburgh Festival. We kept in touch right up to her tragic early death.

Four days after the preview, I received this hand-written letter:

Dear Peter,

I must write a note (only a note because other operatic matters press on me!) to congratulate you most sincerely on a really fine achievement. I thought the production of the Turn of the Screw most convincing. I am not very experienced in 'watching' T.V. but all the people I mind about who were there said that it was easily the best operatic T.V. production they had seen, & I can quite believe it. Anyhow you've <u>quite</u> convinced me that serious opera works on that screen, as long it is done with your taste & skill. Do let's talk sometime about the whole subject, & in the mean time many thanks for your endless trouble and patience.

Yours, Benjamin B

Ten days later, over Christmas 1959, *The Turn of the Screw* was seen on the ITV Network. It felt odd to sit back in the comfort of one's own home, instead of having to sweat it out in the studio, as a machine some miles away played back the results of one's labours. Of course, I was intrigued watching my own work and, as always, wished that I had done certain things differently – perpetuating the programme maker's mantra: 'If only I could do it all over again'.

The reaction of the press over the next few days was extremely good and I was very glad that a number of influential papers applauded A-R for being so adventurous. A lot of mail arrived at Television House, and this letter sent to A-R's Managing Director, Paul Adorian, must have gone down well with his Board of Directors:

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN,
4, St. James's Square, London, S.W.1

Chairman: Sir Kenneth Clark, C.H. K.C.B, D.Litt, I.L.D.

31st December 1959.

Dear Adorian,

I feel I must write you a letter of congratulation on A-R's production of The Turn of the Screw. Programmes of this kind done for a minority very often don't come off, and succeed in pleasing nobody, but this was really a masterpiece of television, both as production, performance and photography.

In fact, as a work of art I think it the best thing the medium has ever produced. I have seen the opera many times, and to tell the truth I thought it came off better on the T.V. than it had ever done in the opera house.

I am quite sure that one or two productions of this kind do the medium an immense amount of good, and even from the commercial point of view, are money well spent. They are the sort of argument which the friends of commercial television will be able to use when the whole subject comes up for review.

Please give my warmest congratulations to John McMillan and to everyone else concerned.

Yours very sincerely,

Kenneth Clark

And then the viewing figures were published. The TAM (Television Audience Measurement) ratings were the commercial yardstick for ITV's audience size, as well as the share of the overall audience with the BBC. These weekly statistics were avidly scrutinised by advertisers and broadcasters alike. The ratings were obtained by means of meters, attached to the television sets in several thousands of homes included in the sample. These meters looked like barographs, with a rotating drum covered with graph paper, and an inked needle tracing the time the set was switched on and to which channel, BBC or ITV. It did not measure whether anyone was actually watching anything, but it was accepted as the best system available at the time. Years later, this important data would be remotely accessed, but at the time a TAM representative used to call once a week on the selected homes to collect the graph paper and attach a fresh one.

The Turn of the Screw broke an Olympic record – it registered a rating of precisely nil – the inked needles failed to spring into action. I was not a bit surprised (neither was John McMillan) that ITV's excursion into an area even the BBC would class as esoteric programming, failed to produce a measurable audience. McMillan then bravely commissioned an independent research organisation to discover whether anyone at all had watched the opera.

Several months later, interesting statistics came to light. Sadler's Wells Theatre (where the opera was first performed) seated an audience of 1600. The research project established that the number of people, who actually watched *The Turn of the Screw*, would have filled Sadler's Wells with all seats sold, for eight performances a week, for sixteen weeks – an audience of just over 200,000 people. As a TAM rating, where audiences are measured in millions, this miserable total was an unmitigated disaster. But in terms of opera-going audiences, it would have been declared an unprecedented and colossal triumph.

McMillan asked A-R's Graphic Design Department to create a colour brochure, celebrating the opera. The designers were well known in the industry for the Company's in-house magazine, 'Fusion', which was winning a host of awards. They were able to draw on a rich selection of excellent production stills, but in addition, they asked the main contributors for short comments; today these have become useful archival material, preserved in the Britten-Pears Library in Aldeburgh:

Benjamin Britten

This is the first time in this country that an opera of mine has been specially produced on television, and I am extremely grateful to Associated-Rediffusion for its enterprise and courage in mounting THE TURN OF THE SCREW. I am particularly happy that it should have been this opera that was chosen because it is one of my works most close to me, and also the one I feel most suitable for television.

Television can do an enormous amount to popularise opera in this country, especially if it avoids the spectacular Grand Opera so beloved by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and concentrates on the intimate and concise, which seems to me to belong particularly to the present day.

I cannot praise too highly the skill, taste and knowledge shown in adapting this difficult opera for television, especially when coupled with a respect for the score which did not allow one note to be cut.

Myfanwy Piper - Librettist

The work is a combination of strangeness and intimacy, and so for television, at its best in conveying both these, an obviously suitable subject. What surprises and delights is, that without distorting or adapting, the producer has made it seem as though it were specially created for the medium. It has illusion without apparent trickery, reality without realism, as it must in any presentation, but a new kind - so it is a new experience. It makes me realise how much can be done with the exuberant possibilities of television when they are used with tact and sensibility.

John Piper - Original scenery and costume designer

This scenery is a matter of creating atmosphere, not of presenting facts. Scale, texture and a telling disposition of darks and lights are all-important. As to texture, I was surprised to find how well it could be realised by the television cameras, and how many new means of suggesting it are possible. The matter of lights and darks I found exciting, because the medium does not so much reflect light, as it allows light to pierce through darkness, as in stained glass. Here again the possibilities seem enormous. But it is in the matter of scale that I was most interested of all. You can move, for instance, from a small drawing, with some tiny scribbles or spots of darkness on it, to a full-sized theatre cloth with a figure in front of it without any jolt to the eye, so that scale momentarily disappears, and there is the thrill of being in a no-man's-land of dimension, which can be most helpful in a highly atmospheric work.

Stephen Reiss - General Manager of the English Opera Group

For many years we have been trying to produce vital English operas, but, mainly for financial reasons, the public has had very little chance of seeing the results. We therefore have every reason to be grateful to Associated-Rediffusion for putting one of our works on to television, and, in THE TURN OF THE SCREW, we feel that Peter Morley has chosen an opera ideally suited to the medium. The original production has inevitably had to undergo a complete metamorphosis, but, by his understanding of the opera and the

style we have striven to create, he has made sure that the impact remains as strong as ever. The English Opera Group feels that, if just a handful of people, who have never seen opera before, make their acquaintance with it through the television medium, surely the effort which has gone into this production will have been justified many times over.

By now, I had moved on to my next assignment – but I must recall some intriguing repercussions. Boosey & Hawkes were Benjamin Britten's publishers, and A-R had to enter into a contract with them for staging the television version. One of the clauses stipulated that if the production process entails any form of recording, these recordings would have to be destroyed within two years of transmission. One must remember that the words 'video-piracy' and the means of carrying it out, had not yet been invented. But B&H was afraid of possibly losing control of their material, and with hindsight, they cannot be blamed. Depositing tapes for posterity in the National Film and Television Archives was still in its infancy.

Almost two years later in 1961, Lord Cottesloe, who had been Chairman of the Art's Council, wrote to A-R's Chairman asking whether he could come and have a play-back of the opera as he was an ardent Britten fan, and had missed the transmission. As a valuable and timely opportunity for good PR, he was immediately invited to come to Television House to view it. Unfortunately, the overworked Ampex machines could not be made available to play back the video recording. Instead, engineers had to come to the studios on the weekend, when the machines were idle, to make a telerecording of the opera, i.e. putting the electronic image onto film. Apparently, the first attempt was technically below standard, and they threw it out. The next effort was successful, as I found out for myself when I was present at the screening for Lord Cottesloe. Soon after, as per contract, the Ampex video tapes were wiped and the telerecording was destroyed. And under the heading of 'material wiped or lost forever', the *Screw* was often quoted as a tragic example.

Twenty-five years later, however, I received a call from Pam Logan, assistant curator of the British Film Institute's Television Archives in Berkhamsted, telling me that an old crate had been discovered with rusty cans of film, marked *The Turn of the Screw*. This must have been the discarded 'take one' of the telerecording, and no one has been able to explain how it found its way to the archives. I was immediately given a VHS copy by the BFI for confirmation that it was my production, and it would be an understatement to say that I was thrilled and very happy to be reunited with the opera.

In October 2000, four decades after its original transmission, the Britten-Pears Library in Aldeburgh held a *The Turn of the Screw* study weekend, and invited me to introduce and screen my VHS tape. The audience was made up of senior musicologists and Britten experts – most of whom had not seen my production. What pleased me most about their very warm reactions was that of all the hundreds of interpretations over the last fifty years, my television version was deemed to be the truest to the original production as staged at the Teatro la Fenice and Sadler's Wells in 1954. Subsequently, I bequeathed my original camera script and production stills to the Britten-Pears Library.

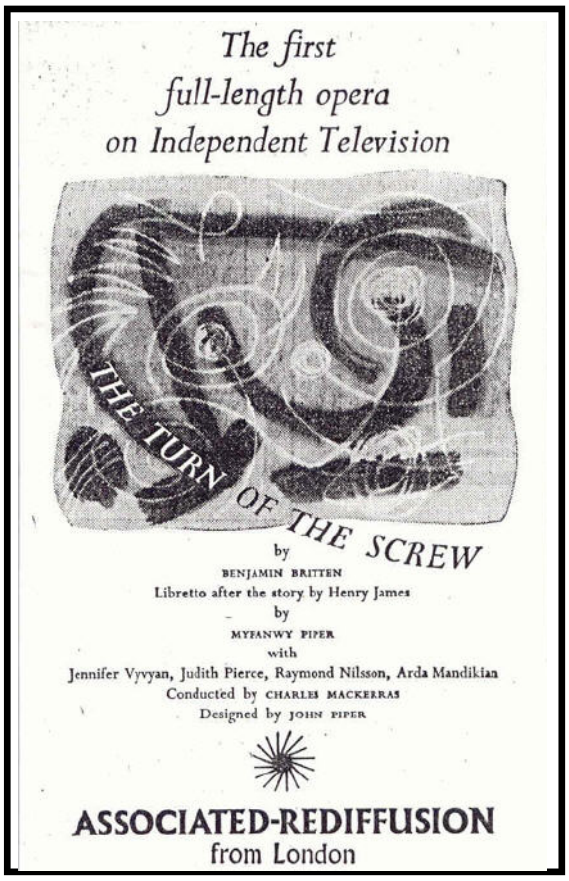
Then, in January 2002, an audience of 250 attended my introduction and screening of *The Turn of the Screw*, (on the large screen) at the National Film Theatre on the South Bank. The inferior technical quality of both picture and sound did not seem to matter a

bit – I believe that it actually adds to the historical value of the work. The question and answer sessions after these presentations are always interesting and rewarding, especially with the presence in the audience of an opera buff who was in Venice for the premiere in 1954 and was able to make some valuable comparisons.

That same year saw the publication of 'Television Opera', written by Jennifer Barnes, Assistant Principal and Dean of Studies at Trinity College of Music, London. Comparing stage productions with my version, she writes:

> *The Turn of the Screw was adapted from a ghost story by Henry James, which revolves around a central conceit: "Do the children see the ghosts or are they the product of the governess's imagination? Are Miles and Flora preyed upon by ghosts – or by the governess?" As Britten and Piper discovered, this particular element was problematic in the theatre; singing ghosts were clearly visible to the audience, if not to all the characters. However, five years after the opera's premiere, the televised production used camera techniques to reinstate some of James's ambiguity. From the moment Quint first 'appears', Morley directed the cameras to focus first on The Governess's eyes and then on the balcony. She looks to the empty balcony and sees his image materialize from nothingness. Thus when the ghost appears he does so specifically through her eyes. The ghosts in Morley's production are still singing ghosts, but the camera script ensures that they consistently emerge through the disturbed eyes and mind of The Governess.*
>
> *In 2001, Peter Morley contacted the Britten-Pears Library and offered to donate his production script, which includes his beautifully drawn story-board adjacent to his camera shot list. Combined with the film, this provides a complete cycle of investigation, from Britten's manuscript, to the camera script to an aural and visual record. With recent public screenings in both Aldeburgh and London, the Morley production is beginning to get the recognition it deserves.*

A nice thought, after a mere forty-three years.



The Governess (Jennifer Vyvyan) Quint (Raymond Nilsson)

The Ghosts: Quint (Raymond Nilsson)
Miss Jessel (Arda Mandikian)

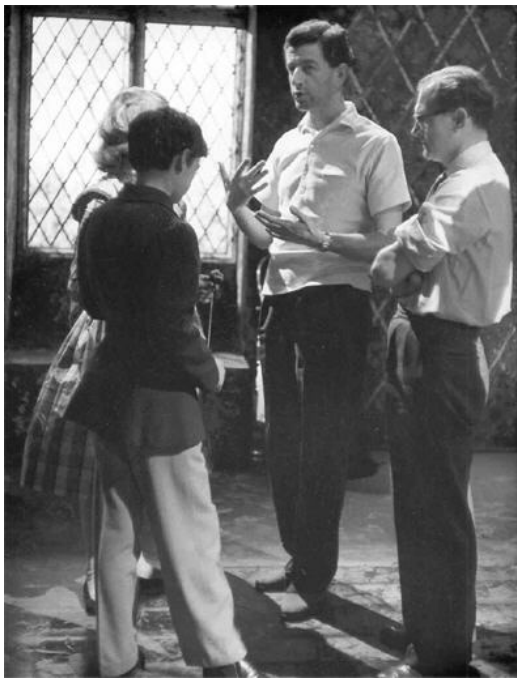
The Governess (Jennifer Vyvyan)
Miles (Tom Bevan)

The Housekeeper (Judith Pearce)
Flora (Janette Miller)

"Miles - dear little Miles, is there nothing you want to tell me?"

"What have we done between us?"

Directing the 'Screw' in Studio 5, Wembley
Bridget Booth, Vision Mixer and Rosemary Winckley, Production Assistant



Miles and Flora getting notes during
camera rehearsal

Final notes to Jennifer Vyvyan in a break before recording 'as for live'
Colin Graham in attendance

Feeling a bit nervous at Associated-Rediffusion's Press Preview
With Benjamin Britten, Lord and Lady Harewood and John McMillan

Chapter 13

The relentless pressure on programme-makers saw to it that any euphoria I felt after the successful airing of *The Turn of the Screw* soon evaporated – especially with the choice of subject for our next documentary. John McMillan asked Cyril Bennett and me to his office and said that he thought it would be a good idea for us to make a programme about alcoholism. He was aware of the importance for A-R to be seen to handle difficult social subjects, and I remember him saying to me "After all the fun you have had with your opera, this should make a nice change for you." It certainly did.

At the time, the general public did not consider alcoholism to be a disease, let alone, an incurable one. There were no specialist hospitals and only very few centres where alcoholics could seek treatment. As part of the research, I went to the World Health Organisation in Geneva and visited a number of hospitals and Social Welfare Centres to see how the Swiss dealt with alcoholic aversion treatment. It was a depressing trip.

In May 1960, *Alcoholism - Study of a Disease* hit the screens.

