

## British Catholics and the Mass Media

by Kevin Grant

### *Introduction: The Cockle and The Wheat*

It is beyond the power of parents or of pastors today to monitor the tide of the mass media in Britain as it passes over those they might protect. Exposure to all sorts of ideas and images is now an inescapable part of the general risk of life; and the carefulness of Christians in what they contribute to or select from the output of the media can counteract but cannot significantly dilute the contrary messages.

It is a fallacy that any one medium is or ever will be the best or most important in any absolute sense. The media merge; and competence in their employment requires a knowledge of the character and reach of each type so that messages may be conveyed to chosen groups. Christian practitioners in the media need to master this orchestration. It may be regretted in this connection that we have in this country no single professional guild of Catholic or Christian media workers.

### *Television channels*

There are three television channels in Britain today: BBC 1, introduced prewar, ITV, the commercial operation (1955) and BBC 2 (1962). The BBC is a public corporation, financed by the licence fees of householders, and not directly accountable to Parliament, press, or any other body, a status recurrently challenged but so far mercifully preserved. Independent Television (ITV) is financed by advertisement revenue and controlled by the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA).

BBC 1 and ITV, both mass news and entertainment channels in the main, afford coverage effectively to the whole country; only isolated fringes or hill-ringed spots are not reached. BBC 2, a minority channel (6% of the national audience), relaxed in tempo, keyed to complement BBC 1 programming and to carry Open University programmes, is available to 93 per cent of the population.

The British devote an average of four hours a day to watching television (44% prefer BBC 1; 56%, ITV). People in the upper social groupings watch much less than average.

In "*Broadcasting, Society and the Church*" (1973), the Broadcasting Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England wrote, "From a Christian point of view, such unselective and persistent viewing is incompatible with the responsible stewardship of time".

### *Radio: the general picture*

Radio has a vigorous life of its own, especially in its service to housewives by day and the young in the evening. Popular channels are kept on all day in many of Britain's workplaces. Coverage is effectively universal. Multi-set ownership of transistor sets by households is general and many of our 12 million private cars are fitted with radios.

The BBC has four national radio channels and 20 local city-based stations as well. Of the national channels Radio 1 is essentially for young people's music and diversion, Radio 2 for housewives' music and for sport. Radio 3 is the cultural channel for talks, classical music, and Open University programmes, and Radio 4 is the general news and information service. With the competitive stimulus since 1972 of Independent Local Radio, financed by advertising and estab-

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Kevin R. Grant ist Deputy Managing Director der katholischen Wochenzitung „The Universe“ in London. Er war früher Direktor des „Catholic Herald“ und davor zehn Jahre bei der Verlagsgruppe Thomson als Vertriebsspezialist.

blished now in nineteen localities, all BBC channels carry news on the hour or half-hour. One of the independent stations, LBC of London, is essentially a news/talk operation and provides the general news cover for the whole independent network. Pirate radio, now unimportant, made a troublesome but definite contribution to the official introduction of commercial radio.

The percentage shares of the radio audience are lately reported by commercial researchers as follows:

BBC Radio 1 26%, Radio 2 20%, Radio 3 2%, Radio 4 15%, Independent local (commercial) 29%, Luxembourg 1%.

#### *Government enquiry into broadcasting: the Annan Committee*

The broadcasting authorities currently await the Government's response to an enquiry into broadcasting entrusted to the chairmanship of Lord Annan. The range of possibilities is broad. "*The Times*" has described it as a fair audit but a weak blueprint, and doubts that its main proposals will set the pattern for future broadcasting. The three main questions posed are: Should the BBC split up? Should a fourth channel go to a new Open Broadcasting Authority, run like a publishing company and taking contributions on merit from any source? Should the BBC and independent local radio stations be hived off to a new Local Broadcasting Authority?

One serious argument in favour of dividing the BBC into smaller units is that workers in broadcasting would then have more freedom; this seems to chime with the notion of subsidiarity in Catholic social teaching. But in his analysis "*Broadcasting in a pluralist society*"<sup>1</sup> Father John Harriot, SJ, argued for the retention of a large broadcasting authority: "The more sources there are, the smaller the audience for any one, until broadcasting moves closer to a system of private communication like the telephone. The more sources there are, the smaller the area of shared experience within the community as a whole."

#### *Religious broadcasting*

The first thing to get clear is that it is part of the public service in the United Kingdom. This is quite unlike the position in countries like Ireland, Holland, Germany and others where church-funded Catholic broadcasting is in one way or another guaranteed a place on the air. On the other hand, neither religious bodies nor political parties are allowed to buy advertising time on television or radio.

The young Father Agnells Andrew's contribution to the wartime radio discussion programme "Anvil" was the first clear sign that Catholic broadcasting was not a separate enclave. It led to the appointment of Fr. Agnells after the war as Catholic adviser to the BBC — a post he held until 1968 (official title: Catholic Assistant to the Head of Religious Broadcasting). During his long tenure of office, covering Vatican II, there could be no dissent that the Catholic contribution to religious broadcasting achieved much more give and take. Father Agnells was notably followed in office by Fr. Pat McEnroe, who in 1977 was succeeded by Fr. Crispian Hollis. During the 1970s Catholic religious broadcasting has become so successfully integrated into the whole without loss of its distinctive voice, that we may be near the time when the BBC need not any more appoint a specifically Catholic adviser. This has been Fr. McEnroe's achievement.

Annan found that the decline in the influence of the Churches observed throughout our century has not ceased in recent years. Church attendance has dwindled and Christians feel themselves a minority in a heathen population. Nonetheless, more people still go to church than to football matches — 42% of the British are occasional churchgoers, 80% hold some belief in God and nearly half believe in an afterlife<sup>2</sup>.

The Report argues that Christian ecumenism and concern with social issues have meant that, while allegiance to church worship diminishes, religious interest kindles. The mosques and temples of eastern religions arise to solace our immigrants. Not only are religionists asking the eternal questions; disbelievers ask them too and are seen and heard doing so on television and radio.

Since 1962 when the last broadcasting enquiry<sup>3</sup> was conducted, there has been no decline in the time devoted to religious broadcasting. The BBC broadcasts 2 3/4 hours a week on television and about eight hours on network radio. ITV's religious output has kept at about 2 1/4 hours a week. The new BBC and IBA local stations also have religious programmes, so that total output is up. Religion's share of total broadcasting has fallen as total broadcasting time has increased, but Annan recommends no increase in religious broadcasting — "the best sermons are not necessarily the longest".

