Notes of a meeting held in Mr. Lovell's room, Central Office of Information, on 26th June, 1947, to consider the supply of Hellschreiber instruments, fix a new target date to commence working, and examine the possibility of extending the service to the Americas at an early date.

Present:

Chairman (Mr. Lovell)
Mr. Rennie (F.O.
Mr. Whitley (C.O.)
Mr. McLoughlin
Mr. Iles (C.O.I.)

Mr. Williamson
Mr. Thwaites (G.P.O.)
Mr. Easterbrook

Wing Commander Jowers of the F.O. was unable to attend owing to illness and Mrs. Presten of the D.O. had a prior engagement.

Supply

Mr. Easterbrooke indicated that whilst the supply of Relays would be available soon nothing definite could be said about the Printers. It was understood the Coventry Gauge and Tool Company were being held up only because Messrs. Klaxons had not supplied the motors. The cost of each motor to the manufacturer was estimated at no more than £5 which would be £250 for the 50 sets on order. It was considered absurd that the value of a service of the importance and extent of the London Press Service should be curtailed for such a sum especially, as it emerged later in the meeting, that the Hellschreiber system, on its introduction into Europe, Middle East and the Americas alone, was capable of saving the Exchequer at least £5,000 per annum.

Although Messrs. Klaxons had offered their drawings for the use of any other manufacturer who could undertake the production of the motor the Contracts Department of the Post Office considered it neither profitable nor desirable from the point of view of expediting supply, to transfer the manufacture of the motors at this stage to any other firm.

Mr. Easterbrooke, nevertheless, undertook to have enquiries made with the object of getting suitable motors from Germany and Mr. Rennie suggested that any such motors might be imported as samples.

Such keen disappointment was expressed at the delay that it was decided to have representations made at the same time, preferably through the Ministry of Supply at the highest possible level. It was however thought that any such representations would be most effective if
the Post Office associated itself with the Central Office and Mr. Williamson undertook to enquire whether his Department would agree to the proposal.

Wording

The present weekday wording of L.P.S. and Meco was stated by Mr. McLoughlin to be 9,715. Under the Hellschreiber system comparable wording would be 11,055. The difference of approximately 1,500 words represented \( \frac{3}{4} \) hour transmission time; but considering the advantages of the elasticity of the programme and the fact that we could not ask the Post Office for less than \( \frac{1}{4} \) hour transmission time the variation was not considered unreasonable.

The proposed Sovco service would, it was estimated, require 2,000 words and would be used to transmit a large part of the material now sent by commercial channels to Moscow and paid for by the Foreign Office, estimated at £12,000 per annum. This Service, although centred on Moscow, was intended for Posts in an arc from Helsinki to Bucharest including Warsaw.

Finance

Mr. McLoughlin stated that the present cost of transmitters for morse transmission of the L.P.S. and Meco to Europe and the Middle East only was £11,950 per annum. The cost of the same transmissions in Hellschreiber including the Sovco would be approximately £8,150. This would represent a saving of £3,800 in a full year; but, as a number of additional expenses were involved in Hellschreiber transmissions, the saving in a full year might be estimated at £2,800. Nevertheless, no saving in the rent of transmitters should be anticipated this year because (a) Hellschreiber will be operating for only a part of the year not yet determined and (b) the Post Office may raise the charge to commercial levels.

To the above saving for Europe and the Middle East might be added a similar saving when Hellschreiber working was introduced into the Americas.

Range of Transmissions in Hellschreiber

The meeting had before it proposed times for Hellschreiber working to Europe and Middle East.
In fixing the times of transmission regard was paid to the times the material became available, the continuous use of transmitters for the longest possible periods to ensure economical renting, the global advantages of the present programme and the convenience of the Posts. It had been found possible to fix the transmissions over a range of 13.5 hours (i.e. 1330 to 0315). Any major alteration of the time of transmission of any part of the programme for the advantage of one part of the world would be to the disadvantage of another part. It was generally agreed that the present set up, which had been well tried, should be retained as far as possible in its essentials. Mr. Williamson said that ultimately it would probably be possible to supply all the broadcasting requirements of the Central Office by the use of two transmitters only.

Target Date

Considering the uncertainty of supplies and the difficulty of transport to certain Posts it was thought that the end of December should be considered a possible time to commence Hellschreiber working in Europe and the Middle East.

Hellschreiber in the Americas

The Foreign Office had reviewed the Posts requiring Hellschreiber sets and it appeared that 49 of the 50 sets on order would be required. There were however sets at Guatemala and San Salvador, which, although they needed repairs, might be used in America, thus releasing an additional two sets for distribution elsewhere. It was not anticipated that there would be any transport difficulty in supplying the American Foreign Office Posts.

Re-runs

At the present time the L.P.S. programme is re-run one hour later to (a) North America, (b) Central and South America and (c) South East Asia. When (a) and (b) are transmitted in Hellschreiber, (c) will be the only beam requiring a re-run and Mr. McLoughlin enquired whether this could be incorporated in the main programme. Mr. Williamson explained that owing to a lack of transmitters at the times required it would not be possible to move (c) with the main programme to save the re-run but he would bear the request in mind in case transmitters became available.
Summary of L.P.S. in Morse

As the L.P.S. was still being transmitted in Morse in which a summary already appeared, it was not considered opportune to express any opinion on the value of a summary in Morse until more of the Service had been converted to Hellschreiber working. Mr. Williamson would collect data and the point would be raised again.

M. McLoughlin