> Philip Purser wrote in the *News Chronicle* :
> *John McMillan, who is controller of programmes of Associated-Rediffusion, thought it would be a good idea to do a feature about the disease of alcoholism and handed this idea to director Peter Morley and scriptwriter Cyril Bennett, who had previously worked together on documentaries about Hitler and about Israel.*
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> *They got down to some intensive research; discovered the rather alarming extent of alcoholism in this country; summarised medical opinion. They rounded up victims and redeemed victims of the disease (not cured victims, for there is no cure). They visited the lower-depths bombsite off the Commercial Road, London, where the meth-drinkers assemble in final degradation.*
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> *They ended up with the informative, graphic, fully documented kind of thing which is the TV equivalent of a weighty piece of magazine journalism.*

That definition *magazine journalism* was a novelty. It had taken me a little while to realise that television was redefining the accepted definition of both documentary film-making and print journalism. The developing medium caused the blurring of these two traditional methods of communication. I had cut my teeth on the all-filmed and carefully crafted documentary, and realised now that filmed 'documentary' elements inserted into studio-based programmes, created a different dimension due to the immediacy and urgency of being 'live'. And one simply had to come to terms with it. There is, of course, a role for the traditional documentary on television fulfilling the classic definition of 'the artistic interpretation of reality'. But just as much as traditional print journalism has stuck to its historic role, it too had to adapt to the grammar and the immediacy of the new medium. When the two traditions meet on the small screen, the label 'factual television' seems as good as any. It adequately describes

the communication of facts, the art of story telling and the exploration of ideas.

And *Alcoholism - Study of a Disease* is a classic example of this developing genre. My filmed elements included sequences illustrating the horrific hallucinations, described most graphically by two of our participants, recalling their delirium tremens. But it was the filming with a group of alcoholics, who had hit rock bottom and were now unable to find a way out of their dilemma, which is so vivid in my memory. There were four men and one woman, barely sheltered from the elements, living a vagrant life in utter squalor in the ruins of a bombed-out East End church – with their killer drink –methylated spirit. It was both shocking and depressing to witness the depths plumbed by these wretched meth-drinkers. I spent a very cold night with my small crew trying to get to know them and to elicit some facts about the how and why of their situation. We had to be very patient. They sat or lay huddled close to a fire they had lit in the open, using branches, old furniture and orange crates, harvested during the day. The strong, intoxicating presence of methylated spirit hung heavily in the cold air. Meths was their staple diet, somehow procured from chemist shops. There were also bottles of cider and cheap wine – full, empty and smashed. We were walking on broken glass. The woman and one of the men, barely capable of speech, attempted to explain how the world had conspired to reduce them to this way of living. Neither of them seemed to want their circumstances to change. In the early hours, in the middle of this painful conversation, I noticed one of the men who had been lying close to the fire and totally comatose, roll over on his side into the red-hot embers. Harry Hart, my cameraman, and I made a dive and rolled him back on to his other side, beating off glowing cinders from his ragged overcoat. He remained oblivious of what had just happened, and so did his friends; they did not bat an eyelid. What a night. It took a good week for the smell and taste of meths, which had penetrated my lungs, to leave me.

I cued these film sequences into the live programme, which I directed from our studio in Television House. The linkman was a doctor, a specialist in the treatment of alcoholism, and with him were two recovered alcoholics who were interviewed by him.

The reaction to the programme was subdued. The cold statistics it revealed and the fact that there is no cure for this disease were, to say the least, sobering. A letter sent to the 'T.V. Times' by Alcoholics Anonymous after transmission spoke of the public reaction to the programme: "The most remarkable response we have ever had to any publicity. Since the programme, the A.A have had dozens of inquiries from heavy drinkers seeking advice."

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1960 was a busy year, and looking back on it, a clear reminder of the risks A-R took with their directors.

While I was filming for *Alcoholism,* I was planning, with my other hand, the outside-broadcast of Princess Margaret's wedding to Anthony Armstrong-Jones. I was surprised when I was asked to direct this for the Independent Television Network. After all, the only O.B. experience I had was that modest afternoon programme in 1957 from Apsley House, when Jane was my P.A. As it turned out, only twelve days before going into the studio directing *Alcoholism*, I was on air, live, for over two hours with

the Wedding. For the first time, ITV was covering a major national event in competition with the BBC.

There were two memorable images from that occasion, which I shall always cherish. The first was during camera rehearsal, the day prior to transmission. One of my camera positions was on a scaffolding tower we had erected in Trafalgar Square, looking straight down Whitehall. Sitting in the control gallery in Studio 9 in Television House, Kingsway, I was eagerly awaiting the bank of monitors to come alive so that I could establish the repertoire of all the shots I could exploit, from the many cameras covering the procession from Buckingham Palace, and those inside Westminster Abbey for the service. I could not believe my eyes when the very first picture to appear on one of the monitors was a huge close-up of a man in a barber's chair being shaved with an old-fashioned cut-throat razor. We all fell about. It was only when the cameraman zoomed out that he revealed an open window of the first-floor barber's shop in the building on the corner of Northumberland Avenue and Whitehall.

The other vivid memory is a shot, after the ceremony, of a glamorous Princess Margaret processing out of the Abbey with her groom, and the lights from inside the west door backlighting her train as it billowed in the breeze. All of us who played a part on this happy day were relieved that it had all worked.

Maybe it was because of this O-B that, shortly after its transmission, I was asked to produce and direct the State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill for the whole ITV network – a huge outside-broadcast with an unknown transmission date. It was to be a constant pre-occupation – but much more of that later.

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Cyril Bennett and I had been talking for quite some time about the idea of producing a one-hour documentary film on Japan, based on our fascination for that country, and our ignorance of it. We were spurred on by Reg Courtney Browne (our programme researcher on *Tyranny* and *Israel*) who, while serving in the army, was posted to Japan in 1945, and stayed on for ten years. We were intrigued by his endless stories about his experiences, and the more we heard, the more determined we were to make a peak-time documentary. He had married Kaye in Japan, a Canadian-born Japanese, who was working as an interpreter for the U.S. army, and his knowledge of the country and his command of the language was impressive. Cyril and I were not alone in being ignorant about that far-off country; hardly any film about it had been shown on television – so the prospect of bringing back an unfamiliar story with unique footage became irresistible. We wanted to get away from the public image of Japan in Britain: an image based on the odd mixture of flower arrangements, Madame Butterfly, Pearl Harbour and prison-guard atrocities. Instead, we wished to explore the so-called 'Coca Cola Culture' brought in by the U.S. military and its administrators, and to find out what sort of impact it was exerting on Japan – how much was rubbing off on that ancient culture. In other words, an examination of how far the Japanese have taken to democracy, which General MacArthur brought with him after Japan's surrender in 1945, and how profoundly the western way of life might have altered this highly traditional and feudal people.

Once again a visit to John McMillan's office bore fruit. He was keen on the idea, and famously said: "It had better be good – it's going to cost an arm and a leg." It did. He gave us a one-hour peak-time transmission slot for early November, and wished us luck. We thought of a working title for the project *The Two Faces of Japan,* and we never felt the need to change it.

For background briefing, I spent every spare minute reading-up on Japanese history and culture. In addition, I agreed with A-R's Features Department that I would take with me the smallest possible team to do the job: it was Cyril as writer, Reg as researcher and consultant, my P.A. Rosemary Winckley, Charlie Squires film editor, and Deborah Cheshire, our unit Manager. It was agreed that I would recruit and use a Japanese camera crew.

I flew out in advance of the team to find a crew and set up the technical facilities. Cyril and Reg would come out a week later, with the other three joining us a few days prior to the start of shooting.

A couple of days before my trip I had to fight a recurring back problem, so when I stepped into the cabin of the BOAC Comet I was distinctly below par. I suppose the excitement of the whole enterprise made it all just about bearable. This was my first long distance flight, with refuelling stops in Rome, Cairo, Karachi, and Singapore, before landing at Tokyo airport. The journey seemed to be never ending. A fresh crew took over after every stop, joining distinctly unfresh passengers. After each take-off, the new cabin crews always served the same cooked breakfast. Fortunately, BOAC was famous at the time for its scrambled eggs, but I had my fill on reaching Singapore and I was feeling distinctly ill. And when we finally landed In Tokyo, I was more than ready to crawl into my hotel bed – but that was not to be.

When I got to the top of the aircraft's steps, to my horror, I saw a photographer on the tarmac and four identically suited men, huddled under umbrellas in the pouring rain, forming Japan's Foreign Office Press Department's reception committee. As the Japanese BOAC official escorted me down the steps under his umbrella, I was stunned by the hot, humid, steamy air, which made breathing quite difficult. Fortunately, Reg had briefed me well on matters of etiquette, and although I felt that I just wanted to curl up and die, I was able to fish some rather soggy business cards out of my raincoat pocket, and go through the formal exchanges of cards. Then, there was a short speech by their spokesman, declaring that it was a great honour to welcome me to their country. I replied, stressing my gratitude for being received in this generous way, and how much I was looking forward to the honour of having the opportunity to get acquainted with Japan. Reg would have been proud of me.

We set off in two chauffeur-driven limousines. I had been booked into the Maranouchi Hotel, right in the middle of Tokyo's business district. When we got out I was yearning for my escape to bed, and was about to thank them for meeting me and escorting me to my hotel, when their spokesman announced: "Morey-san, now is the time for you to go up to your room to freshen up. We look forward to seeing you down here in reception in ten minutes." Reg had also taught me never to make a Japanese lose face!

I showered quickly, gritted my teeth and when I reappeared downstairs, they were all looking at their watches – it soon became clear what was in store for me for the rest of the evening. The cars took us to a theatre. All four of my of well-meaning torturers showed me to my seat and handed me a seat cushion, and pulled out a wire from it with an earpiece; the cushion acted as the aerial, and thus I suffered the instantaneous

translation of the longest and most boring play I have ever been to. And then, to my dismay, dinner in a typical Japanese teahouse: shoe removal on entering, four Geishas in attendance and a bevy of kimono-clad waitresses. I was sharply reminded of my recent back condition when I attempted the agonising ritual of squatting down on the traditional tatami matting for the meal. I had not seen a bed for what seemed like a week and I felt like death, and knew that I could only survive this ordeal by concentrating on some serious sake consumption. The soup was fine, followed by my first true culture shock. A waitress brought on a long, slim dish displaying an octopus tentacle. With a sharp knife she cut off thin slices and delicately placed them into my bowl with chopsticks. All eyes were on me now. I learned later that the Japanese take great interest in how foreigners react to their first taste of raw fish. Once more I thought of Reg's instruction: 'Close your eyes and think of England' – I did, and swallowed. In spite of feeling so ill, I was surprised that I rather liked the texture and the taste. There were a lot of courses to come and also more speeches. Finally, and mercifully, I was brought back to my hotel. I had just enough strength to get undressed, and to crawl into bed. I woke up fourteen hours later.

My first task was to make contact with an old friend of Reg – Ian Mutsu. We became good friends, and I was to meet him many times in Tokyo and London over the next forty years. He died in 2001, aged 96.

Ian's father, whose family belonged to high-ranking Japanese nobility, was a diplomat. In the twenties, he was posted to London as First Minister to the Japanese Embassy. He married an English woman and they produced a son. Ian Mutsu, standing at 6'3", was unusually tall for a Japanese, his facial features carrying only the slightest Japanese trait. In his teens Ian went to school in England and never lost his love and close ties to the old country. In the mid-thirties the family returned to Japan, where later, Ian studied journalism. The war caused great personal difficulties for him. Apart from torn loyalties, and feeling closer to England than to Japan, his physical appearance made it difficult for him to be seen in public. He virtually went into hiding in the country, and because of his family's wealth, was able to survive the war in some comfort.

At the end of the war, he returned to Tokyo, pursued journalism and then started his own small film company. In 1960, when I first met him, his company was making documentaries and instructional films. That was our good luck. He was able to present me with a camera crew, and all their gear: a location manager, an interpreter, who had worked for Reg, and an all-round fixer who had the know-how for getting filming permits, finding locations, and experience in approaching potential participants. I don't know how we could have made that film without Ian Mutsu and his organisation.

Arriving in Japan for the first time is a breathtaking experience. It is so completely different from any other country I had been to, that one might have landed on Mars. It was just as well that I did not come with preconceived ideas on what we were going to do or how we were going to do it. I felt disarmed, astonished, enchanted and rather intimidated by the thought of having to condense the thoughts, actions and feelings of this nation into a one-hour film. I could hardly wait for Cyril and Reg to join me and to share my first experiences with them. I remember the night before their arrival I was channel-hopping on my TV in my hotel room, and was thus introduced to the Japanese baseball craze and also traditional Sumo wrestling. The grotesque size and mountains of flesh of the wrestlers, coupled with the ancient ceremonial rituals observed by the

sport, was an eye-opener. Even more so when, every so often, just at the moment when a gigantic posterior filled the screen in tight close-up, dressed in, what I suppose today, would be called a modest thong, a short message would be superimposed cheek to cheek, which I assumed was something to do with the contestant's score. The next day I made my number with Fuji Television to see whether we could hire a studio for filming, should we require it. I asked my contact there to translate the messages electronically pasted on the wrestler's rear end. "Morey-san, the Japanese letters have little to do with wrestling, they are commercials for Johnson's Baby Powder." How stupid of me not to have thought of that.

Cyril and Reg arrived in the hotel that afternoon, and by next morning had recovered well enough for us to meet for breakfast and to make plans. Cyril, always worried about his fibre diet, had telexed me asking whether he should include a packet of All-Bran in his luggage, and I was able to telex back assuring him that every breakfast cereal God has thought of was on the hotel's menu. So when the waiter came to take our orders, to Cyril's dismay, and mine, he sucked in his breath and said: "Hhaa so sorry – Arr-Bran arr gone." This became the unit's stock phrase when things conspired against us.

We had budgeted four weeks for the completion of the script and four weeks for shooting it. A tight schedule for television in those days, and we were not helped by the fact that 1960 produced the worst summer in Japan for fifty years – unbearably hot and humid and a constant preoccupation with typhoons, which were sweeping across the Pacific every few days, plus the daily earthquake tremors in Tokyo. In Kyoto, we were right in the centre of a typhoon that killed fifty people, and one quickly became aware of the fatalism of the Japanese in the face of natural violence and disaster. The death toll of this typhoon barely rated a headline in the local press.

There was so much to see, so much to take in. In Tokyo, we explored Kabuki theatres, department stores, communal bathhouses, temples, Pachinko saloons, Geisha houses, massage parlours, Parliament buildings and so on. In those days street names did not exist, and many an hour was lost finding our way around. When I handed a note with the written destination to a taxi driver, he would look at it, smile and say, "Hi", meaning 'yes'. I soon learnt that this meant he did not have the faintest idea where to go. If I got a "Hi-hi", the chance of reaching our goal was more favourable. Inevitably, he had to stop at various police kiosks and ask for directions. These smartly dressed cab drivers, always sporting white gloves, were known locally as kamikaze – for good reasons. I said to Cyril after our first morning that we must write a taxi journey into the script. I would shoot it and with luck survive the trip. In our film's final cut, that ride remains as a monument to a very scary moment.

We narrowed down our locations to certain specific areas of Japan, representing different social backgrounds: Tokyo itself; the Kansai region, including the shipyards of Kobe; Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan; the industrial area of Osaka (the Manchester of Japan) and, of course, Hiroshima. We decided to tell our story through four representative people, and a lot of the time during this research period was taken up in finding them and getting their approval and co-operation. In the end, our cast consisted of a housewife near Osaka, married to a white-collar worker (he was an administrator with a film company making commercials for Japanese television); a

shipyard riveter in Kobe; a girl model and a university student in Tokyo. These four people gave us our story line. In the meantime, Reg, together with Ian Mutsu, was negotiating agreements for us to interview the Prime Minister, Hayato Ikeda, and the Leader of the Socialist Opposition, Inejiro Asanuma.

One surprising impression I got during this planning period – another graphic aspect of the 'two faces' – was the contrast between the beauty, simplicity and delicacy of the Japanese home, no matter how poor, and the hideous sprawling vulgarity of everything outside it. Town planning in the cities was piece-meal; loud advertisements hung untidily all over the street, the traffic and the driving was chaotic and often ruthless. All the signs of form and order inside the home were blatantly disregarded. The instant rebuilding of Tokyo after the war had produced unspeakable ugliness. I was thrilled when I returned to Tokyo twenty years later, to see a huge change, with a display of some very fine architecture.