The shape of religious programmes has not altered much in recent years. At 6.40 a.m. BBC Radio 4's "Prayer for the Day" finds a particular and responsive audience. An hour later the same channel carries "Thought for the Day", more obliquely devotional, to about two million listeners, and then at 10.15 it puts out the "Daily Service". This, lasting a quarter of an hour, is live and therefore expensive. It has an audience of half to three-quarters of a million daily. Some British people construct their day around it.

BBC and ITV both televise religious services or other religious programmes on Sunday morning. The audience for all weekend religious broadcasts amounts to five or six times that for "Grandstand", the major BBC sports programme on Saturday. Taking television and radio together, religious broadcasts reach some 20 million people at the weekends and 27 million throughout the week, more than half the population. Some ITV regions — the individual companies are quite separate and have great autonomy — close their daily programmes with an "Epilogue".

The classic time for religious broadcasting on television has been the "closed period" from 6.15 pm to 7.25 pm on Sunday evening, but in 1976 the BBC and ITV agreed with the Central Religious Advisory Committee to reduce the period to 35 minutes between 6.40 pm and 7.15 pm. It means that religious programmes must now find less protected places in the schedules. They must stand against secular programmes on their intrinsic rather than confessional merits.

Religious broadcasting has not been static. There have been innovations. Yorkshire Television have networked their "Stars on Sundays", which, with a wide audience (7 1/2 million) despite much criticism, seems designed in the Annan phrase "to make viewers glow from comforting songs and readings, leather armchairs and open fires". There is an audience of 4 million youngsters for the Catholic disc-jockey Jimmy Savile with his "Speakeasy" on Radio 1. The BBC dealt most professionally with many issues in their "Anno Domini" series, now supplanted by "Everyman", the first major effort at a programme designed to stand up in the secular schedules purely on its own merits.

### *The nature of the beast*

Lord Aylestone, chairman of the then Independent Television Authority, said a few years ago that "television demands mass audience — that is the nature of the beast", and the particular dilemmas this creates for those in religious broadcasting are aired with perception and competence in the Annan report.

The independent contractors reported to Annan a conflict within the Churches themselves. "Sometimes they have acknowledged the rationale of the companies" position which aims at

keeping alive the broad Christian ethic. At others they have developed an uneasy feeling that they are perhaps forgoing too readily the opportunity which this unique protection affords to propagate the hard-line didactic message, even at the cost of reducing the audience for the closed period still further."

This conflict was clear from much of the evidence Annan received. One body argued that programmes of "implied religion" were important, but the Catholic bishops of Scotland regretted that the topics were more often social than religious; such programmes created religious doubts, insecurity and confusion, they felt. The National Association for the Protection of Family Life even found religious programmes "remarkable for their non-religious content". The bland and thus controversial "Stars on Sunday" was defended for its emotional appeal by the General Synod of the Church of England, but the Independent Methodist churches felt it should not count as a religious broadcast at all.

Various minorities, Jews, Asian religionists and Humanists felt their views were underrepresented. Annan sums up in a memorable phrase — "from this evidence we found it easier to draw plans for a new Tower of Babel than for a new Jerusalem". So they turned to the body which advises both BBC and the IBA, the Central Religious Advisory Committee (CRAC). This consists of 29 members, about half of whom are clerics drawn from the main Churches. Four are Catholics. Appointments are made jointly by the BBC and the IBA after consultations with the various Churches, and they last five years.

The Committee has lately reformulated its objectives for religious broadcasting in a way departing fundamentally from those governing previously. Their aims today are:

1. To seek to reflect the worship, thought and action of the principal religious traditions represented in Britain, recognizing that those traditions are mainly, though not exclusively, Christian.
2. To seek to present to viewers and listeners those beliefs, ideas, issues and experience in the contemporary world which are evidently related to a religious interpretation or dimension of life.
3. To seek also to meet the religious interests, concerns and needs of: those on the fringe of, or outside, the organized life of the Churches. These aims bring out that religion in this country is no longer synonymous with Christianity and it is no longer required that broadcasting should pretend that it is, says Annan. The view of CRAC today is that even if their religion lays a duty upon believers to proselytize, they must not use broadcasting to fulfil that duty. Annan accepts that answer and the Government are likely to do the same.

Annan says that a fourth channel would be peculiarly well suited for minority religious programmes and that local radio can cater well for religions small in the nation yet bulking large in particular localities. Annan recognizes that if churchgoers and non-churchgoers, believers and agnostics, all look to the same programme for inspiration, quite a number will be disillusioned. Everything, from hymns and the reiteration of old certainties to atheists discussing moral and social questions, is going to find its place — and while religious broadcasting *can* meet all these needs, it cannot do so in the same programme, which Annan feels is sometimes attempted.

But CRAC discerned for Annan another more fundamental weakness in religious broadcasting. They wanted some overlap between religious broadcasting and current affairs, otherwise the former became "a little ghetto within broadcasting, trying to maintain some kind of conservative propaganda for our own little group of committed Christians". CRAC want to engage a wider, non-committed audience and to attract top-quality producers to make adventurous programmes.

It has, of course, been from this view that the impetus to abandon the "God Slot", the closed period, has come, but again Annan sees dangers. First, it wonders whether the BBC's religious departments are always mindful that radio is often more valuable to religious broadcasting than television; and, second, noting that all programme departments have to attract the skills and resources they need for their objectives, it saw the possibility of religious departments losing their best people if they grew bored with the simpler kind of religious broadcast: like other departments they need top talent and will not retain it without making challenging programmes.

Annan made two recommendations: 1. The Broadcasting Authorities should consider whether the aims of religious broadcasting would be better served by widening the range of expertise in their religious broadcasting departments or by spreading responsibility for religious programmes to other production departments, while ensuring that specifically religious services continue to be broadcast. 2. Each of the existing and newly recommended authorities should appoint its own Religious Advisory Committee to advise on how the needs of worshippers of the Christian denominations and of other faiths could be served as fairly as possible, and to consider how the religious interests of both believers and non-believers could best be served. Advisers should not be chosen from the fringes of the Churches; the profound, not the publicists should be sought, the simple and not the tortuous. And it would be right to include individuals with a religious understanding even if no recognized religious belief.

It is useful to record a few examples of audience numbers: Zeffirelli's "Jesus of Nazareth" attracted 44% of the television audience on Palm Sunday 1977 and 37% on Easter Day, much more than the normal Sunday evening programmes on BBC 1 or Independent Television. BBC's "Songs of Praise", a telecast of hymn singing, holds 15 to 20 per cent; and "Stars on Sunday" at the same hour a few per cent more. BBC 1's "Everyman" in its new late night slot is getting a rating of 11 per cent, while the IBA programmes earlier on Sunday evening hold 15 to 20 per cent, also against secular competition. Other religious programmes hold fewer viewers. The IBA's Sunday morning worship seems to average two per cent but this excludes institutions which both the BBC and IBA believe provide much of the audience for such programmes.

But the great dilemmas the Annan Committee discerned remain. Granada Television, one of the ITV companies, has just completed a 13-part series, "The Christians", with their chairman assuring the press that "it is not a religious programme". Reviewing it in "*The Times*", Michael Ratcliffe said: "Have you noticed how it has suddenly become quite respectable to display a fastidious and even intense interest in Christian subjects while declaring one's lack of Christian belief?"

### *Decency*

There is a sustained debate over standards of decency in the British media, and it focuses in a special way on television. The Reverend David Martin, a member of the Church of England General Synod's Commission on Broadcasting, has written<sup>4</sup> that some elements in our society will be offended by the slightest vulgarity while others will be totally indifferent to the most explicit sexuality the screen dare offer. "It is the extraordinarily difficult, and perhaps impossible task of the media to cater for all, and I can see no possibility of a solution acceptable to everyone." Apart from the constraints inscribed in charters and codes of practice there is an unofficial but brave standard-bearer for decency in Mrs. Mary Whitehouse, who runs the National Viewers and Listeners Association. She is not afraid to be laughed at, a rare quality in British Christians today, and she has won the grudging respect of many liberals who disagree with most of what she says. Perhaps they are glad that she is there.

### *Catholic involvement*

In addition to having a Catholic Assistant to the Head of Religious Broadcasting in London, the BBC has a separate assistant based in Birmingham who assists in respect to the North, Midlands and Wales. It also has priests acting as advisers to each of the twenty local radio stations.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority likewise has a Catholic priest as representative on its Religious Advisory Board and a separate adviser for each of its thirteen independent regional television companies. All these are priests. Advisers are also appointed to the independent local radio companies, some being priests, others lay men and women. Some of the appointments are thought to be made rather casually and unimaginatively, a fault of the system rather than of the dutiful nominees.

To conclude this section on a topical note: A Government "think-tank" of young civil servants has recommended a massive paring of Britain's overseas representation, to reflect our reduced influence in the world, suggesting that the BBC's broadcasts to other countries be severely curtailed. In this respect it might be appropriate to quote "*Communio et progressio*" which emphasizes the importance of religious broadcasts to countries where religion is persecuted. Vatican Radio and some evangelical stations are the main source of such broadcasts, but the BBC certainly includes a quota of religious material in its foreign service. "In those countries where the Church is forbidden the use of the media of social communication, listening to foreign religious broadcasts may be the only way the faithful can learn about the life of the Universal Church and hear the Word of God. In the name of Christian solidarity, such a situation puts a grave obligation on Catholics of other countries. It is necessary to organize religious broadcasts that are specially suited to the needs of fellow Christians who suffer this sort of deprivation."<sup>6</sup>

### *The Cinema*

For the audiences who select it, the cinema is a more powerful medium than television. Television's power lies in the size of its audience, the time devoted to it, and the relative lack of discrimination of the average individual in his or her attention to it. Turning it on or off is a family or community decision. Going to a cinema, however, is in most cases an individual, conscious decision. Once chosen, the cinema is the supreme audio-visual medium — by size, colour, quality of picture and sound, by the surrounding darkness and, above all, by freedom from distraction. More than two million people a week go to the cinema in Britain. The audience is mainly young: 15—17 years, 14%; 18—24 years, 42%; 25—34 years, 21%; 35 years and over, 23%.

A stranger to London who judged the cinema by what he saw from the top of a bus, by advertisements in the papers or by some of what he read in the review columns, could be forgiven for concluding that the venal were conspiring with the mad to destroy the innocent. Miss Freda Bruce Lockhart, film critic of the "*Catholic Herald*", when asked if she felt that film critics attempted moral as well as technical and aesthetic discrimination in their work today, said that she felt their overriding consensus was against more censorship and that although critics might be chary of passing moral judgment, most of them had some standards of moral taste to bring into play when called upon. All her own professional life she had favoured the right of serious directors to say what they meant; she felt the inoperability of the "depraving and corrupting" criterion, but would like to see a common decency standard, if one could be established, to prevent pollution of the environment. She observed that the unseemly appeared to leave the young unruffled, and that the particular influence of the cinema in this respect could not be

measured with our present knowledge. Judgment of the effect on individuals could only be made in the context of their whole environment.

In Britain we have an Advertising Standards Authority charged with ensuring that all advertising is honest, clean, decent and truthful. Correspondence with his body, however, on cinema advertising reveals it as tortuously reluctant to do anything about abuses. Taste and decency are the toughest areas the ASA deals with. A fair number of complaints are upheld and the ASA has the new censorship system of the "*New York Times*" under study. Meantime, British poster contractors and newspaper proprietors owe more to expediency on this point than to principle.

Our man on the London bus would be wrong in his immediate conclusion about the cinema. There are signs, in Miss Bruce Lockhart's view, that the tide of indecency is turning. In any case, lurid London films are not necessarily the films that ordinary people up and down the country are going to see. The top films of the main distributors in 1976 were collectively innocent.

### *The Catholic Press*

The enthusiasm of a Catholic for the apostolate of the press could be aroused by the paragraphs on the printed word in "*Communio et progressio*": "The Press, of its power and nature is of towering importance . . . Since it is able to deal with such a variety of material and since it can so admirably encourage men to think, it has prime place in the promotion of social dialogue."<sup>7</sup> He would, however, be shaken by the stark facts on Catholic press sales over recent years and by the sharpness of the contrary opinions held and urged about each major Catholic publication. Tom Burns, editor of "*The Tablet*", observed that "Catholics, like other people, don't like reading what they disagree with". Archbishop Murphy wrote in 1977: "Generally speaking the Catholic press of this country has steered through the Scylla and Charybdis of authentic teaching and justified comment with commendable and faithful helmsmanship. But when the history of the epoch through which we have lived is written, the watershed will be '*Humanae vitae*'. For the first time an heretical notion of the "right to dissent" flared up, and has smouldered ever since, occasionally fanned into life by certain sections of the press. Apart from digging the graves of our Catholic culture by this revolt, we are digging the grave of Western survival. I would think by now the flames have at least been contained, but the loss of young life in the Church might take another generation to recover."