During these travels we met many European and American residents and it was strange what little insight we got from them on Japan and its people. Foreigners in Japan lead a very secluded life in their isolated enclaves and there seems nothing as insular as a Western mind resident in the East.

We had by now amassed so much potential material, so many contradictions with sharp conflicts between the traditional and the new, that to decide what to include in the film, as usual, was overshadowed by the problem of what to leave out. We wanted to show the two faces of Japan, but not merely the practical aspects of the merging of the American 'coca-cola culture' with Japanese tradition, but also the conflicts created by this in the Japanese mind. How traditional feudal family life, in spite of television sets and washing machines, seems to have been completely untouched. In the home the male still took precedence over the female, and found his entertainment and romance outside the home in the vast industry of bars, clubs and hostesses. The sheer weight of formality and etiquette, the over-riding obligation to family and ancestry – all this, in one way or another, we hoped to reveal in the film.

The time had now come for a final script discussion, and with no air-conditioning in the hotel, Cyril and I hired a chauffeur-driven Cadillac and this became our office for the day. We decided then and there to invite Tom Harrison, the anthropologist (founder of Mass Observation in 1937) to act as a linkman and to conduct the two political interviews. At the time he lived in Sumatra, and we flew him in from there.

I cannot remember where the driver took us that day, but when we returned that evening we had a script.

The rest of the unit had checked into the hotel. The day before we started filming, Ian Mutsu introduced us to the film crew, who had brought the equipment for me to approve. We used a 35mm Arricord, which also recorded sound and a hand-held Arriflex. I attempted to break the ice and, through our interpreter, briefed them about the film we were about to embark on and the very tight schedule I had organised. The cameraman, Sabura Iwamura, his assistant and the sound recordist listened without showing any reaction whatsoever. Once more, I had to remind myself of Reg's wise words and warnings.

Naturally, I accepted the language barrier, which our splendid interpreter handled with ease; more than one can say about that much bigger barrier: the schism separating

the western from the eastern mind; the great difficulty of understanding people whose thoughts, emotions and feelings are so hidden by conventions, traditional behaviour and etiquette. This became a real obstacle when I tried to establish a rapport with the cameraman, to make him appreciate the flavour and style I was trying to get into the film. What was often new and exciting for us was commonplace to him. Why should he get enthusiastic about shooting scenes of a Kamikaze taxi ride or the dense Tokyo rush hour crowds, so solid in their movement that it made London look under-populated, when he himself is normally part of this crowd? I too had to learn to conceal my emotions. I could never show despair, impatience or anger, as this would have caused deep offence and humiliation. Filming with a crew who speak only Japanese, in a temperature of 97 degrees with maximum humidity, made it quite hard to remember these subtleties.

Fortunately, before shooting started, I had heard a story of an American producer working in a Japanese studio, who had shouted at and bawled out a Japanese technician, a focus-puller, who had inadvertently ruined half a day's shooting. The producer found this technician in his office the following morning, vehemently protesting at having being humiliated in front of his own people. He then produced a knife, hacked off his little finger and flung it at the producer, not merely to show the depth of the insult he had been made to suffer, but also as a symbol of repayment of the debt of obligation to himself, his family and his ancestors. Mercifully, I remembered this extraordinary anecdote, because two weeks into our shooting schedule, the camera assistant had accidentally loaded an exposed roll of negative film into a magazine, and when I received the rushes report the next morning announcing a double-exposure problem, I could have killed him. In the UK, that is about the worst crime a camera operator can commit; instead, I put my arm round his shoulder, thanked him for all his sterling work, told him that the technicians at the laboratory were highly amused when they screened the rushes, and that I would be really grateful if it did not occur again. At the end of that day, Iwamura-san, the cameraman, came over to me, bowed, and simply said *domo arigato*, thank you very much.

They all turned out to be very charming, willing and hard working, but there was this ever present strain of observing correct behaviour, even during the most difficult and trying moments. After every shot when I had said "cut", there was always the ritual of the interpreter having to ask on my behalf whether the cameraman thought the shot okay, and as committal by a Japanese is taken very seriously, the time wasted in getting his considered opinion, with a tight shooting schedule hanging over us, needed an extra amount of self-control. I soon found out that whenever Iwamura-san turned to me after a shot with a smile on his face, I knew that something had gone wrong – for in Japan you hide your sorrow behind a smile – and the greater the trouble, the bigger the smile.

However informal the technicians appeared to be with each other during working hours, rank was always strictly observed. They must have found our speed as difficult to take as our informality, and the goodbyes in the evenings after shooting were always elaborate and formal and acted as a constant reminder to us of how crucial our observance of etiquette was to the success of the film.

Our first location was Hiroshima. This was the unit's introduction to the famous air-conditioned Bullet train. We all enjoyed that ride and were amazed that one could actually make telephone calls from it to anywhere in the world.

We arrived 500 miles later. I found it hard to believe that it was a mere fifteen years since the dropping of the bomb. Hiroshima was the first Japanese city to be rebuilt after the war.

We shot a sequence in the Atomic Radiation Sickness Hospital; for all of us, a deeply moving and very depressing experience. We saw patients who had languished in this hospital since 1945, dying daily from leukaemia and other radiation diseases.

When our crew was confronted with this tragedy of filming dying people, I wondered how they would react, but there was no trace of emotion. Japanese know how not to show emotion, or evoke it in others. I got a graphic example of this from our local driver we had hired for the shoot. He was very friendly, and by the second day, as he took us to another location, I could not resist asking him, through our interpreter, where he was when the bomb fell on Hiroshima. He smiled and explained that he was lucky, because he was on a job ten miles outside the city, but his wife, three children, parents and in-laws all perished on that day. And he kept on smiling. He thus avoided the natural reaction from a Westerner expressing his deep sorrow on hearing that story. It would have placed him under an obligation to me, and to absolve him from it, he would have to find a way to repay me. There was a lot to learn.

We first met Seichi Kubota, our 21-year-old student from Tokyo University, in a coffee bar – the Mozart coffee bar. We could just as well have met in the Chopin or Louis Armstrong coffee bar – each one with its dedicated musak. Kubota-san was a member of the militant and violently anti-American student organisation, Zengakuren, which organised the riots against President Eisenhower's visit to Japan. In spite of the trouble these riots caused, few of the Zengakuren members to whom we spoke appeared to take them very seriously. Most of them, like Seichi Kubota, regarded their student years as the last opportunity to let off steam before taking their place in the formal, ultra-conservative mainstream of Japanese life. He invited us to film him in the student dormitories of his university, which were deliberately kept filthy and untidy; a calculated act of defiance, perpetuating the traditional university ritual of the last fling before having to face the 'discipline of the rest of my life', as he put it. Kubota-san saw nothing odd in this, or the fact that he discussed Marxism with his fellow students – and then, on his way to the tranquillity of his home, stopping off at a Shinto shrine to offer a prayer to his dead ancestors.

He invited us to his home. This in itself was unusual, as foreigners were rarely given that opportunity. He wanted us to meet his mother. His father had been killed in the battle for Okinawa and, by tradition, he was now the master of the house. It was a traditional small house with sliding doors and tatami matting throughout. When we arrived by taxi, Kubota-san begged us to wait in the car. He went in and a few minutes later the delicate main door slid to one side and there was his kimono-clad mother facing us. She was kneeling, with her head bowed low touching the floor, and standing behind her, the man of the house, who had quickly changed into his yukata – and who now welcomed us to his home. His mother still bowed, gracefully shuffled backwards, slid open another door and from the kitchen brought in small bowls of green tea and a platter with daintily arranged minute pastries. The title of our film seemed to me to be most appropriate.

Filming with our second cast member was a delight. Shigeko Yamasaki was a very beautiful and very funny 22-year-old model. She had excellent English, in fact, American; we discovered on our last day with her that she had mothered a U.S. soldier's

baby. Shigeko also neatly underlined the theme of our film. She too invited us to her home where she lived with her mother. Her father had been a war casualty. Both in their kimonos, they introduced Cyril and me to the tea ceremony, observing all the traditional rituals. He hated drinking it, but I quite liked the taste of what looked like thick surface water from a rich pond.

Inside the confines of her own home, there were no signs of the banter and the fun we were to have when we filmed her daily life free from these constraints. She went about her job as a successful model, smartly dressed and expertly made-up. She arrived at a Takashimaya Department Store in a taxi, smoking, being met by senior staff for a photographic session modelling their latest French collection.

She easily and happily combined the razzmatazz of jazz and baseball, the glamour of modelling beautiful clothes with the ritual of the tea ceremony. We did not expect to find a typical Japanese career girl – western ignorance on display once again.

Our third cast member was Uzuki Shoji, a riveter in a modern shipyard. It was through him that we were able to shed some light on the miraculous development of Japanese industry – and all that in merely fifteen years. He had been a sailor in the Imperial Japanese Navy during the war and now worked in the Kawasaki shipyard in Kobe. We filmed him at work with his team of riveters, all helmeted, wearing identical uniforms, evoking unpleasant wartime imagery. But this time the threat was rather different. Very simply, his shipyard produced a 45,000-ton tanker every $2^1/_2$ months, while in Britain we took 10 months. His living standards were three times higher than pre-war and he had a union to negotiate his wages. Shoji-san lived with his family in the traditional manner, but with a washing machine and 6-channel TV. The Company rented him a house, gave him cheap lunches, free medical treatment, and cheap holidays at a Company hotel for him and his family. We soon discovered that this level of prosperity was reserved for the industrial elite, working in major industries and living in company-owned suburbs. Of course, we also filmed the other side of the story – oriental Japan, unchanged by Western modernisation, with 60% of the working population labouring in back streets, providing cheap goods to the world. If I were to go back now, over forty years later, and make a follow-up of *The Two Faces,* the industrial story would be rather different.

Osaka was the hometown of our fourth cast member, Shizu Yamaoka, a suburban housewife and mother of two young boys. When she shopped in a supermarket, gossiped with her neighbours, or cooked for her family, she seemed to be very like a housewife in the West. But Mrs Yamaoka – like most Japanese women at that time – had been trained for two years at a ‘bride's school’ and her parents had arranged her marriage. Within a family unit, the ranks were prescribed – first the husband, then the eldest son, and then the wife. She accepted her status because she had been brought up to do so, and was content to be addressed at all times not by her name, but by her rank 'oksan' wife. We filmed the family at home having dinner, which she had prepared for her husband and children, and also went to a shopping spree with her. Another opportunity to juxtapose the old with the new. Shizu Yamaoka only wore kimonos, and there she was in the fur department of a very modern department store, choosing a stole, while Beethoven was gently piped to all the floors. Back at home, she was perfectly content to spend the evenings alone, while her husband, like most Japanese husbands, found his ‘relaxation’ outside the home with an abundance of bar girls in the

world's most bizarre entertainment industry. No Western woman, who hasn't been to Japan and studied the relationship within a typical family, will ever understand this.

To have a sequence in the film showing this extraordinary industry, which provided the Japanese male with exotic pleasures outside his home was, of course, irresistible. Cyril and I first came across an amazing example early on, when we were researching facts and looking for locations. We went and had dinner in a large and well-appointed restaurant. A small group played the latest pop music from the U.S; the waitresses were friendly and the food excellent. Our conversation was, as ever, about the script and the many problems we had to solve before we could lock down the final shape of the film. We hardly noticed that after the meal our table had been cleared, and it was only when the lights dimmed that we realised that some sort of floorshow was being prepared. I looked up and noticed that a searchlight was focused on a large birdcage, which was slowly descending from the ceiling, and I realised that it was going to land on our table. It did – a beautiful, nude young lady stepped out of the cage, and to applause from the other guests, handed me a menu and asked what we would like to drink. The only thing she was wearing was a headband advertising Santori whisky.

We were not able to include this particular venue in our 'bar sequence', but we discovered so many other establishments that we had no difficulty illustrating Tokyo's unique nightlife.

There were just two interviews to be shot. The first was Tom Harrison's interview with the Prime Minister, Hayato Ikeda, in his official Tokyo residence. He praised Japan's relationship with the United States, re-affirming that Japan's future was closely linked to America He stressed that promotion of trade with China was desirable, but friendly relations with the Unites States were vital to the Japanese people.

Inejiro Asanuma, the opposition leader, in our interview with him at his Socialist Party headquarters, stated the opposite viewpoint. He said that the economic dependence on America had not brought prosperity to many Japanese people, and that America was an actual danger to the freedom and independence of Japan. He worried about the likely re-emergence of the Japanese armament industry. He insisted on a peace economy, not one geared to war.

Sadly, this proved to be Asanuma's last ever interview, as just a few days later, at a political rally in Tokyo, he was assassinated by a right-wing student who ran on to the speaker's platform and stabbed him. Newsreel cameras recorded this grisly and tragic event. We used that footage in the final cut.

There just remained one more sequence to get into the camera – an act of pure self-indulgence. I had spotted amongst the plethora of the Ginza's animated bright advertising lights, high up on a tower of the Asahi Shimbum building, an electric news bulletin. This was similar to the running ribbon in New York's Time Square, showing all the latest news in letters 6ft tall. I asked Reg to negotiate permission for us to 'borrow it' for twenty minutes on the evening of our last day's filming. I don't know what the revellers in the Ginza might have made of it, but had they looked up to catch the news, they might have been surprised to read: *Written by Cyril Bennett, Directed by Peter Morley, An Associated-Rediffusion Network Production.* Instant end credits for our film – and Reg paid for it with a crate of beer, happily accepted by the operator of that facility.

In *The Two Faces of Japan* we tried to convey what was the mood at that time of that complex nation – and tried to indicate the way it was likely to swing in the future. I have never ceased to be fascinated by Japan. In the 1980s, when I was developing the first interactive video discs, I had the good luck to make several trips, learning more about its people and observing the fantastic changes that were taking place. In 1985, I was, at last, able to take Jane with me, and let her experience some of the many impressions that I had brought back to London over the years.

The Two Faces of Japan was transmitted on 2nd November 1960. It got huge viewer ratings, attracting an 87% share of the audience that night. The film was repeated three months later. It was shown worldwide, including Japan, where it was broadcast by Fuji Television. The press reviews were fairly blush-making, but it was a letter from the BBC that meant a lot to me. I had never met Norman Swallow, their great documentary maker, although we became good friends later. This is what he wrote:

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION 4th November 1960

Dear Peter Morley,

A brief line to say that I found your Japanese film to be quite magnificent; the best example of documentary television on an international theme that I have seen for a very long time – beautifully shot, edited with great style and force and with a commentary which was absolutely right. Many congratulations on a job of which you and your colleagues must surely be very proud.

With regards,
Yours sincerely

(Norman Swallow)
Chief Assistant (Documentary & General)
Talks, Television

9.25 NEWS
The latest from the newsroom of ITN

9.35 THE TWO FACES OF JAPAN

Japan, 1960 . . . Fifteen years after the first atomic bomb exploded on Hiroshima and the surrender of the Imperial Japanese Army, it is at peace. But it is a country of extreme contrasts. Rock 'n' roll and the Geisha girl; baseball and arranged marriages; mob violence and Buddhism. Have the Japanese changed? Despite 15 years of democracy, the Japanese still believe in violent solutions to their problems. A few days after he was interviewed in Tokyo for this programme, the leader of Japan's Socialist Party, I. Asanuma was assassinated. An Associated-Rediffusion Features Unit spent two months travelling in Japan to picture, in human terms, the impact of Western modernisation on the unvarying ritual, the strict code of discipline that is the essential feature of the Japanese nation. The programme poses two major questions for Britain: Are we ever going to have to fight Japan again? Will Japan ever again be an economic threat to this country?

Introduced by **Tom Harrisson**

Written by ***Cyril Bennett***
Research by ***Reginald Courtney-Browne***
Film editor ***Charles Squires***
Film cameraman ***Saburo Iwamura***
Camera assistants
Takayoshi Sugiuchi, Hiroyasu Koitabashi and Goro Uchiyama
Sound crew
Chisato Ota and Michio Orimoto
Directed by ***PETER MORLEY***
An Associated-Rediffusion Network Production

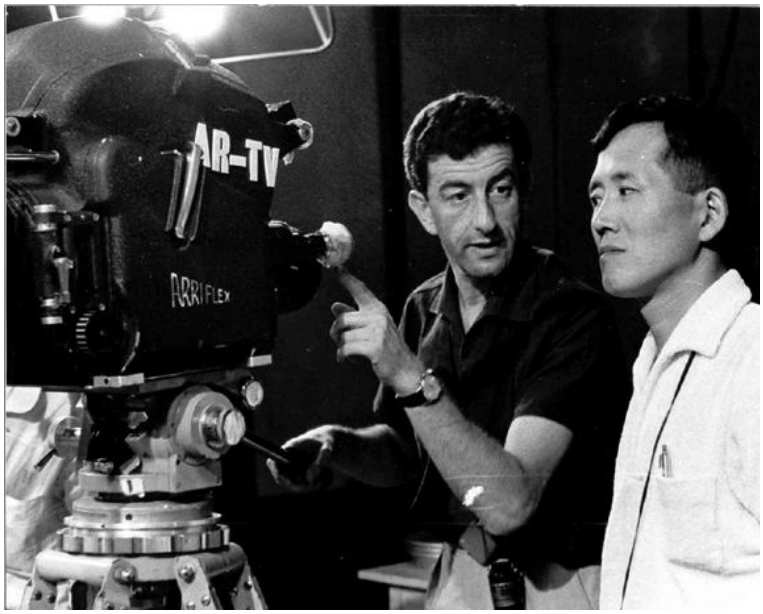
At Home At Work

Shigeko Yamasaki - a 22 year-old Tokyo model

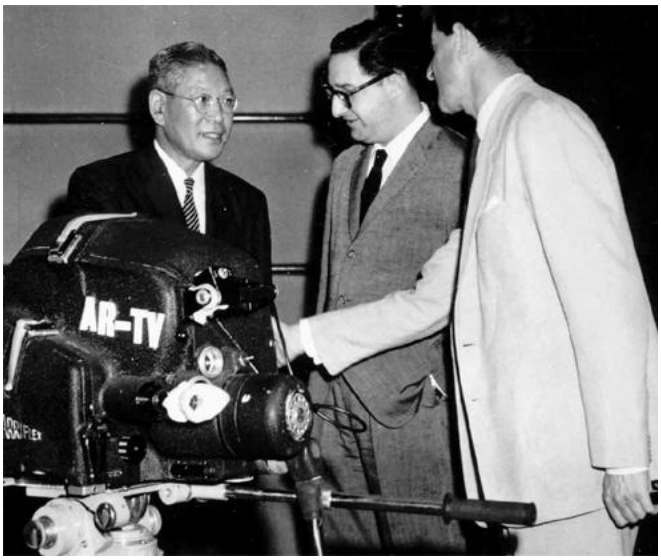
Uzuki Shoji - Kawasaki shipyard worker

Shizu Yamaoka - housewife

Seichi Kubota - Tokyo University student



Breaking the ice with my Cameraman - Sabura Iwamura



With Cyril Bennett
meeting Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda

Finalising ‘to camera’ links with Tom Harrison

A break in the filming with Shigeko, our model

Research for the film was not unpleasant

Chapter 14

In 1960, with five years experience directing live and filmed television programmes, I agreed to have a go at answering some questions sent to me by Derrick Knight, the Editor of *FILM*. I first met him in 1951, when he came to interview me in my cutting room over the old Umbrella Shop in New Oxford Street. At the time, he was writing a piece on 'British Documentary Film'. Now, ten years later, his magazine embraced television, and these excerpts, which I have found among my papers, reflect some early thoughts – almost 45 years ago:

DK Coming from Documentary Films to Television, did you find the transition difficult?

PM I joined Independent Television in its early chaotic days, and after four weeks went on the air with an all-live fifteen-minute programme. When it was over, I went down on the studio floor to thank the cast and technicians. Within a matter of minutes the studio had been cleared of all scenery. After all the effort that had gone into producing fifteen minutes screen time, all there was to show for it was this empty studio, and one or two people coming up and saying 'That was jolly good - went very smoothly'. Adjusting myself to accepting this new end-product was the most difficult part of the transition from film to television. Remember that the director of a live television programme does not see the final result of his efforts. Surrounded by a bank of T.V. monitors, he is so involved in conducting this giant electronic dubbing session, where production, performance, photography, cutting and dubbing take place simultaneously, that he has to ask an outsider after it is all over "how did it go?"

It is this adjustment to a very much shorter, and highly concentrated creative period, and having to be 'right first time', that presents the main difficulty. From the technical point of view, learning, or as I was, being plunged into this new medium, was frightening and exciting, but not difficult. I shall always be grateful for the years I spent hunched over a Moviola with scissors at the ready. I consider the cutting room to be the finest possible training ground for the television director, because it prepares one for the ultimate job in the control gallery: the composition, assembly and rhythm of the visual image in the course of a live production.

DK Does television require more talents than film?

PM No. Television is more complicated than film, therefore the television director's knowledge of the technical aspect of his craft has to be of a somewhat greater range, but the basic talents to be able to tell a story in picture and sound are shared by both.

DK You have directed programmes that were either all-film, film and live or all-live. How long did it take you to make one of the "Members' Mail" series, "Tyranny - the Years of Adolf Hitler", and "The Turn of the Screw"?

PM "Members' Mail" was a weekly fifteen-minute series, all shot on location. It allowed for two-and-a-half days shooting, the remainder of the week cutting, dubbing and preparing the next one. I remember years ago, spending six months cutting a one-reeler. Here, in the same length of time, the output was six and a half hours screen time. Sacrificing polish and finesse for urgency and topicality is one of the demands of television documentary. "Tyranny" was a different type of programme. It ran for one hour and was a mixture of archive film, specially shot film and the live studio. From the moment the idea was accepted, I had four weeks to transmission. This meant day and night work for the writer, Cyril Bennett, Charles Squires, the film editor, and myself, and included a hurried trip to Germany for filming key interviews. Benjamin Britten's opera, "The Turn of the Screw", was a two-hour live television production. It took nine months planning (part time only), five weeks rehearsing, and four days in the studio.

DK By comparison with TV, film allows time far perfection. No doubt it would have been easier to film "The Turn or the Screw" than produce it on live TV, but do you think it would have been any more effective?

PM If you mean 'a film of the opera', using film technique and breaking it down shot for shot, it would have been laborious from a technical point of view, very hard on the cast, and an immensely long and expensive production. On the other hand, the Paul Czinner method, using his multi-film-camera technique, and recording on film an existing stage production for posterity, would have defeated the point of my television production. I did not aim to preserve "The Turn of the Screw" the same way that the Bolshoi Ballet, and recently Margot Fonteyn have been recorded by that excellent method. I chose this opera because I felt that it would make 'good television'; that it was well suited to the small screen. Opera and television have found it difficult to be mutually compatible, in spite of some magnificent B.B.C. productions by Rudolph Cartier. I felt that Benjamin Britten could have written "The Screw" for television, and it was for that reason that Associated-Rediffusion agreed for me to direct it. Here we had all the advantages that television alone can offer. A special production, containing pure television technique, with the live sustained performances of the cast and orchestra. So the question of whether filming it would have been any more effective does not arise, as it would have been a totally different interpretation. In my view, it would have become another filmed opera, pleasing neither opera lovers on the one hand, nor filmgoers on the other.

DK Are you influenced, and if so how, by the fact that the audience is millions of small separate family groups sitting in their own living rooms rather than large mixed audiences in cinemas or theatres?

PM Whether the audience is a few hundred thousand or several millions, I never think of it in terms larger than a mass audience made up of one or two people. This is fundamental to the attitude a T.V. director has to have to his work. Balance, pace and timing have to be totally different for group audiences. I had proof of this when some of my programmes, like "Member's Mail" and especially "Fan Fever" were shown at the National Film Theatre's main cinema, on a large screen, for the 'Captive Cinema' season. The time I allowed for laughter reaction from a television viewer was not nearly

long enough for a large audience, and a lot of dialogue got lost. Tony Hancock's success as a television comedian is largely due to the way he addresses and plays to an intimate family circle. Sir Kenneth Clarke's magnificent lectures on revolutionary painters are a perfect example of how to speak to an audience of a few.

DK Some film producers are ingenuous enough to think they are uninfluenced by the thoughts of the audience, is this self-delusion possible on TV?

PM The TV director who is not influenced by his audience fails in his responsibility to it. "Tyranny" was a peak-time programme, aimed at a mass audience. This meant that the production had to have ingredients that would make it compelling viewing to readers of, say, both the Daily Mirror and The Times. Presenting the facts clearly and simply, without talking down to the audience and underestimating their intelligence (it often happens) are the basic rules. Over nine million people watched this programme, the largest audience a documentary programme has ever attracted – one cannot but help being influenced by it. "The Turn of the Screw", on the other hand, was aimed at a minority group – opera lovers. Here one could be quite uncompromising. I was free from the responsibility of attracting a large audience, a most refreshing and exciting experience, and of great credit to Associated-Rediffusion for making it possible.

DK Finally, can you see any advance in television technique in the foreseeable future, which will widen the gulf between T.V. and film?

PM The development of video-tape is bound to have a profound effect on both. How far it will bring the two together, or the opposite, is hard to tell. To the T.V. director this new device opens up great possibilities. The quality of the recorded picture is so good that he can use it as an additional picture source during a live studio production without anyone being able to tell that it has been pre-recorded. And who knows what future video-tape holds for the film-maker. Is film out? Will the amateur cinematographer with a small electronic camera be able to strap a pocket video-tape recorder round his waist, shoot, go home and play it back on a TV monitor? I am looking forward to reading FILM in 1965, I think, by then, we may have the answer.

Younger people working in the industry today, never having experienced a world without television, might find the excerpts from this FILM interview rather quaint. But it all had to start somewhere; and those of us who had the great good luck to be involved in these early days, look back with some pride on this period of unpredictability and excitement. I don't think any of us realised at the time that we were, in fact, pioneering – we would have been even more impossible to live with if we had. It's only in looking back that one can recall the huge risks that the ITV bosses took, employing producers and directors with negligible experience and no yardstick to go by – it really was a step into the unknown. This was the age of adventure and exploration – before that adventure turned into a giant industry – marvelling at the fact that one was actually being paid for it. How things have changed.

* * * *

My next assignment was a follow-up to *The Two Faces of Japan*. A-R was on a roll with its documentaries, and it was not difficult to get John McMillan to back the 'Japan' team with our next idea. Little did we know that we were making a rod for our backs – we chose France. Japan was unfamiliar territory, viewers simply had to take our word for everything in the film; but here we were going to explore a country a few miles across the channel, and we soon discovered a major tripwire – the danger of perpetuating clichés about that familiar neighbour of ours. We had to be on our guard all the time.

The press quoted me as saying before we left for France: *"We do not intend to do a highly topical programme, but rather one which if viewed in 12-months time will still be as balanced as on the day of the original transmission. We want to find out something about the French character and through that come to a better understanding of their problems – in short 'what makes a Frenchman tick'.* A tall order.

As with Japan, we spent a month in France, travelling round, researching, meeting people, getting ideas, finding locations, and allowing enough time for a script to emerge. We looked for participants who would act as points of focus. There was also the research for archive material for short historical sequences (French Indo-China, Algiers, elections, demonstrations, etc.). Finally, we settled for a peasant farmer and his family, a goldsmith, a young artisan family, a Dior model and a painter. I used a French film crew; mercifully, this time the cameraman, Jack Curtis, was bi-lingual.

The only bit of France that I could recall was Normandy and the 1944 fight north to Belgium and beyond; all of that had by then taken a backseat in my memory. Now television presented me with this opportunity to get to know the country. I found this pre-production month stimulating and very enjoyable – with Paris as our headquarters that was not difficult; going to one of Edith Piaff's famous performances being one of the high points.

We collected such a rich inventory of potential ingredients that the problem of deciding what to include stared one in the face. It was as important to show the squalor of Algerian immigrants surviving in their *bidonvilles,* the 'petrol can' shantytown slums of Nanterre, only three miles from the Arc de Triomphe, as it was to show the positive achievements of French industry, infrastructure, and the changing face of the nation.

On our last night before shooting started, over a dinner that went on to the early hours, Cyril and I came to the final script decisions. The next day, the four-week shoot started. Of the many locations and situations we filmed, all with their memories, I will recall just two:

France's haute couture and its influence on the rest of the world demanded inclusion in our story. We had persuaded the House of Christian Dior to let us film their famous Spring Collection. I got a second camera crew for this, because at the last moment, in addition to the front-of house catwalk, I got permission to shoot inside the sacred changing room for a behind-the-scene sequence. Dior had never allowed this before – so they took quite a risk. The camera captured this total pandemonium in the overcrowded inner sanctum as the models came off the catwalk. They had to change into a new number at lightning speed, ready for their next entrance. There were about twenty of them in various stages of undress, some half naked, some totally, with an army of hysterical dressers in a great panic administering to them. And outside, the international audience, closely seated around the catwalk, was aware only

of gentle music and the serene appearances of models. It was a useful addition to our study of the French.

The other vivid memory concerns Yves Klein. We were keen to give a picture of the contemporary art scene in Paris in 1960 – with the accent on the avant-garde. Yves Klein was considered then to be one of the most controversial artists of the twentieth-century. He was a pioneer of performance and conceptual art, exploring the 'poetic power of pure colour and space'. He was a leading member of the Neo-Dadaists in Europe, and with others, founded Nouveau Réalisme, a movement in which elements that constitute everyday reality – such as junk metal or rubbish collected at random – are transformed into works of art. Klein was also a jazz musician and a black belt judoka. When we were in Paris, we found him committed to the use of his ultramarine blue, a glorious pigment that he claims to have invented. He used this colour to make monochrome paintings and sculptures, often featuring sponges painted blue. Klein sought to 'free art from line and form, and rid it of its material dimension'. Cyril and I felt that we simply had to capture this man on film.

He had recently embarked on a series of 'living brush' exhibitions, public performances in which, under his direction, naked models covered themselves in his blue paint and used their bodies to make imprints on canvas laid out on the floor, and on the walls. One such performance, which took place at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain in 1960, was accompanied by an orchestral rendition of Klein's Symphonie Monochrome, in which a chord, held for 20 minutes, was followed by a 20-minute silence. Klein called his 'living brush' paintings, Anthropométries.

I feared that he would not want to co-operate, but I was wrong. He was only too willing, but said that he might have 'legal' problems filming his 'living brush' paintings in France; instead, he suggested a friend's photographic studio in Düsseldorf, Germany. And so we went there, and he introduced us, firstly, to his ultramarine pigment, which he called International Klein Blue (IKB), and then to a very beautiful model, his 'living brush'. He had prepared the studio before we arrived, with huge sheets of white paper on the floor, and others covering the walls. He then asked his model to undress and to cover herself, head to foot, with his paint, while he went next door to put on his dinner jacket and black tie. When he re-appeared, he spotted a couple of small areas on the model needing some more paint, which he then applied himself by hand.