Writing in "*The Month*" of April 1975 on the Catholic events of 1968, John Wilkins of the BBC said, '*The Tablet*' did more than any other English Catholic periodical at the time of *Humanae vitae* to explore the meaning of loyal dissent, and a moving editorial 'On Loyalty' was published . . . In it Tom Burns argued that if the paper was convinced that the natural law argument on which the encyclical was based could not be sustained, then it was part of its loyalty to the Pope to say so". John Wilkins approved the current pattern of the Catholic press and cautioned anyone seeking to change it to "bear in mind the proper task of the Catholic press: to pursue the truth, without fear or favour, from the standpoint of faith". Attempting that from different positions, some good men have been bumping into each other.

Not all the Catholic publications release their circulation figures, but it is instructive to look at some that do, comparing the trend with that shown by the main newspapers serving other denominations, with sales of secular Sunday papers, and with the highly approximate estimates of Catholic population provided year by year in the "*Catholic Directory*".

### Index Numbers

	1965	1970	1975
<i>"Universe"</i>			
<i>"Catholic Herald"</i> , and			
<i>"Scottish Catholic Observer"</i>	100	67	50
<i>"Church Times"</i>			
<i>"Baptist Times"</i> and the			
<i>"Methodist Recorder"</i>	100	78	65
Secular Sunday papers —			
— serious	100	111	105
— popular	100	98	85
Catholic population	100	101	106

The Catholic press has had much the worst of it. The decline in sales has been far steeper than that in the apparent Catholic population. The fortunes of sundry other Catholic titles are known or suspected to be similar.

There is no Catholic daily nor any serious possibility of one being launched in the foreseeable future. The encouraging thing about the four Catholic weeklies from a marketer's standpoint is how clearly separated they are from each other in role, character and audience sought. If any one of the four were to fail, none of the others could replace it.

Sales of *"The Tablet"* were 13,500 in 1966. They are much lower now, but the paper's influence is strengthened by the high number of readers per copy and the sheer quality of its subscribers, both at home and overseas. Tom Burns describes his paper as attempting a high intellectual standard. Now 140 years old, it has the *"Times"* — like steadiness of a journal that has had only seven editors in a century. It is now more than 40 years since control of it returned from clerical to lay hands — with, as Douglas Woodruff wrote in 1976, the tacit and shared understanding between Cardinal Hinsley and the new proprietors that loyalty and independence of view need not be incompatible. Mr. Woodruff added that he had recently confirmed that Cardinal Hume shared that view.

Mr. Burns sees *"The Tablet"* as offering something to anybody personally or professionally concerned with the Church. Perhaps 35 to 40 per cent of readers are clergy, religious and nuns. New subscribers are getting noticeably younger, which heartens him. He seeks not popularity but rather to feed the Catholic mind, clerical and lay. He sees a great division between present lay and clerical thinking, the danger of two religions. The division, however, is *not* between the intelligent and the unintelligent, the latter are reflective in their own way. Writing obviously for the middle and upper socio-intellectual groupings he directs *"The Tablet"* to explaining different groups of people to each other: those within the Church and those without; the integrist and the open, reflective Catholic; the clergy and the laity.

*"The Tablet"* has consciously left the market place and would not object to being thought of now as an institution, though this troubles those of its friends who cannot see in its new trust status the funding guarantee it seems to imply — even if the list of trustees fairly daunts by its lustre. *"The Tablet"* itself hopes for a future free from financial anxiety, to be able to do things that are not financially rewarding, and to extend the range of its coverage. It faces the future with great confidence and no fear of closure.

The “*Catholic Herald*” has a circulation of just over 30,000 and its sales are currently stabilizing after a long period of falling away. A new young editorial team, led since Summer 1976 by Richard Dowden, is trying to give the paper something of its distinct voice of earlier days and an improved layout. The editor aims to provide news and views of the Church with extensive coverage of the Church in this country, events in Rome, especially as they touch the Pope, and the main events in other Christian Churches and in Catholic Churches overseas, with informed Catholic comment on national and international affairs. The editor intends to convey “what it means to be a Catholic living in Britain today and to avoid the ‘cosy Catholic’ image which we believe to be contrary to the spirit of Vatican II and the Gospel”. The paper is written for educated, middle-class Catholics, the groupings who undoubtedly do need it, as the 1977 “*Catholic Herald*” Survey showed; but a younger, wider audience, to include other Christian denominations, is sought. The editor feels these are difficult days for Catholic journals, which are probably most successful when keeping together a diaspora or tightly knit community with common interests: “Before the Council, Catholics in Britain were a well defined, homogeneous group with clearly identifiable political and social attitudes . . . Since the Council there has not been the same cohesion; this makes the job of journalism more difficult and the need of the laity to know about the Church, as such, less real.”

Under the editorship of Count Michael de la Bedoyere, the “*Catholic Herald*”, foreshadowed and campaigned for many of the changes Vatican II endorsed. Bishops alive today wrote to the paper condemning it as heretical for suggesting that Mass be offered in the vernacular — sometimes the same men who now have no patience with the Tridentinists and condemn the paper for occasionally affording them a platform.

In this context the “Letters” page of the “*Catholic Herald*” deserves mention. Here, above all, for many years, before the war, before the Council, and right up to today, the deepest and often the sharpest feelings of disagreeing, and often disagreeable, laity and clergy have been aired. Anguish, anathemas, judgement, justice, learning and love, all these are there displayed. For sheer consistency of stimulation over generations, this page could be counted among the best elements in the entire Catholic press.

“*The Universe*” is the Catholic weekly with the largest circulation (almost 150,000). Like all the others it is owned and controlled by lay persons, but, as John Wilkins observes<sup>8</sup>, it keeps step with the bishops and has been praised by them for doing so. For the new editor, Jack Walsh, a man with many years of service, its prime role is to “disseminate the teachings of the Church. All else is secondary to this. It has an unbending loyalty to the Pope and to the doctrines of the Church.” It gives weekly news of the Church, at home and abroad, and voices opinions on matters concerning the Church and the social order of the day. A “popular” tabloid, it has always tried to put over its message in an easy-to-read form, illustrated by pictures where possible. Like most of the press throughout the world the paper has lost circulation in the past ten years, but it remains remarkably healthy and faces the future full of confidence. It is at present much concerned with explaining and largely commanding the changes brought about by Vatican II, but once the dust has finally settled on this issue, Unity is the subject it expects will be occupying a lot of its space. “*The Universe*” will push towards this goal with all vigour, but without in any way compromising on the eternal truths of the Church.”

“*The Universe*” is rather unfairly seen as a “nun-on-roller-skates” paper. Recent research has shown its social class profile to be much further up the market than has been commonly supposed. A Jesuit theologian was recently asked which of the four weeklies he would choose if only one were allowed him on a desert island. “*The Universe*”, he replied and echoing the famous sales claim for “*The News of the World*”, “because all human life is there”.

Simpler in appeal than "*The Universe*" is the "*Catholic Fireside*", a letter-press magazine published originally in 1879 for the benefit and improvement of Irish immigrants. It has had only five editors in that time. Editor and proprietor Charles Walker today describes it simply as a family magazine. John Wilkins spelt this out accurately enough in his article, already quoted: "saints and guardian angels, relics and rosaries, spiritual reading and Marian meditation, Wal-singham, Catholic crosswords and romantic Catholic serials". Sales are probably well below those of the "*Catholic Herald*" but it may enjoy an equally numerous readership, as magazines collect more readers per copy.

All the weeklies are lay controlled. One monthly, run by the Redemptorists, has drawn wry comments of admiration from secular practitioners. Called "*Catholic Life*" since early last year (formerly "*Novena*"), it was founded in 1951 to promote the Novena devotions to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. But as that devotion waned it became, in the words of the editor, Fr. Michael Hennesy, "simply a magazine for Catholic families with the purpose of informing, instructing and inspiring". It does well, and has a circulation of 19,500.

The parish newsletter is perhaps the most important medium of all and the Redemptorists among others prepare them with an instructional reverse side, including parts of the Proper of the Mass, leaving parish priests to put their information and other messages on the inside.

A number of dioceses have founded their own newspaper or magazine. The most notable is the "*Catholic Pictorial*", now serving the Archdiocese of Liverpool but with an older and broader history of ventures in Birmingham, Nottingham and even London. The editor, Norman Cresswell, writes: "Our role has never changed — as diocesan newspapers we are at the service of the diocese and the tool of the archbishop. This means that our target reader is each and every mass-goer. This was not always so. But the decline in attendance means that we can no longer aim for one specific section." Archbishop Worlock has, with his enthusiasm, given the "*Catholic Pictorial*" a new incentive to survive. Sales are 14,400 and are thought to be rising for the first time in ten years.

The sudden death of editor-owner, George Broughton, last year led to the demise of "*Pace*", the Northamptonshire diocesan paper, but in Hexham and Newcastle the "*Northern Cross*" continues. This is an unofficial organ but one which is published with helpful co-operation from Bishop's House, most priests, societies and organisations in the area. Its lifespring is the Newcastle branch of the Catholic Writers' Guild. Printing is done on a strictly commercial basis, all else by voluntary effort. The aims of the "*Northern Cross*" are still a model for diocesan papers. If its individual parish coverage is not in the fine focus of its early days (1956), writes Mr. Dollan, the present editor, it is still necessary to cover news locally important but not "big" enough to get attention from the Catholic nationals or intellectual periodicals: "As the nationals get fewer and more Olympian in their outlook, the need for the local and/or regional becomes more obviously essential."

The methods by which Catholic newspapers and periodicals are distributed profoundly affect their editorial freedom. None enjoys casual bookstall sales to any great extent, so the three channels are: sales outside church, delivery or collection of ordered copies from ordinary newsagents, and postal subscriptions. Sales at the church door are the unique opportunity, the unique difficulty. Each of the papers is banned in certain places, with "*The Tablet*" and the "*Catholic Herald*" (the papers which give space to "loyal dissent" in news, features or letters) naturally catching the worst of it. "*The Tablet*" suffers less than the "*Catholic Herald*" because its dependence on parish sales is much less. Practical and administrative considerations can prevent church-door sales as well as the spirit of censorship. Many priests, though genuinely troubled by the ideas occasionally presented in certain Catholic papers, sell them nonetheless,

trusting their laity. Others ban one or more because they feel it their pastoral duty to do so. A better understanding of the overall impact of the mass media today would lead clergy to trust their laity more and lessen censorship. Fr. Michael Walsh, SJ, commented on this situation in his review of our public relations in this country<sup>9</sup>: "There is need for investigative journalism within the Church, but there is no money to pay for it and it is common knowledge that two of the three major Catholic weeklies in this country find it difficult enough to remain financially viable. They have no money to spare to undertake 'insight' type reporting. In any case it would be too much of a risk. They have to rely heavily on church-door sales, and cannot afford to incur the hostility of the hierarchy and clergy. We need to keep the image (of the Church) right, and the press is the means to do so. But we are short of men, short of money and short of freedom."

John Wilkin likes the present pattern of the Catholic press and warns that anyone seeking to change it has a heavy responsibility<sup>10</sup>: as "*Communio et progressio*" says, "there is no advantage in founding new publications . . . if the new injure the old." There is some truth in this. But secular experience teaches something more rigorous which applies to the Catholic press too: the opportunity for unsatisfactory periodicals and newspapers to fail is a vital part of the opportunity for those meeting a real and contemporary need to continue or to come into being.

#### *Other publications*

The "*Catholic Truth Society*" was founded in 1868, by the future Cardinal Vaughan, to combat the semi-pornographic anti-Catholic literature which abounded. The Society was successful in its object; and today, after a century, its aims are:

- to publish and disseminate low-priced devotional works;
- to assist all Catholics to a better knowledge of their religion;
- to spread amongst non-Catholics information about the Faith;
- to assist the circulation of Catholic books.

The Society aims to represent the central magisterial teaching of the Church to the whole of the English-speaking community, and at every intellectual level. Its main medium is the printed word but it has experimented successfully with cassette tapes.

The CTS distributes over two million copies of its publications every year, ranging in price from about 10p. to £ 1.50 (for the paperback RSV Bible). There is a free distribution of about 37,000 copies of the "*Catholic Truth*" magazine twice a year and a variety of standing order and press release arrangements for ensuring widespread circulation. The method of distribution is basically commercial. Publications are sold at a discount to parishes or to individual box-tenders in parishes, these people being reimbursed by the higher price printed on every copy sold. Prices are low because the 32,000 members pay an annual subscription of £ 2 to subsidize the printing. This combination of membership subsidy and very cheap distribution on a commercial basis appears to have been the key to the Society's survival through times of inflation and increased expenditure.

The Society has an annual salary bill of over £ 100,000. It manages without recourse to bishops or any national Catholic sources. Its monetary resources are sunk in its continually changing stock of publications and in its retail bookshop, which keeps available in London virtually all the Catholic books in the English language currently in print.

### *Television and radio training centre*

The Catholic Radio and Television Centre at Hatch End in Middlesex is a unique centre where Catholics likely to be called to work in radio and television — anywhere in the world — can be properly trained. It was started in 1955, years before the Council, when Cardinal Griffin gave his enthusiastic support to strong initiatives taken by Agnelli Andrew, OFM. It also had the support of Bishops Heenan and Grimshaw, the Catholic representatives on the Central Religious Advisory Committee of the BBC.