In the meantime, we had set up the camera, and because I had no idea what to expect, he agreed that we could have a rehearsal. He climbed up a tall stepladder, and using that as his director's chair, instructed his 'living brush' what to do. He told the model to take up her first position, with her back to the camera, and to kneel down, bend forwards until her head touched the floor in front of her. At this point, Jacques Chotel, the non-English-speaking assistant cameraman, who was lining up this first shot, looked across to me, urgently calling out: "Peteur – Peteur", beckoning me to come over quickly, pointing at the camera's viewfinder and exclaiming: "oulala – lala – lala!" I soon spotted what caused his great concern: our model had failed to apply paint to the most intimate part of her anatomy – it was like seeing a close-up of a rabbit (a blue one) from behind with its conspicuous white tail. I had to explain this to Yves Klein and he executed a quick repair.

The filming went well: shots of the model writhing all over the floor, with her movements directed by Yves Klein, followed by a quick application of fresh paint, and then standing up and being told which parts of her body to press against the paper on the

walls, again with quite complicated movements. It turned out to be a unique piece of filming. Sadly, Yves Klein died two years later, he was only thirty-four. An exhibition, decades later, at London's Hayward Gallery in 1995, showed the impact this extraordinary artist has made, with the lasting legacy of his work as proof.

At Associated-Rediffusion, Joan Elman, the resident company lawyer, had to vet the station's output. All scripts went to her as a matter of routine, and all pre-recorded programmes were scrutinised by her for possible legal infringements. *The Heartbeat of France,* she felt, needed to go up to the ITA for approval, because of the full-frontal nudity of Yves Klein's model. I was told to delete a particular scene, but good sense prevailed when I was able to persuade them that, in fact, she was not nude because she was dressed in the artist's paint!

Transmission was on 14th June 1960 – the programme attracted good audience ratings, and press reaction was, on the whole, fairly positive:

> *'We saw a France awakening to new life, taking the Sixties as she finds them. This was a land with no time for yesterday; a land being inherited by a generation that recognized that the world is changing, and succeeding in giving their country a part in setting the direction.'*
>
> *'...glimpses of extremes, from the opulence of fashion and beauty salons to the misery of Algiers, civil disturbance, independent peasants, the abstract artist. A country of contrasts that no one would wish to alter. Yet a country of confusion that one hopes will find tranquilly.'*
>
> *'... delightfully conceived and presented, and was not without its crazy side - unless the shots of an artist on top of a ladder directing a paint-daubed girl as she rolled against a wall to produce his masterpiece were intended to be serious.'*
>
> *'As a reminder of the truth of the old adage, "The situation in France is always critical but never serious" it could not have been more effective.'*

Are we any the wiser now about the French? I doubt it, but I believe that we at least managed to portray France in a different light, avoiding well-worn clichés.

With a cast of thousands!

Shooting on Mme Furtain's farm

The artist Yves Klein applying the blue pigment he invented to his 'living' paint brush

Christian Dior designer Marc Bohan dressing his favourite model

Chapter 15

"You've both had your moments in Japan and in France – and now you owe me." Once again, John McMillan had called Cyril Bennett and me to his office. "Good programmes, good press, good ratings, and the Board is delighted – but I have a big problem – and I am counting on you to help me out." I was at a loss to guess what would come next.

At that time *This Week* was ITV's flagship current affairs programme – in fact, its only one. It was launched by A-R in 1956, and after early teething troubles, became the Network's weekly prestige programme. The BBC's *Panorama* had been revamped that year, with Richard Dimbleby as its chief anchor, and for the next thirty-five years *This Week*'s strident opening title music, Sibelius's Karelia Suite, was to herald ITV's weekly challenge to the BBC.

But now, after a fairly uneven first five years, *This Week* was under threat. Although it was getting a peak-time audience of between nine and ten million viewers, it was regularly clobbered by Friday nights' BBC comedy (Tony Hancock) programmes. In spite of its long run, it was never able to build up a following to compare with Panorama. By early 1961, it was struggling, and a drop in the ever-important ratings battle alarmed the ITA. The press often referred to it as the 'poor man's *Panorama'*. The other ITV network companies threatened to seek ITA ruling to make it no longer mandatory for *This Week* to be carried by the rest of the ITV Network. For a company like A-R, with its eye on the next franchise allocation battle, this was very bad news

"I want you boys to take it over immediately, and to make it sing again," said John, "and you, Pete, to be its producer, and you, Cyril, its Editor. After six months you can go away and do anything you like – just get me out of this hole."

Cyril was delighted; after all, he was a journalist who had clocked up a lot of experience in Fleet Street. His taste for good news stories and politics, here and abroad, was firmly in place – and now he had the chance to be in the editorial driving seat. He relished the prospect. He had now been in television long enough to appreciate the finer points of the new visual journalism, and what better way for him to show his mettle than to call the editorial shots for a major weekly current affairs programme. We recruited Elkan Allan (who worked with me on *Fan Fever* five years earlier) to share the Editor's function with Cyril for the first few months, before he was due to go off to concentrate on his own programmes.

My reaction was, to say the least, muted. Of course, I felt flattered to have been asked, but I left McMillan's office with trepidation. I was not a journalist, nor was I particularly interested in politics. I was a film-maker, a director – someone who cared very much about the style, look and feel of a programme – and I feared that I would have to compromise standards to meet the urgency and immediacy of current affairs

In fact, once we got going, Cyril wallowed in the weekly transmission cycle, and his adrenalin flowed even more rapidly, when on the morning of transmission-day, the contents for that night's programme was still in doubt. And every week he lived for that moment – and every week I nearly died.

And there was another matter that worried me: the thought that we would be able to hoist up a programme by its bootstraps and transform it in six months was ludicrous. After all, we were about to inherit a large team that had been with *This Week* for a very long time, with big and ambitious programme plans in the pipeline. I knew that it would take at least six months to absorb this inheritance factor, and probably another six for our proposed changes to begin to take effect – to become discernable to the viewer.

We kept on Brian Connell as our presenter, and enlarged the reporting team to include Brian Magee, Jeremy Thorpe, Desmond Wilcox, Judith Jackson, and supplemented this list with the ad hoc use of well-known Fleet Street journalists, like Kenneth Harris, James Cameron, George Ffitch, Colin Legum, Paul Johnson, Ludovic Kennedy, Dan Farson, Robert Key, Alistair Burnett and John Morgan. Either Cyril or I chaired our weekly editorial meetings, but it was Cyril who supplied the impetus for the long and often heated debates, narrowing down the subjects the programme should tackle. I took on the role of the long-stop – the filter, who on behalf of our viewers questioned the why's and the how's of the plethora of subjects that emerged from the journalistic team. Reg Courtney Browne was our senior researcher; he had made contact with a most valuable spy in the Panorama unit, so we were pretty well informed about their plans – just as the BBC had their (unknown to us) spy in Television House. Panorama was transmitted on a Monday, and *This Week* was traditionally on the air every Friday. The press took a great interest in the rivalry.

My primary concern was to instil and maintain the highest possible production standards in an atmosphere where it was all happening at breakneck speed, often sidelining the care and quality I cared about. I spent a great deal of my time in our four cutting rooms, where I was able to supervise the directing, shooting and editing of our output.

When we took over in 1961, all film was still shot on 35mm. 16mm was entering the professional field, having cut its teeth in the amateur home movie business; but now the Arriflex cameras from Germany were becoming available and the film laboratories were gearing up for 16mm processing. Professionals were very sniffy about 16mm, and the *This Week* team, especially the cameramen and film editors, had to be persuaded to embrace this breakthrough. The great advantage would be the mobility (weight and size) of the equipment, including the cost-saving in flying the gear all over the world; but what intrigued me most was the effect on our film-making style, with the use of lightweight hand-held cameras. We were trying out something new, and that was exciting.

Of course, there were problems to solve. The 16mm editing equipment in the cutting rooms was still primitive and extremely fiddly. As an ex-editor, I readily understood that our editors would hate it. The solution I came up with, bizarre as it might sound today, was to 'blow up' the 16mm negative film to 35mm positive working prints, as part of the overnight laboratory routine for rushes. It was efficient, and kept the editors happy.

Up to now, I had always created my own programmes for A-R, and I knew, that as a producer in charge of a huge output, I would find it very frustrating to be one step removed from the action. I therefore decided right from the start, that I would be responsible for the weekly live studio direction. This would not only keep my hand in, but also give me a chance to set a coherent style for the 'on air' look of the programme.

I was to clock up over one hundred live *This Week* transmissions. This was my way of giving my adrenalin a weekly outing.

We went on the air with our first edition on 23rd June 1961. A-R had put out a press release announcing *This Week's* new production team. Press coverage was both flattering and scary; I have always preferred faint praise after a show rather than before.

Bristol Evening World:
One of Britain's most experienced programme directors is Peter Morley. So it is no surprise that he has been given the job of putting extra punch into "This Week". Despite its excellence, it has been regularly losing viewers to the other channel, where a well-known comedian has been currently holding forth each week at the same time.

North Western Evening Mail:
"*THIS WEEK" has inevitably been re-named as ITV's answer to the BBC's "Panorama", and likewise has suffered by comparison with it. An impressive number of the famous have appeared in "This Week", but in spite of this, and not always without justification, it has tended to be looked on as a Panorama's "poor relation". It has undergone many changes and tonight comes "under entirely new management". Brian Connell, ITV's Dimbleby, is still there to steer the programme, but there is a new behind the scenes team. It includes Peter Morley as producer, and Cyril Bennett and Elkan Allan as editors, three men who have been responsible for some successful feature programmes among them "Tyranny", "The Two Faces of Japan" and "The Heartbeat of France".*

A huge sigh of relief all round when we came off the air that first night. The programme had worked; the *This Week* team seemed to approve the new style; the reviews were gratifying – but I well remember when I drove home that night, being in a cold sweat worrying about next week's edition.

And so, week after week, under very close scrutiny both from the press and the ITA, we slowly hauled ourselves up the prestige and ratings ladder, but John McMillan's 'just for six months, boys' became woefully inadequate. The changes we were instituting had to be gradual. Sometimes, we chose single item editions, either all on film, or in the studio, but often a mixture of both. And then, we had magazine editions with two or three, and sometimes, even four items. The press began to take us seriously, and that gave the team that 'wanted' feeling, which Cyril and I built on. Soon the day of transmission was to change – and we all welcomed that.

Television Weekly:
The New Year has brought a revised time for TV's longest running current affairs programme, THIS WEEK. "Now we are going on the air at 9.15 pm on Thursdays, directly after the nine o'clock news, we shall have to be even more careful that we are bang up to date," explains Peter Morley. "Topicality will become even more important than before and already we try to be as up to the

minute as we can, sometimes still editing film for the programme after it has started." Peter Morley started directing the programme that he has slowly but surely re-shaped into its present form.

It turned out that McMillan's famous six months stretched to just over two years before he agreed for us to move on. The pace was hectic. A-R was generous with its programme budget, and we could afford to send directors, reporters and crews all over the world.

It would make a very heavy read indeed, if I were to list all the many stories and subjects we covered during that time – so I won't. It would also reveal an impossibly long name-dropping list of the good, bad, famous and infamous people I have met, usually in the Green Room before and after the programme came off the air. In over two years, there could not have been a leading politician, prime minister past or present, or major figure from around the world, who did not grace our studio. A history of *This Week* has recently been compiled by academics at Bournemouth University – now published by its author, Patricia Holland, who has called it *The Angry Buzz* – an authentic and extremely well-researched account – more than my sketchy memory can deliver after all this time.

However, there are just a few highlights I would like to recall. The first, is a one-item edition, and its subject is as relevant and urgent today as it was forty-two years a go – in 1962. At the time, Peter Black, that much respected critic, set the tone in the *Daily Mail*:

THIS WEEK has steadily improved since it was moved to its new day and time. Its interviews in particular have found increased vitality. Last night it had a terrific sequence of filmed interviews with young proletarian smokers (ages 11-15) who testified to their addiction in language that lost none of its horror through being drawn, as far as one could judge, from a total vocabulary of about 200 words. Even optimistic sociologists must have reflected that these children represented a poor return for all that orange juice and vitaminised milk.

The talk between the doctor and the tobacco manufacturers' representative generated further heat. This is one subject that can stand the fullest debate, and TV is the most telling place for it. Associated-Rediffusion is to be congratulated on not ducking it, as it could easily have done.

Behind this particular edition is a story, which I take some comfort in recalling now, because it shows how hopelessly wrong one can be. A-R's staff department had asked us to interview a young man, straight down from Cambridge, to see whether he would be acceptable as a trainee researcher on the team. Cyril and I thought that we should give him a chance – he seemed to have a good approach to current affairs television and he also displayed a healthy sense of humour.

Some weeks after joining us, we decided to do the children-smoking edition, and I got this trainee to do the research, find the school, lay on the participants and organise the shoot. Unfortunately, Desmond Wilcox, who was so good with children, would have been the ideal reporter for this story, but we had sent him abroad with a film crew – and there was no one else to call on at short notice. I discussed this with Randall Beatty, the director for this story, and asked him to use this trainee as the interviewer, but to make sure that his questions solicited statements from the kids, as opposed to short

answers. We would then delete the questions on the final cut – a technique I had developed, starting with *Fan Fever* and also *Members' Mail*, six years earlier. If this did not work out, the trainee was to ask his questions in the standard form, but off camera, not to be seen in shot, as I did not think that he would be good enough – indeed, would never make it in television. His name was David Frost!

This press review is a particularly apt reflection:

> *The New Daily* - Pauline Richardson
> *One of the strengths of This Week is that its reporters take a back seat, as it were, in most of the interviewing they are called upon to do, and people questioned very largely are left to ramble on by themselves. This Week abounds in a delightful spontaneity and freedom which makes the interviewing methods of Panorama seem dull.*

Some months later, David, soon known as 'Frostie', asked me to release him for the odd afternoon, as he had been asked to help in the development of a new BBC programme. He told me it was to be a satirical show. With my earlier misjudgement of him in mind, I readily agreed to his request. The upshot was *That Was The Week That Was,* fronted by David Frost. We have often bumped into each other over the years, always with a good laugh about my prescient vision of him.

Another *This Week* highlight that is worth recalling goes under the heading of 'the one that got away'.

Ever since the end of the war there had been speculation about the fate of top Nazis – who and how they escaped the Allies. One notorious escape route was known to military intelligence as the 'ratline'. It ran from numerous collection points in Central Europe through a series of monasteries and Catholic safe houses to St Gerolomos (a college in the Vatican City) and then on to Genoa, from where the escapees sailed to South America. It is said that the Vatican organized and financed the 'ratline', and that it was allegedly partly funded by assets stolen from concentration camps and other victims. According to records uncovered in Argentina, President Peron's government, which was in power from 1946 to 1955, shepherded nearly 300 war criminals into his country. Besides such notorious figures as Adolf Eichmann, Josef Mengele, Klaus Barbie and other high-ranking Nazi fugitives, dozens of French, Belgian, Italian, Croatian and Slovak fascists, many of them Nazi collaborators sought in their home nations, were also admitted, some under aliases, others under their real names.

In 1960, Eichmann was tracked down to Argentina and spirited back to Israel by Mossad agents, tried and executed. Mengele, the murderous Auschwitz doctor, perpetrator of the most horrific medical experimentation, died in Brazil in the eighties. In 1987, Barbie, the Butcher of Lyons, was extradited from Bolivia to France, convicted of war crimes, and died in prison in 1991. But it was the possibility of Martin Bormann's survival after the fall of Berlin, which caused a continuing controversy right up to the 1970s. He was, after all, Hitler's closest colleague, and his possible escape spawned many wild stories.