Begging and volunteer effort went to its founding. Fr. Agnelli made 171 appeals and raised £ 250,000. Sir Charles Curran, until recently Director General of the BBC and for years Secretary of the Catholic Radio Guild, was among those who scrubbed floors at the Centre in early days. Fr Agnelli has been Director of the Centre since it was opened.

The Hatch End Centre has no exact counterpart anywhere in the world. It antedates and therefore shapes rather than conforms to the urging of "*Communio et progressio*": "It is therefore the task of the national centres and of the specialized organisations to make certain that those who have to use the media receive sufficient and timely training."

The Centre looks to the world, not just to England and Scotland, whose hierarchies control it. It has a staff of eleven, including three trainees. There are four religious on its staff, including three priests. 227 people completed courses at Hatch End in 1976, of whom 132 were religious and 95 were lay people. There were 32 students from the Third World, but as these came mainly for the longer courses (three, six or ten weeks), 40 per cent of effort, time and expenditure went to helping the Third World.

The Centre uses sophisticated and up-to-date radio and television equipment, astutely bought. From January until Easter there is the full production course for overseas students. Then there are four one-week courses on Pastoral Communication for diocesan clergy. The June-August programme includes visits by a mobile unit to three or four centres, courses for students in their long vacations and for senior seminarians. October and November feature courses particular to local radio and the use of audio-visual material in religious education and liturgy. The year concludes with courses for secular business executives in the context of Christian principles.

In recent years, the Bishops arranged an annual collection for the purposes of social communication; but Hatch End existed for many years without these subventions. It is leanly operated, with only its lay staff receiving proper salaries. The English and Welsh Bishops' collection in 1976 was £ 61,00 of which Hatch End received £ 36,800.

Inter-church co-operation is evident also in the field of broadcasting. Indeed, the Broadcasting Commission of the Church of England General Synod recommends in 1973<sup>11</sup> that their Church too should establish a training centre, seeking co-operation with Hatch End, as well as with the Churches' Television and Radio Centre at Bushey.

### *Catholic Information Office*

"It is the mission of those with responsible positions in the Church to announce without fail or pause the full truth, by means of social communication, so as to give a true picture of the Church and her life."<sup>12</sup>

The Catholic Information Office for England and Wales (CIO) was founded in 1968 as a result of approaches made to their bishops by Catholics in the newspaper world, who had difficulty in getting authoritative guidance and briefing especially following Vatican II.

The CIO started by issuing press releases, but the office soon developed a documentation service. In 1972 a nun was appointed Religious Life Officer and this led to the publication of "*Signum*", which gave news and information of developments within the religious life. The Jesuits in the English province have the services of their professional journalist.

The first Catholic Church Information Officer, David Miles-Board, a deacon, is now National Coordinator of the three Catholic Information Services: the Press Office, the Publications Department and the Training Courses Department. The Press Office is involved in the day-to-day flow of information to the media. It handled 160 stories in 1976. Its work included church press releases, telexes to press contacts at home and overseas, background briefings on current issues, telephone briefings of the media and researchers, and the arranging of press conferences for major events and announcements.

"*Briefing*", the official documentation service of the Church in England and Wales, is an off-shoot of the press work of the Information Office. News that involves the Church sometimes filters through the media in an over-simplified and sometimes sensationalised form, a danger "*Communio et progressio*" emphasises. So "*Briefing*" provides not just the highlights and controversial sections of Church documents, but the full text with an introduction, putting the document in context and summarizing its contents. "*Briefing*" has over 2,000 subscribers, of whom some 700 also take "*Signum*."

The training courses aim at providing competent communicators in the written word at parish and community level. The training team in 1976 has been conducting courses around the country, working with the Diocesan Information Officers. Topics covered include relations with the press, reporting meetings in a lively manner, and the Parish newsletter as a force for Christian formation as well as information.

The three departments run on a grant of £32,000 of which about three-quarters comes from the National Catholic Fund and the rest from the Mass Media Collection. As at Hatch End, there is a large hidden subsidy in that several executives draw virtually no salary because they are priests or religious.

The question of overlap between the training at Hatch End and by the CIO arises in some minds. But Hatch End's sphere is the audio-visual, that of the CIO news and information. A little overlap on basics quickens; rigid demarcation stifles. The same applies to any overlapping of the sphere of the Catholic Truth Society and that of the CIO Publications Department.

### *Diocesan Activity*

Fourteen of the twenty dioceses of the English and Welsh Conference have priests either appointed as Diocesan Information Officers or officially responsible for this work. In some cases the Bishop's secretary acts in this role.

The scale of activity varies from the purely nominal to instances where the function is full-time or there are active mass-media groups in existence. It is certain moreover that some good work in the parishes is not monitored at diocesan level.

The Archdiocese of Liverpool has had a full-time Diocesan Information Officer for six years, it had a communications group for eight years, but this is now pending reformation. Several parishes have groups who edit and produce their own newsletters, and Liverpool has the only priest seconded full-time to the local (BBC) radio station.

DABCAS (Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Communications Advisory Service) consists of three priests and one layman, including the Professor of Communications from the Wonersh Semi-

nary, whose TV and radio studio is used for making cassettes and video tapes. These cover topics such as marriage and family life, the revised rite of penance. DABCAS provides the advisers to BBC Radio Brighton, and has created links between priests, local newspaper editors and radio executives.

In the Middlesbrough diocese, one priest leads an ecumenical team for the bishop, covering radio and press work. This has two groups, one centred on the local newspaper. another meeting at the local radio station. A third group is active in the south of the diocese.

### *Conclusion*

It might be concluded from the foregoing that the condition of the communications and information services of the RC Church in England is quite adequate. A questioning voice was raised by M. Walsh in "*The Month*"<sup>13</sup>. He wondered whether our new efforts are not aimed at reaching the better educated at the expense of the less well educated. The common opinion before Vatican II was that the better educated were not being reached. More research is needed on the extent and effectiveness of our communication system. As M. Walsh put it: "a business corporation could not afford to lose so many customers. It would employ a public relations firm to find out why, and suggest remedies."

### Anmerkungen:

1. "*The Month*", August 1974.
2. Dr. Cupitt, "*The Listener*", 18 March 1976.
3. Pilkington.
4. "*The Month*", February 1974.
5. A. Flannery, OP, ed., "*Vatican II: conciliar and post-conciliar documents*", Dublin, Talbot Press, 1975, p. 342.
6. *Communio et Progressio*, 157.
7. 136.
8. "*The Month*", April 1975.
9. "*The Month*", December 1974.
10. "*The Month*", April 1975.
11. "*Broadcasting, Society and the Church*".
12. *Communio et progressio*, 123.
13. December 1974.

### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Von den drei Fernsehkanälen Großbritanniens werden zwei von der BBC und einer als Independent Television (ITV) unter der Kontrolle von Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) von mehreren kommerziellen Programmgesellschaften betrieben. Die Briten verbringen im Durchschnitt täglich vier Stunden vor dem Fernsehschirm, wobei 44% BBC und 57% ITV bevorzugen. Im Hörfunk hat die BBC vier verschiedene nationale Programme und 20 lokale Stationen, während es 19 unabhängige lokale Hörfunksender gibt, die von Anzeigen leben. Religiöse Programme sind im Vereinigten Königreich Teil der öffentlichen Verpflichtung des Rundfunks, wobei es religiösen Gruppierungen oder politischen Parteien nicht erlaubt ist, Sendezeit bei Hör- und Sehfunk zu kaufen.

Die BBC sendet über das Fernsehen wöchentlich 2 ¾ Stunden und über die Hörfunksender rund acht Stunden religiöser Programme. ITV sendet rund 2 ¼ Stunden solcher Fernsehprogramme pro Woche. Die lokalen BBC- und unabhängigen Hörfunkstationen haben ebenfalls religiöse Sendungen, so daß die gesamte Sendezeit für religiöse Programme noch wesentlich höher liegt. Der Anteil am Gesamtprogramm ist prozentual allerdings deswegen gefallen, weil die Sendezeit insgesamt verlängert wurde. Die von der Regierung eingesetzte sog. Annan-Kommission zur Neuordnung des Rundfunks empfiehlt keine zusätzliche Programmzeit für religiöse Programme, denn „die längsten Predigten sind nicht unbedingt die be-

sten". Das Schema der religiösen Sendungen hat sich in den letzten Jahren kaum geändert. Um 6.40 Uhr vormittags findet das „Gebet des Tages“ über BBC 4 eine besonders aufmerksam reagierende Hörerschaft. Im gleichen Programm hat eine Stunde später der „Gedanke für den Tag“ etwa zwei Millionen Zuhörer. Der 15-minütige tägliche Gottesdienst, der jeweils live um 10.15 Uhr im gleichen Programm übertragen wird, dürfte täglich rund 500.000 bis 750.000 Zuhörer haben. Manche Engländer gestalten ihren Tag rund um diese Sendung.

Die religiösen Fernsehsendungen von BBC und ITV liegen meist am Sonntagmorgen. Die Hörerschaft für alle religiösen Programme am Wochenende dürfte fünf- bis sechsmal größer sein als jene von „Grandstand“, der wichtigsten BBC-Sportsendung am Samstag. Seh- und Hörfunk erreichen mit ihren religiösen Programmen zusammen rund 20 Mio. Menschen am Wochenende und 27 Mio. während der Woche, d.h. mehr als die Hälfte der Bevölkerung. Manche ITV-Regionen, die eine ziemlich große Autonomie haben, schließen ihre täglichen Programme mit einem Epilog, einer religiösen Schlussendung. Die klassische Zeit für religiöse Programme war früher sonntags der geschlossene Block von 18.15 Uhr bis 19.25 Uhr, welcher allerdings 1976 von BBC und ITV auf 35 Minuten zwischen 18.40 Uhr und 19.15 Uhr beschränkt wurde und damit religiöse Programme in andere Programmteile verwies.

Der religiöse Rundfunk in Großbritannien war nie statisch. Immer wieder gab es Neuerungen, so z.B. bei Yorkshire TV, trotz mancher Kritik, die Sendung „Stars am Sonntag“ mit immerhin 7 ½ Mio. Zuschauern. Den katholischen Diskjockey Jimmy Savile hören immerhin vier Millionen Jugendliche bei seinem Programm „Speakeasy“ über BBC Radio 1. In der Sendung „Anno Domini“ hat BBC viele religiöse Fragen fachlich gut behandelt, die jetzt durch die Sendung „Everymen“ ergänzt werden in dem Bemühen, innerhalb des allgemeinen Programms aufgrund der Qualität eine eigene Bedeutung zu gewinnen.

Die Beurteilung religiöser Sendungen im Rundfunk ist offensichtlich aber nicht eindeutig. Unabhängige Berichterstatter für den Annan-Report berichten und belegen unterschiedliche Auffassungen innerhalb der Kirchen selbst: Einige anerkannten die Richtlinien der Rundfunkgesellschaften, einer christlichen Ethik im weitesten Sinne zu dienen, andere meinten, es entwickle sich ein ungutes Gefühl, daß die Kirchen zu leicht die Möglichkeit einer einmaligen Chance aufzugeben, über den Rundfunk ausschließlich die Botschaft, auch auf die Gefahr hin zu verbreiten, daß dadurch die interessierte Hörerschaft begrenzt werde. Aufgrund dieser Erfahrungen heißt es im Annan-Report, man finde es einfacher, „Pläne für einen neuen Turm von Babel zu entwerfen als für ein neues Jerusalem“. Man wandte sich deswegen an das „Central Religious Advisory Committee“ (CRAC), das sowohl BBC als auch IBA berät. Es besteht aus 29 Mitgliedern, davon sind etwa die Hälfte Kleriker der verschiedenen Kirchen, unter ihnen sind vier Katholiken. Dieses Komitee hat kützlich seine Ziele für religiöse Rundfunkarbeit formuliert, die wesentlich von denen abweichen, die früher galten. Danach sollte religiöser Rundfunk versuchen:

1. den Gottesdienst, die Gedanken und Aktionen der hauptsächlichen religiösen Überlieferungen in Britannien widerzuspiegeln, wobei anerkannt wird, daß diese Traditionen hauptsächlich, wenn auch nicht ausschließlich, christlich sind;
2. den Zuhörern und Zuschauern jene Glaubenshaltungen, Ideen, Probleme und Erfahrungen der gegenwärtigen Welt nahezubringen, die eindeutig mit einer religiösen Interpretation oder Dimension des Lebens in Beziehung stehen;
3. den religiösen Interessen, Sorgen und Notwendigkeiten jener zu dienen, die am Rande oder außerhalb der organisierten Kirchen stehen.

Aus diesen Zielen folgt, daß Religion in England nicht mehr gleichlautend mit Christentum und es deswegen auch nicht mehr notwendig sei — so der Annan-Report —, davon auszugehen. Auch wenn eine Religion von ihren Mitgliedern verlangt, Proselytenmacherei zu treiben, dann sei der Rundfunk dafür — so die Meinung des CRAC — nicht das richtige Mittel.