Now, in 1961, sixteen years after the end of the war, I was given the opportunity to film the 'ratline'. It came about when the contact I had made two years earlier – leading up to my secret interviews with Hitler's sister and other cronies – once again

approached me. He arranged for me to be met by a man at Munich airport, who would be my guide. Also, I was to bring plenty of cash. John McMillan had agreed to this venture, and told me to ring him at his flat in London should I need more than £500. He, Cyril and I had decided that this story was potentially so hot that we should keep it under our hats until I returned.

My guide duly met me at Munich airport. He told me that he was a journalist and businessman, but withheld his name. He drove me south through Garmisch Partenkirchen and into the Austrian Tyrol – followed by another car with the German film crew that I had previously booked from London. Our destination turned out to be the small town of Nauders, situated in the Austrian *Dreieck* – the triangle – the three-cornered meeting point of the borders of Austria, Switzerland and Italy. He had booked rooms in a small hotel, and over dinner (superb fresh trout from the river Inn), he told me the plan for the next day. We would have a steep climb up to a small, ancient homestead, and meet its owner, the local mountain guide, also known as 'The Smuggler'.

We started our trek early that morning, humping the camera gear up the steep slopes, until we reached the homestead. The mountain guide came out to meet us – an old man, with a full beard and a gnarled face, speaking a dialect that even my nameless German-speaking guide had to struggle with. He could have stepped straight out of *Central Casting*.

I had told the camera crew beforehand to shoot 'from the hip', as we called it, and cover this meeting, especially my attempt to interview the guide. He turned out to be amazingly frank about everything. He clearly remembered giving shelter to a great number of high-ranking Nazis, recalling the names of Eichmann and Mengele. He also spoke of Martin Borman, but was not certain, as all his clients, as he called them, were in some form of disguise. Each one stayed a single night with him, and when I asked to see the room he hid his travellers in, he proudly let me film him heaving a huge wardrobe away from the wall, to reveal the door that led to their hideout. Then, in the early hours, he would take his charges up the mountain to the *Dreieck* border point, cross with them into Italy and hand them over to an Italian guide.

The old man now led us along the same route up the mountain, until we reached the *Dreieck.* There was no border sign, fence or even a post to mark the three frontiers, but with his spiked walking stick he pointed, in turn, to Switzerland and Italy. After a few yards further on, he announced that we were now in Italy – the point where sixteen years earlier he handed over his charges to an Italian guide. He then led us back to his homestead; my Munich guide had agreed a fee with him in advance of our arrival and I parted with £50, which he gladly accepted.

The next morning I joined the camera crew in their car, and we set off for Italy; the Munich guide had arranged for me to meet a 'friend' in Merano, who would reveal the next stage of the 'ratline'.

Merano is in the Trentino-Alto Adige Region of northern Italy, about 100 mountainous miles south-east of the Austrian *Dreieck*. Before the First World War, this part of Italy belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, part of a much larger Tyrol, but was ceded to Italy in 1919. In 1945, at the end of the Second World War, it was (and still is) a largely German-speaking region, and became a haven to thousands of 'escapees' from Nazi Germany, many of whose descendents still live there today.
My rendezvous with my new contact was at Merano railway station. He had spotted us first, introduced himself in perfect German (again gave no name) and took us to the

hotel he had booked for us near the station. At the check-in desk, I became aware, for the first time, of a slightly strange atmosphere. It was the way the clerk took our details, scrutinised my passport, without the friendly greeting one normally gets on checking in. I also noted that the guide was in deep conversation with the hotel manager, in German.

Later, he took us to some locations he thought would be of interest. He pointed to the exterior of our hotel and a set of windows on the top floor, which, he said were the overnight rooms for the 'visitors' who came from Germany. From here, they were handed over to the 'experts', as he called them, before they were escorted to their next temporary home. We then walked to a couple of mansions that he said were 'safe' houses. Often, the 'visitors' would be put on a train the next morning to go 'further south'. By the end of that day, I had enough information to plan a sequence I could shoot, portraying Merano and the obvious landmarks to illustrate that part of the story.

And then, over dinner, there was some disappointing news. He told me that he had failed to get me an introduction to someone he knew well in a Vatican College in Rome, and who had declined to be interviewed. Also, that it was highly unlikely for me to find anyone else in Rome who would be prepared to speak about the immediate post-war period. The Vatican's alleged involvement in the escape of leading Nazis was not new – so I was not a bit surprised. But then, he gave me some good news. He had set up three interviews for me. He said that he would give me the names and addresses, but I would have to handle the filming on my own, as he was leaving Merano early the next morning. He then told me who they were. Apparently, as the Russians approached Berlin in 1945, Bormann dispatched his wife, Gerda, and their ten children, to northern Italy. He was not the only high-ranking Nazi who organised their family's escape from Germany at that time. In 1946, Gerda Bormann died of cancer, and a Countess, with an old Habsburg title, who lived in a large villa outside Merano, fostered the family. My guide had persuaded her to take part in an interview with me, as well as two of Bormann's daughters who were staying with her. That was a bit of luck, and I looked forward to the next day. I went up to my room and discovered that while I had been in the dining room, someone had rifled my briefcase and been through my, as yet, unpacked clothes. Not what I had expected.

While we were filming the exteriors the next morning, I got the distinct feeling that we were being followed and observed. Later the cameraman confirmed to me that he had seen the same two men on several occasions, and that they were taking notes. I began to feel a bit uneasy.

In the afternoon, I made contact with the Countess and we set off to her villa for the interviews. She was in her seventies, very friendly and hospitable and willing to talk about the Bormann family. She only spoke German, so I had quite a struggle, but we managed to communicate fairly easily. I was told in some detail how she managed to cope with the Bormann children. She said that she had never met their father, and believed absolutely that he perished in Berlin, escaping from the bunker shortly after Hitler had shot himself.

Then it was the turn of the daughters. The eldest was teaching, and the youngest, aged about eighteen, was studying. They spoke lovingly of their parents, especially their mother, and were adamant that their father was shot by Russian troops trying to escape.

When I said that this was the *This Week* story 'that got away', I did not mean that to be Bormann. In fact, it was the whole story. On my return to London, I screened the rushes and quickly assembled the material into a ten-minute item for the programme. Cyril and I then ran head-on into a brick wall. Brian Connell, our very conservative presenter, protested because the veracity of my escape line story could not be proved, and that he felt that *This Week* could be accused of tabloid journalism. Of course, we would never make the claim that this was the truth; we wanted to present it as a piece of speculative journalism – that it was quite possible that this could have been a section of the 'ratline', and that Bormann might have used it as his route. In any case, Cyril and I had planned to follow up the film with a discussion in the studio about possible Vatican involvement. And that did it. John McMillan (who was on our side) decided to sound out the ITA. The official verdict from them was that the danger of some viewers possibly being misled into believing that the programme had finally shown that Martin Bormann had escaped to South America with the connivance of the Vatican, would be harmful to *This Week.* Their consensus was that the project must be abandoned. Cyril and I were furious – at the time neither of us appreciated the immense power of the word 'Vatican' – and the reactions it could create.

Ten years later, in 1972, a skeleton discovered in West Berlin, not far from the Hitler's bunker, was identified as Bormann. Dental and DNA matches were established, and in 1973, he was officially declared dead by the West German authorities.

Sadly, when A-R lost its franchise in 1967, a considerable amount of its film library was lost as well – and in spite of many searches I have failed to track down my 'ratline' film. However, I have a number of photographs, so at least I have a record of my Munich contact, the mountain guide, the climb to the *Dreieck* and pictures of the Countess and the two Bormann daughters.

* * * *

Another highlight of 1962 was a *This Week* Special. The Duke of Edinburgh had just set off on a two-months tour of South America. This was more than a flag-waving exercise; it was a journey to promote British trade, money and skills.

Cyril and I put in a request to Buckingham Palace, inviting Prince Philip to present a personal report on his return from this ambitious visit to the sub-continent. We went to the Palace to meet James Orr, his private secretary, who was quite keen on the idea, but warned us that HRH would need some persuading. I then spelled out in some detail what this would entail. The programme would be extended to forty-five minutes. We would script, and assemble, using archive footage, historical sequences of all the countries of his visit, plus the ITN newsreel material covering his travels. We would ask him to come to Television House a day or so before transmission to record his own narration for the film clips (Cyril would write these). And for the actual Thursday night broadcast, I was keen for him to present this 'live' programme himself, ending with an interview with Brian Connell.

James Orr took a deep breath. He pointed out that HRH had never appeared on ITV before, and the Palace was always cautious about setting precedents. Also, up to now,

he had only ever agreed to a BBC interview, and may baulk at doing anything more ambitious. But he said he would send a signal to HRH, and put our request to him.

It's worth recalling that at the time ITA rules stipulated that programmes featuring royalty were not allowed to carry advertisements, and not only that, they also had to have 'neutral buffers' at the beginning and end, to separate them from the commercials.

While we were waiting for news, we started compiling the filmed elements – it finally took several signals from James Orr to Prince Philip for him to agree.

We sent our narration scripts to Windsor Castle to await Prince Philip's return, and were then told by James Orr to report there to discuss the programme. We both arrived and were told to wait outside his private quarters. I recall seeing a young Prince Charles playing with a toy glider in the grounds, when HRH appeared, asking us into his study. He was very cold with us, castigating the script, telling us that he had never read such rubbish in his life, and that we were to return the following day, as he would rewrite it all. Inwardly I was furious, and realizing that I was about to put the whole enterprise at risk, said to him that we were professionals with a lot of television programme making experience, and that I would be surprised if the script could be improved. He showed us out.

We realized the following morning, when Cyril and I once more entered the castle's inner sanctum, that this was Prince Philip's way of sizing up the caliber of people he deals with – finding out what they are made of, whether they could be trusted. He came out, giving each of us a beautifully typed copy (on crested heavy cream paper) of his re-write. "Come straight through to my study when you have finished reading." We read it quickly, noting that he had hardly altered anything, and walked in. He greeted us with smile, pressed a bell to order some coffee for us, and from that moment on we got on like a house on fire.

A-R's Managing Director was Captain Tom Brownrigg R.N. (Ret'd), and he took an intensive interest in *This Week*'s foray into royal waters. He had been the Mediterranean Fleet's Navigating officer during the war, where he had made the acquaintance of the young Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, and now he made sure that the prescribed royal protocol would be followed to the letter. He issued 'orders of the day', stage-managing the first royal visit to Television House. There were detailed instructions about the make-up of the official line-up in the foyer: "The Chairman, Board of Directors, General Manager, Controller of Programmes and Morley to be in position at 11.00 hrs, etc." There were instructions, with exact details, about the food, drink and floral decorations in the Green Room. "The 'Gents' on the floor of the dubbing theatre to be re-decorated, with Morley to be the key holder," and so on.

Prince Philip wanted to see the film clips before coming to Television House for the recording, and he asked whether this could be done at Windsor. So I had to organize the temporary installation of a 35mm projector in the castle's glorious St.George's Hall, and we made another trip to show the clips. All went well, and I took the opportunity to brief him about Captain Brownrigg's arrangement at TV House. "Good God", said Prince Philip, "you don't mean Bugger Brownrigg?" We learnt that this was how he was known in the Navy, and enjoyed listening to some hilarious wartime anecdotes, some very indiscreet, about naval matters during the war. He also said that

he really hated these overblown arrangements whenever he goes anywhere, especially on what he called 'working visits'.

The day came for the recording, the line-up was in position, and when Prince Philip arrived with James Orr, there was a perfunctory shaking of hands with Spencer Wills, the Chairman, and the others; he then quickly turned to me and said: "Come on, Peter, let's go, we have work to do." This, I was to learn over the years, was typically Prince Philip.

We went upstairs to our dubbing theatre, and I installed him in the commentary booth. I sat next to him. He readily took directions, and was prepared for any number of takes to get it right. I had also booked an extra two hours rehearsal time in the main studio, so that I could give some quick lessons on the use of the Autocue teleprompting system. It was a good day.

And then came transmission day. Prince Philip arrived early evening for another studio rehearsal, and then Cyril and I had dinner with him in the Green Room. At 9.15pm we went on the air. He took to it like a seasoned reporter, not showing any nerves. About halfway through the programme, as we came out of a film clip and back 'live' to the studio, he ignored his autocue and said: "Well, this seems to be rather like a natural break here. I wonder if could do a bit of advertising", and turning to one of the cameramen, he asked: "Would that be all right?" At this point, the whole crew corpsed, but he quickly returned to his script and continued until, finally, with great relief, I cued the end credits, with the ringing tones of the Karelia Suite seeing us out.

* * * *

Without any doubt, the most important and memorable event during my *This* Week stint occurred early in 1962. I finally did it. I married that delightful, pretty and young P.A. from Ipswich, who had been my assistant for a short period in 1956, and again in 1957. Jane had been a senior drama P.A. these past years and was enjoying her work very much, and because *This* Week kept me in London, we saw a great deal of one another. We enjoyed holidays in Scandinavia, Italy and Switzerland. Jane recalls with glee that I had been hopelessly reluctant to commit myself, clinging on to my confirmed bachelorhood (true) and now, aged 38 had finally decided to settle down. We got married in London's famous Register Office, Caxton Hall, in Victoria Street, with both families and our friends on parade, except my mother, who did not come over from Switzerland.

John and Jackie McMillan had generously invited everyone, plus many colleagues from A-R, to their flat in Bickenhall Mansions by Regent's Park, for a sumptuous buffet luncheon. Afterwards, we went to our brand new home, a small neo-Georgian house in Grange Grove, Canonbury, to get ready for our evening party. I had already moved in from my Kennington bachelor flat a month before for some serious do-it-yourself; and that very morning I was putting the last coat of paint to some bookshelves when I let in the caterers, who had arrived with tables and chairs. I had the paintbrush in my hand as I opened the door, and was not surprised when they asked whether Mr. Morley, the groom, was at home.

The small house nearly burst at the seams as our guests arrived that evening. Jane's parents, Arthur and Phyllis Tillett, her aunt, Marjorie Stevens, my sister Anne, my brother's family, Tommy, Molly and their three boys, Anthony, David and Richard; our closest friends, Thilde and Ernst Fraenkel, Shirley Nutten, Rosemary Peachment and many more; and from the television world, Cyril and Shirley Bennett, the McMillan's and Brian Connell.

It was a good party, and Cinderella-like, at midnight our coach arrived to take us away to our short honeymoon in St. Moritz. Jane had been on skis before, winter sporting in Austria, but I was a total novice. On our first day we signed up for lessons; surprisingly, I was put into a more advanced class than Jane, and so on day one of our marriage, I was separated from my bride. My group was taken up by ski-lift to a modest height (in my book it was the summit of a major peak), when the instructor shouted: "See you all down below." I was terrified, and what's worse, totally humiliated when, with yells of delight, a large group of tiny children shot past me from much higher up the mountain. I came to two instant decisions: to slide down on my backside and, from now on, only to indulge in serious après-skiing. I arrived sore, but safely in the valley and found Jane in her class of beginners. We came to the conclusion that this sport was not for us. But we had a good time, with excursions in cable cars to savour the views and take in the air of this alpine paradise. On the way back, we stopped off in Lugano to look in on my mother and Harry Kahn.

* * * *

By September 1962, Cyril and I had been running *This Week* for well over a year and we were getting consistently encouraging press coverage and good audience ratings. The time had come for a heart to heart with John McMillan, and to put our 'six-months tenure' on the table. We armed ourselves with some press cuttings:

> *Oxford Mail:*
> This Week (9.15) has long since risen above the ignominious description once given to it as "poor man's Panorama" and now has a well-earned reputation for lucid and interesting presentation of current affairs.
>
> *Aberdeen Evening News*:
> *This Week is rapidly becoming one of the high spots of the week. Its simple forthright style combines the informality of "Tonight" with the searching eye of "Panorama" to provide one of the best ITV offerings*.

McMillan must have guessed our reason for wanting to see him, as on his desk was a large album with press cuttings. "That's been an extremely long six months," I said to John, "but both of us want to move on." I told him that from my point of view, as much as I relished the challenge of 'making it sing', (as he put it to us when he asked us to take on *This Week),* it would be better for A-R, and certainly better for me, if I could go back and do what I enjoy most, and that is making my own programmes. Cyril said that he was looking forward to a new challenge. "Both of you have done me a huge favour, the ITA and the Board are full of praise", said John, "and this is what

I want you to do. Find a suitable successor to take over the show and you are free to do whatever you like."

Little did we guess that it would take us another year to find the right person; so we soldiered on, and in spite of the weekly grind of turning out a peak-time programme, I was almost enjoying it because the programme could hold its head up high. For a moment, I thought that we might have sniffed out a successor. Reg's spy at the BBC thought that *Panorama's* very successful editor, Paul Fox, was looking for a change. I gave him a call, suggesting that it was about time we met and had a drink to toast our rivalry. He readily agreed, and we made The Old Bull and Bush, in Golders Green, our venue. Little did I realise that their spy in our camp had told him that I was ready for a move away from *This Week.* We were much amused by this bizarre situation. Here we were, offering each other our jobs, and neither of us expressed the slightest interest. I wanted to go back to my own programme making, and Paul had ambitions within the BBC. In fact, he became Controller of BBC-1, and some years later moved over to ITV, as Managing Director of Yorkshire Television. I was to see quite a lot of him in both these roles.

* * * *

We agreed with reporter Bryan Magee's suggestion to send a crew to the States, and file stories back to London, covering the American 1962 mid-term elections. Having spent well over a year dispatching directors, reporters and crews all over the world, I decided that I would send myself over to the other side of the pond, as I had never been to the States. My P.A., Rosemary Winckley, who had been brought up in the States, nobly volunteered to swap directors with Jane, so that she could join me as my P.A. on this exciting trip. The plan was for us to fly over, take two weeks holiday (a second honeymoon) and then meet up with Bryan Magee in Hollywood to cover Governor Pat Brown's stump around California. After that, we would journey up to Michigan to do the same with Governor George Romney, and finish up with Edward Kennedy in Massachusetts. A lot of preparations and planning had to be done, and as usual, in a hurry. Because of American union rules, I would have to pick up local film crews in these locations.

I remember with some embarrassment that I was late in rushing across to the Savoy for a lunch date with an American embassy official. I pushed hard at that grand establishment's revolving door, not realising that someone was exiting at the same time. The poor man was knocked to the ground (he happened to be an American). I apologized, helped him up, and he was very gracious about it all.

This was an exciting time; Jane and I could hardly wait to discover New York. This was to be our first week of the holiday. There were two aunts and six cousins to look up, none of whom I had seen since I was a small boy. We did all the tourist sights, and more; and ever since, I have cherished the thought of living and working in that amazing city for a year or so – an unfulfilled ambition – although I have been back very many times for short stays. We then flew to Washington D.C. for a couple of days and were given an extensive tour, including Capitol Hill with the Senate in session. Our generous guide was Victor Sadd, a comrade-in-arms of Jane's father, who served with him in the Suffolk Yeomanry at Gallipoli during the First World War.

Then across to San Francisco, and after two days sightseeing, we picked up a hire car to take us down to Los Angeles. I chose an open Chevrolet, white with red upholstery – to us it was just like being in the movies. We chose the coastal road, as I was keen to overnight near San Simeon. I simply had to see William Hearst's Xanadu, as my early memories of *Citizen Kane* and Orson Welles made this mandatory – I was not disappointed.

Then on to Hollywood. We checked into the Washington Hotel, rising early the following morning for our last holiday treat – a drive out to Disneyland. I wanted to be back at the hotel by 2pm to rendezvous with Bryan Magee, who was due in from London. I was most impressed by the huge size of Disneyland's car park, almost deserted so early in the day. We sampled a great number of the attractions, and against expectations, I was surprised that it was all staged in such good taste. We left at noon to face a nightmare. The massive car park was now a sea of cars, including hundreds of white Chevrolets with red upholstery. I panicked because I had failed to make a note where we had left ours, and now found myself having to try dozens of doors. We finally made it back to the hotel, it was just after 2pm, and I wanted to be there to greet Bryan. And then occurred one of those bizarre coincidences, for which there is no explanation. I said to Jane that I would quickly pop in to see if Bryan had arrived, rushed to the entrance, pushing hard on the revolving door, and to my horror, knocked down an exiting man. It was the same victim who had received my Savoy treatment a few weeks earlier. I was speechless, and all he could say was: "Not you again!" Truth really can be stranger than fiction.

Just as we were organizing the local film crew and getting ready to start filming with Pat Brown on his Californian re-election stomp, the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis balloon went up. This was a piece of fortuitous timing for *This Week.* Telexes to and from Cyril in London soon established the line we were now going to follow. Bryan's interviews with Governor Pat Brown reflected this world crisis, and we were right in the middle of it. Fascinating for a non-journalist like me. We spent about three days in and around LA and then flew to Detroit to do the same with Governor Romney and his cronies. We finished that assignment, and on October 22nd, we found ourselves at Detroit Airport waiting to be called for a flight to Boston. I overheard a waiting passenger say that President Kennedy was about to address the Nation. I got out my pocket transistor radio that I had brought back from Japan – it always travelled with me whenever I left London in case there was any breaking news about Churchill's health. A crowd of passengers straining to hear JFK on my tiny radio pressed around me. It was a dramatic moment – the Soviet ships carrying missiles were nearing Cuba.

We arrived at Boston airport, picked up the film crew and drove into the country to find Edward Kennedy, who was out stomping. A memorable drive: we had heard about the display of New England's foliage with its fantastic colours in the fall, but never expected this.

We found young Teddy Kennedy and his entourage coming out of a church in a small Massachusetts village, and grabbed him for an interview. Bryan naturally asked his opinion about what action the President (his brother) should now pursue, with the world on the brink of nuclear conflict. We were all astonished when he told Bryan that he hadn't really thought about it. More questions elicited similar responses. To this day,

whenever I see him on television, I always wonder what political angel is holding his hand.

We packed up and flew down to New York. We had arranged with London that we would base ourselves at the U.N. Headquarters and cover the crisis from the very centre of the storm. The next few days were nail-biting, and we managed to grab politicians as they flitted in and out of that building. We had booked our accommodation at the Beekman Tower Hotel, which was near the U.N., and I well remember that we got little sleep. Of the many interviews we shot, the most impressive was Senator Hubert Humphrey, later to become Lyndon Johnson's Vice President. We also filmed man-in-the-street (vox pop) interviews in Time Square. Bryan and I were surprised to record so many bellicose, gung-ho sentiments.

It was now 26th October – United Nations Day – always a cause for celebration. And in the middle of this unprecedented and frightening drama, the Tel Aviv Symphony Orchestra duly performed a concert in the main U.N. chamber – even the Russian delegates attended.

Two days later, on the 28th, the world breathed again, with Kennedy and Khrushchev declaring a solution to the missile crisis in Cuba. We pulled up sticks and returned to London.

I found it quite hard settling down to the weekly programme pattern, but at least I knew that there would be an end to it once we had found the right person to take over. It took a long time, another ten months, before we struck gold. Our saviour was Jeremy Isaacs, who was making his mark at Granada Television. He was the editor of the popular *What the Papers Say* and other successful current affairs programmes like *World in Action*, and was keen for a move. Cyril and I could not have handed our baby over to a more talented pair of hands. He was to make many changes to the programme, and under his editorship, it was to climb to its highest peak.

On 15th August 1963, we went on the air for the last time; thanks to the press, our departure did not go unnoticed.

> *The Observer* – Maurice Richardson:
> *When you think what it used to be like, the improvement in A-R's This Week since Peter Morley and Cyril Bennett took over two years ago has been quite phenomenal.*

> *The Sunday Times* – Maurice Wiggin:
> *Peter Morley and Cyril Bennett leave This Week in the highest point of renown. Their enterprise has made it a feature not to be missed.*

On 22nd November, at the Guild of Television Producers and Directors annual award ceremony, held at The Dorchester Hotel, Cyril and I were presented with our masks (now known as the BAFTA masks) for the best Current Affairs programme. This was the first time that ITV had achieved this award, and we were in good company that evening: other award winners included Harold Pinter, Vivien Merchant, Joan Kemp-Welch, Morecambe and Wise, Alan Badel, Anthony Craxton, and Bernard Braden.

But our euphoria came to a sudden halt when awful news spread across the dance floor to the dining tables – John F Kennedy had been assassinated in Dallas.

Many who had attended that evening's celebrations raced to their various news desks, leaving those of us who were left, totally bewildered. Jane and I did not really take it in until the next morning, when all the lurid details began to emerge.

Two evenings later John McMillan phoned me. He wanted a fully networked live tribute programme the following night, 25th November, the day of Kennedy's funeral. I phoned Cyril, and together we quickly decided on the style for this tribute, taking into account that we had just under twenty-four hours before we went on the air. That evening we recruited Bernard Levin to write the tribute, and he gave us lists of books by American authors and poets he would need first thing in the morning, so that he could compile a selection of appropriate readings. He would then write the linking material to be spoken by whoever was going to conduct the tribute. I remember having to look up the telephone number of Vivienne Moynihan, A-R's casting director, (it was now midnight) to give her some suggestions of American names to contact first thing, and to find out who was in town. I suggested to Cyril that Sir Laurence Olivier would be right for the presenter's role; fortunately, Vivienne knew him well. During the next hectic day we recruited the services of Eli Wallach, Anne Bancroft, Gary Merrill and Joseph C. Harsh to be the readers. A quick call to Michael Yates, our Head of Design, and we settled for stark simplicity – four lecterns against a background of black drapes. By lunchtime, Bernard Levin had produced a most moving, brilliant script, and Olivier had agreed to come to the studio two hours before transmission, so that I could introduce him to the tricks of reading from the teleprompter, which he had never done before.

We went on the air at 9.30 p.m.– it turned out to be a very moving programme. It was telerecorded and at the request of the American Embassy, copies were made available to be shown all over the world.

* * * *

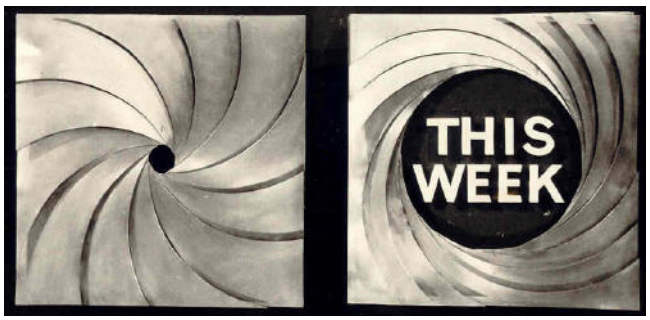
This broadcast marked the end of my close four-year partnership with Cyril Bennett. It was an exciting adventure, exploring the magic of television; learning more about its power, its strengths, as well as its limitations.

TOWN Magazine interviewed us and came out with this embarrassingly flattering piece, which modesty compels me to quote:

> *Peter Morley is the producer of This Week, Associated-Rediffusion's answer to Panorama, with Cyril Bennett as the editor beside him. Morley, 38, handsome, courteous and well-liked, is typical of this better type of ITV features producer – a skilled technician who pushes himself and others hard, and lives and breathes television. He joined A-R in 1956 after years in the film industry, directing and film-editing documentaries — and the experience he picked up there on the cutting floor is responsible for much of the polish and the often poetic quality of This Week's film work. He and Bennett have worked as a team at A-R since 1957, first making documentaries, then building This Week into the best regular serious programme on ITV, with unusual autonomy. Their secret: they cancel out*

each other's limitations – Bennett, a journalist is no expert in filming, and Morley is no authority on current affairs, which he leaves to Bennett. Now Bennett is being promoted to features director, and Morley too will get some new overlordship of features production. The tandem will continue at higher executive level and the next challenge will be colour TV.

Cyril and I had a good laugh over this – but now went our separate ways, with Cyril rising to head A-R's Features Department, and four years later emerging as the Controller of Programmes of the newly created London Weekend Television.



Cyril Bennett and I take over *This Week*

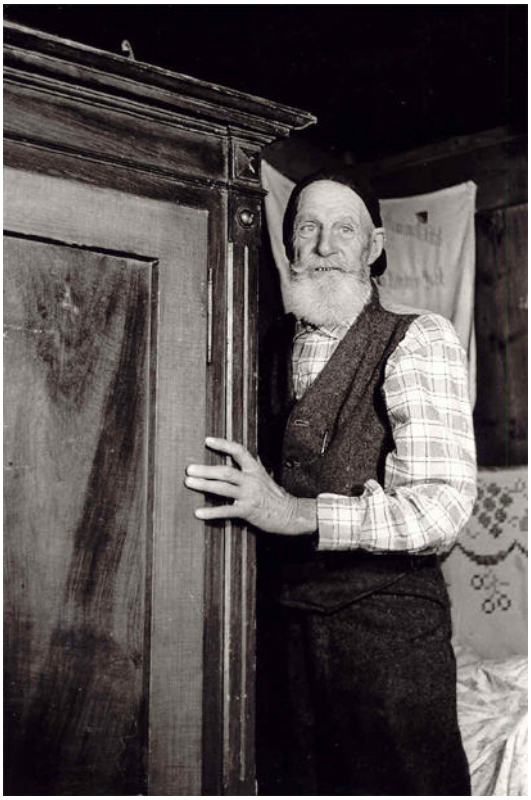
Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in the *This Week* studio for a live 30 minute interview with Kenneth Harris

Leader of the Opposition Harold Wilson with Kenneth Harris

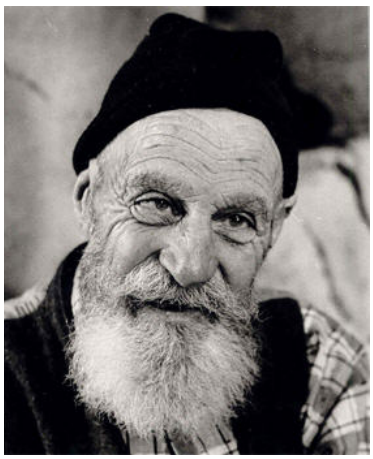
Prince Philip arrives at Television House. His debut on ITV

He meets the studio crew

Learning the finer points of using 'Autocue'



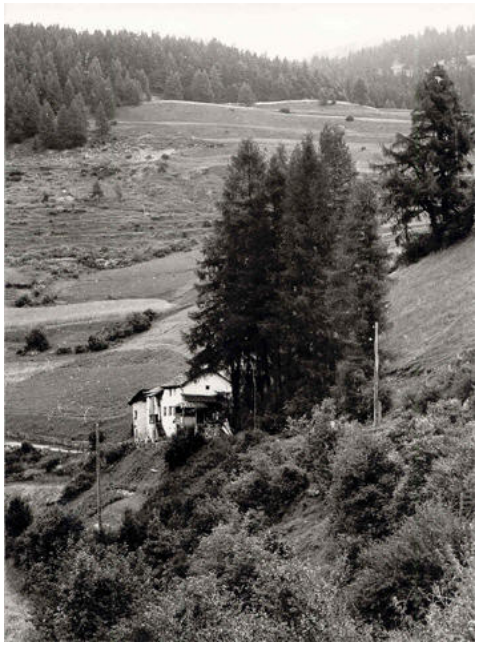
The Rat Line

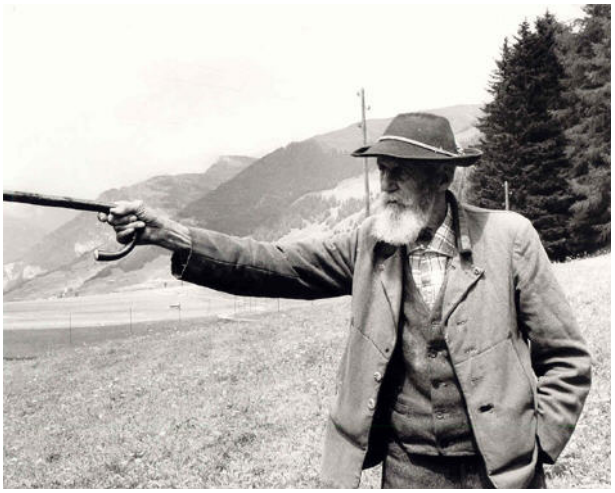


The Austrian mountain guide known as 'The Smuggler'

He demonstrated how he manhandled the wardrobe to reveal the door to his 'secret' room where he claimed to have hidden Nazi escapees like Eichmann and Mengele before smuggling them to Italy - on their way to the Vatican.