Die Annan-Kommission gibt zwei Empfehlungen:

1. Die Rundfunkautoritäten sollten überlegen, ob Aufgaben des religiösen Rundfunks besser durch eine Ausweitung des Zuständigkeitsbereichs der Kirchenfunkabteilungen erfüllt werden können oder durch Verteilung der Verantwortlichkeiten für religiöse Programme auf andere Abteilungen, bei Absicherung der religiösen Belange.

2. Jede der be- oder entstehenden Rundfunkgesellschaften sollte ein eigenes Beratungskomitee für religiöse Fragen schaffen, das etwas zu den religiösen Bedürfnissen der Gläubigen christlicher Gemeinschaften sagen könnte. Solche Berater sollten nicht aus den Randbereichen der Kirchen, sondern aus der gesunden Mitte berufen werden.

In den britischen Medien gibt es eine ständige Diskussion über Anstand und moralische Fragen in der Publizistik. Mrs. Mary Whitehouse, Leiterin der nationalen Zuschauer- und Hörervereinigung, ist die Hauptverteidigerin dieser Belange. Sie hat keine Angst, ausgelacht zu werden, eine seltene Eigenschaft heutiger Christen in Großbritannien.

Über zwei Millionen Menschen gehen im Vereinigten Königreich jede Woche ins Kino, darunter mehrheitlich junge Menschen, wobei die 15 bis 17jährigen 14% und die 18 bis 24jährigen 42% der Besucher stellen.

Für die Werbung gibt es im Lande eine „Advertising Standards Authority“, die dafür zu sorgen hat, daß die Werbung sauber und ehrlich bleibt.

Die katholische Presse in Großbritannien hat schwierige Entwicklungen hinter sich. Es gibt keine katholische Tageszeitung und wird sie wohl in naher Zukunft nicht geben. Die vier katholischen Wochenzeitungen sind in ihrer Zielgruppe und Aufmachung gut voneinander geschieden, so daß kaum ein Blatt ein anderes ersetzen könnte. Die Auflage von „*The Tablet*“, einem von seinem Standard her mit der „*Times*“ zu vergleichenden Wochenblatt, betrug 1966 13.500 Exemplare. Rund 35 bis 40% der Leserschaft dürften Geistliche und Ordensleute sein. Das inzwischen 140 Jahre alte Blatt für die gehobene Mittel- und Oberschicht ist außerdem schon fast zu einer Institution geworden. Der „*Catholic Herald*“ mit einer Auflage von 30.000 Exemplaren möchte Informationen und Meinungen, vor allem aus dem innerkirchlichen Bereich sowohl Englands als auch Roms und der Weltkirche geben. Die Redakteure möchten darlegen, was es bedeutet, im heutigen Britannien ein Katholik zu sein. Das Blatt richtet sich an die gebildete Mittelschicht der Katholiken, wobei die Leserschaft sich offensichtlich mehr und mehr verjüngt. Schon vor dem Zweiten Vatikanum hat der „*Herald*“ manches diskutiert und angesprochen, was nach dem Konzil selbstverständlich wurde. „*The Universe*“ ist das Blatt mit der höchsten Auflage (ca. 150.000). Es will vor allem als Nachrichtenblatt über das Leben der Kirche verstanden werden. Als populäre Zeitschrift hat „*The Universe*“ immer versucht, auch im Stil leicht lesbar und verständlich zu bleiben. Einfacher als das „*Universe*“ ist „*Catholic Fireside*“, ein 1879 ursprünglich für irische Emigranten entstandenes Blatt; heute könnte man es als Familienmagazin ansprechen.

Außer diesen Wochenzeitungen, die alle von Laien verantwortet werden, geben die Redemptoristen seit 1951 eine Monatsschrift heraus unter dem Titel „*Catholic Life*“ (früher: *Novena*). Einige Diözesen haben ihre eigenen Blätter, so z.B. das „*Catholic Pictorial*“ der Erzdiözese Liverpool. In Hexham und Newcastle erscheint „*Northern Cross*“.

Alle katholischen Blätter werden außerhalb der Kirchen über Vertriebsfirmen oder auf Bestellung geliefert. Keines der Blätter wird in größeren Mengen an den Kiosken verkauft.

Die „*Catholic Truth Society*“ wurde 1868 von Kardinal Vaughan gegründet. Der Verlag veröffentlichte preiswerte Devotionalien und Religionsbücher, Publikationen über den katholischen Glauben und bemüht sich um den Vertrieb kirchlicher Bücher. Über zwei Millionen Exemplare werden durch die Gesellschaft jährlich vertrieben.

In Hatch End bei London haben die Katholiken seit 1955 ein eigenes Radio- und Fernsehzentrum unter der Leitung von Pater Agnellus Andrew. Allein im Jahre 1976 haben in dem Zentrum 227 Personen an Kursen teilgenommen, unter ihnen 32 aus der sog. Dritten Welt. 1968 wurde ein katholisches Informationsbüro für England und Wales gegründet, das sich zu einem Dokumentationszentrum ausgeweitet hat; für Ordensleute wird seit 1972 von dieser Stelle auch ein Mitteilungsblatt zu Fragen religiösen Lebens unter dem Titel „*Signum*“ veröffentlicht. Die Kollekte zum Weltkommunikationstag, durch welche u.a. Hatch End und andere Unternehmungen finanziert werden, erbrachte für England und Wales im Jahre 1976 die Summe von 61.000 Pfund.

## R É S U M É

L'auteur, lui-même spécialisé surtout dans les questions de presse, s'y connaît fort bien dans les mass media catholiques de Grande-Bretagne. A partir de cette connaissance, il donne un point de vue concentré des activités religieuses, à la télévision et à la radio, en Grande-Bretagne, et des différentes directions actuelles. Puis il s'adresse au film, et plus abondamment, à la presse catholique. Enfin, il en vient à parler du centre de radio et de télévision de Hatch End, près de Londres, et du bureau d'information catholique pour l'Angleterre et le Pays de Galles qui s'est agrandi en un centre de documentation.

## R E S U M E N

El autor, especialista sobre todo en problemas de la prensa, está muy familiarizado con los medios de comunicación social de Gran Bretaña. Partiendo de su experiencia, ofrece una concisa panorámica sobre las actividades religiosas en radio y televisión en Gran Bretaña y las diversas tendencias actuales. Aborda especialmente el informe de la llamada Comisión Annan para la reestructuración de la radio. Después pasa revisión al cine y analiza exhaustivamente la prensa católica. Por último se ocupa del Centro para Radio y Televisión en Hatch End, cerca de Londres, y de la Oficina Católica de Información para Inglaterra y Gales, que se ha convertido en un centro de documentación.