He took me up the mountain where the borders of Austria, Switzerland and Italy meet





"That is Italy"

26th January 1962
our wedding day

Our first ‘do’ at the Dorchester
ITV’s first Current Affairs award for *This Week*
beating BBC’s Panorama

We were in good company that evening
Vivian Merchant Harold Pinter Joan Kemp-Welch Cyril Bennett PM

Chapter 16

Jane and I were celebrating our second year in our small house in Canonbury. She was a busy A-R Production Assistant; her Director, John Frankau, was responsible for a prolific output of television dramas. She was enjoying her work as much as I was mine – it was a good time for both of us. In the mornings, we usually set off together to Television House, where I had established an unorthodox parking routine: the uniformed gatekeeper at Somerset House allowed me to enter the splendid inner courtyard, and for a small consideration let me leave the car there. How things have changed.

My desk diaries for 1963/4 remind me of the extramural activities I had taken on and which kept me on my toes. The British Film Institute had invited me to serve on their Television Selection Committee, which was chaired by Ernest Lindgren, the BFI's Curator. From a long list of programmes that was handed to us at our monthly meetings, the committee's task was to decide, which of these should be recommended for preservation. Our yardstick was not the quality of individual programmes, but their historical value to future students of television. Therefore, absolutely dreadful creations like *Double Your Mone*y or *Take Your Pick* were just as essential to preserve as, let's say, a Dennis Potter play. The continuing strands of programmes, like *Coronation Street* always presented a problem – how many episodes should be kept, maybe one every year? And how about news bulletins, and episodes of *This Week*?

The meetings were held, over the lunch period, in the BFI boardroom in their then headquarters building in Dean Street, Soho. They usually lasted a couple of hours, with about twelve of us sitting round the boardroom table – sandwiches and wine at the ready. It was an interesting assembly of 'experts', including critics, writers, historians and programme makers. The Chairman, Ernest Lindgren (and later, the television critic, Philip Purser) often had quite a job keeping us in order as we argued about the merits of individual programmes. The banter was always light-hearted, often very funny – especially when committee members, like comedian Barry Took and playwright Philip Mackie, got going – but we always had to be reminded of the criteria.

Of course, in a perfect world, one would simply keep everything, but the reality was that the originating companies had to be willing to donate the selected programme to the archives – and pay for the cost of making the copies. The BBC had its own archives, and strove to keep everything (with glaring deletions, which were to come to light years later). ITV supported the BFI's preservation policy and made annual grants available for this purpose.

I had served on this committee for just over twenty years when, in 1984, technology took over in the form of video recording, and we no longer were required to make painful decisions. A deal was struck that allowed the BFI's National Film and Television Archives to record, off-air, the major output from the ITV companies, and some years later they came to a similar arrangement with the BBC.

At least now, the possibility of preserving everything was becoming a reality, and needless to say, another set of problems surfaced: the permanence of videotape as a storage medium. After all, we are still not absolutely certain how long paper lasts, and

it's been around for quite a while. How will videotape fare? Even when stored in ideal conditions by the BFI, observing meticulously monitored temperature and humidity criteria, there have been cases where the magnetic coating has been known to peel away from its backing. Nothing is forever and, no doubt, the next task will be to transfer this mass of material on to a solid state digital system, which would then have to prove its longevity.

Over the years, I have enjoyed my association with the British Film Institute and, especially, with the National Television Archives. I was made an honorary member many years ago, and thanks to this relationship, I have been able to magpie VHS cassette copies of dozens of my programmes, many of which I have used for lecturing and presentation sessions – *The Turn of the Screw* being my prize possession.

Another activity that made fair demands on my time was the Society of Film and Television Arts. I was on the council of SFTA, but its parents, the British Film Academy and the Guild of Television Producers and Directors, still retained their separate councils – the difficult marriage of the two media being only fully consummated in 1975 when it became BAFTA. The Guild's council met frequently, sometimes in our homes. Apart from organising Guild evening sessions for the membership 'to further the arts and crafts of television', we were perpetually engaged in organising and fine-tuning the annual award ceremonies, usually held at the Dorchester Hotel – long before they became a televised annual ritual.

It was valuable to have the opportunity to keep in touch professionally with fellow programme makers at the BBC and the other ITV companies.

* * * *

It was time to make another documentary, hopefully on film. I relished the idea of working on my own again, away from the relentless pressure of weekly programmes and the tyranny of topicality.

In 1964, I was not aware that 'race relations' was the burning issue that it has become today. In fact, I can't remember seeing any television programmes on the subject. And I knew little about mixed marriages, which at the time, seemed to me to be a taboo subject – maybe too hot to handle. All the more reason to make a film about it.

I had observed that people in the street were more likely to turn, look and take notice of couples when the man was black and the woman white; while the other way round hardly caused a stir. I decided right from the start that I would try and concentrate on black male - white female marriages.

I felt that it was important to avoid imposing an outsider's thoughts and feelings on this tricky subject; but to make an impressionistic film of what it is like to be in a mixed marriage – I knew it was bound to evoke an unspoken hidden subtext: 'Would you let your daughter marry a black man?'

My researcher was the splendid Joan Hill, and on her first day she was able to unlock a rich source of information. Her very helpful contact was The Rev. Clifford Hill, who had officiated at many mixed marriages in his church in North London. He put us in touch with several couples. I wanted to make sure that my final choice of participants came from different social backgrounds, and to use a style of film-making

which would allow them to reveal, what I expected to be, a rich mixture of attitudes without the intrusions of an interviewer, or indeed, commentary spoken by a narrator.

With Joan Hill, I now spent over three months meeting many couples, and after I had picked the ones for the film, it was important to get to know them really well. I visited them several times in their homes, and slowly gained their trust, and in the end, their enthusiasm, to take part in the film. I took reams of notes, and learnt a lot about detailed aspects of mixed marriages, which, in fact, most of the couples had never discussed – and now, in front of me, they were openly talking about them for the first time. The observational technique I finally decided on, was to create the right conditions for the camera to observe and to listen to couples speaking to each other.

I used two cameras – one camera focused on each partner, so that I could capture every word they were saying, and at the same time film their reactions as they listened to each other. I sat between them – out of shot – and acted as a prompt, suggesting topics that I now knew they had feelings and opinions about. It worked. Of course, at first they were aware of the cameras, but soon they became so engrossed in their 'prompted' conversation, that inhibition and embarrassment disappeared. Although some of the dialogue sounded slightly stilted, it produced an astonishing, and often emotional, spontaneity, generating topics that were entirely new to me. The shooting ratio was unusually high, and I knew that editing the material would be quite difficult – the price one has to pay for this type of film-making.

I was very open about the effects their exposure on network television might have on them and their families; also the reaction of the press, especially the tabloid papers. It is hard to remember today that 'to be on the telly' was still a relatively rare event – people nowadays are streetwise about the medium, and know pretty well what to expect.

I offered them the opportunity to come to Television House to see the final version before transmission, and to give their agreement to go ahead. I was surprised that none of them felt it necessary to take me up on this.

I called this film *Black Marries White - The Last Barrier.* Among my large clutch of press cuttings I have selected these excerpts, because between them they seem to echo very clearly what the film was about and the variety of reactions to it.

The *TV TIMES* asked me to write this promotional piece:

When I started the research it was like entering a new world. There is no handy reference book to give the facts about mixed marriages. Obviously the only ones who can know anything about it are the partners of a mixed marriage, and I have tried to recreate on film the impressions I got during the many hours of conversation with them. That is what the programme is, an impression of attitudes and emotions about all the things that make and break a marriage. And in this case, marriage complicated beyond measure by racial prejudice.

The couple that was living reluctantly in appalling conditions spoke as frankly and freely as the professional couple in their delightful mews house in Marylebone. Everyone taking part, even those families where the tensions are unbearable, gladly exposed their most private thoughts and feelings because

they believed that an understanding of mixed marriage is an integral part of the understanding of the whole problem of colour.

I deliberately chose situations where the husband is coloured and the wife white, because these are the extremes that evoke the maximum reactions. We largely regard an Englishman marrying a coloured girl as a romantic eccentric, a situation that doesn't kindle the deep prejudice of a coloured man invading our society and "taking" one of our girls.

There is no typical marriage. A union of two people is unique. Therefore, it is unthinkable to make a definite statement about so complex a union as a mixed marriage. That is why I have dispensed with the narrator and the interviewer, even the prepared script. All three might have imposed a different and irrelevant set of attitudes that could have come between the viewer and the people in the film and it might have blurred the fundamental issue.

Do we believe in the desirability – even the inevitability – of the ultimate merging of the races? If we do, then the mixed couples in the world today must be regarded as the pioneers who have crossed the 'last barrier' to total integration.

On Wednesday you can see this disturbing programme, and as one of the Jamaicans in the film said to me: "You're dealing with human dynamite." He was right.

The morning after transmission:

Shaun Usher – *Daily Sketch*:
The dynamite exploded on ITV last night. With an extraordinary documentary called: "Black Marries White - The Last Barrier". Its theme: the brutal, biting, loaded question: "Would you let YOUR daughter or sister marry a coloured man?" There was strong reaction even before the programme went out. Phone calls flooded into Rediffusion's office. The callers were white AND coloured, but their message was the same –"Take that programme off".

Marsland Gander – *The Daily Telegraph*:
"Black Marries White – the Last Barrier" on Independent television last night was the most remarkable documentary that I have seen for a long time. It contained no interviews and no narration; there was no script and there were no names used. No commentator intruded his views or bullied his victims. It was poignant and pungent; quintessentially human and sometimes unconsciously funny.

Peter Morley, of Rediffusion, had taken a roving camera to Tottenham and to Stoke Newington to inquire into the provocative and delicate subject of mixed marriages. He recorded the conversations of husbands, wives and parents. How he managed to find four couples who spoke so naturally, fluently and candidly is a mystery. Says Morley: "Remember, I'd been talking to these people for months on end. But with the cameras beside me, they came out with things they they'd never said before. Take one couple, the wife suddenly asked her husband what he'd do when their little girl came home from school asking why she was called 'nigger'. You could see the husband

wince at the thought – he'd obviously not faced it before. And the grim thing was that he had no answer."

Monica Furlong – *Daily Mail*:
Racial intolerance was a tough nut for television to crack, and Rediffusion deserve our thanks for exploring it so honestly in "Black Marries White". They left nothing out. Every shade of prejudice, conscious and unconscious, every kind of ignorance, every sort of insensitiveness – stone by stone they showed us the huge monument of embarrassment, misunderstanding and human grief. There were the damaged, obsessive couple in their dismal lodgings talking with Pinteresque inconsequence, finding it hard to say the words "black" and "white" to each other. There was the girl who had had too much to drink and would not shut up, contriving with ghastly well-meaningness, to say more wounding things than a dozen Fascists. There were people, small, simple people who wanted to do the right thing who had found themselves or their children caught unwittingly between the grindstones of public opinion and still could not endure the knowledge of it. Two couples, however, showed unforgettably that there is a way to break down the racial barriers, a way that involves facing all the facts, knowing all about the myths and the drawbacks and the rude words. A Nigerian doctor and his English wife demonstrated it best. For them racial prejudice had become so thoroughly defeated that it was part of their private joke-world. They enjoyed teasing each other about Negroes being specially virile or about intolerant landladies. They shone with love and understanding for one another.

The technique of this programme, which had dispensed with interviewers and experts and relied entirely upon the conversation of black and white people to open up the subject, must be put down as a brilliant success.

This selection of cuttings gives a pretty good flavour of the film. The A-R telephone operators were kept very busy the next day, with just about an equal number of pro and con callers. The reaction from my colleagues at A-R was different. Apart from my immediate soul mates in the Features Department, there was almost total silence. In our club bar in Television House at lunchtime, where normally the previous night's delights, or otherwise, were the main topics of conversation, mixed marriage was definitely not on the menu. I got the feeling that the programme had touched some raw nerves, because it forced one into a spell of self-examination – the outcome I had hoped for – so I was not disappointed.

The viewing figures were staggering: *The Daily Telegraph* reported:

The controversial documentary "Black Marries White" was seen by more than 7½ million homes. These audience figures were issued by the TAM ratings organisation. This is a remarkably high figure for a documentary particularly as it did not start until 9.40 p.m. Only the Cup Final and "Coronation Street" had bigger audiences during the week.

I received a lot of mail, ranging from the complimentary to the vitriolic, but etched permanently in my memory is the parcel I received. I removed the wrapping and found a blood-soaked bible with an almost illegible scruffy note, putting a curse on my family and me. It remained on my Television House windowsill for a long time, and acted as a constant reminder that programme makers must never ignore their audience.

Black Marries White—The Last Barrier

An Impression of Mixed Marriage

Most people, even those who profess to have no colour prejudice, shy away from the prospect of 'my daughter marrying a Negro.' There are no facts and no statistics about mixed marriage. There are only experiences and attitudes to what is a profound human dilemma. This is a frank programme about a disturbing subject, and the people taking part are the only people who can possibly know anything about it—those who are partners in a mixed marriage. There is no narrator to explain the tensions and pressures that both the white and coloured societies impose on those who have dared to cross the colour line in marriage. There is no interviewer whose own attitudes could diffuse the issues. There is only the stark dialogue of human experience, which come spontaneously from the mixed couples themselves. *Black Marries White* is a challenge to re-examine our attitudes in the light of these experiences

CAMERAMAN MICHAEL RHODES
SOUND STAN CLARKE FREDDIE SLADE
FILM EDITOR DAVID HODGSON
PROGRAMME ASSISTANT JOAN HILL
DIRECTED BY PETER MORLEY

Rediffusion Network Production

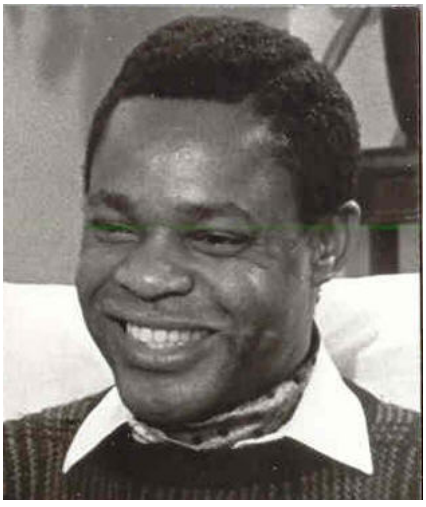
"If God didn't want us to mix he would have separated us."

"It doesn't matter what outsiders say as long as we're happy."

"If one day Beverly comes home from school and said to you 'Daddy' why do they call me a nigger girl?'- what would you say to her?"

"Sometimes I think about it."

"...and in our case with a mixed marriage it is obviously more important that we should have been well adjusted and happy together before we started introducing children into it."



End of Part Two