MASS MEDIA AS AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION IN UGANDA

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Could the mass media be agencies of national unity and development in Uganda, the current violent upheavals notwithstanding? This article, adapted from a historical study, shows that Uganda's mass media systems could not effectively play that role, given their structures. Socialization, the process by which people learn to be members of the human race and members of the culture in which they are born, forms the theoretical framework of the study. At issue, therefore, is the extent to which the mass media could be agencies of socializing Ugandans to a common culture whose central elements would be national unity and development.

Ugandans have had control of the modern systems of mass media since 1962, when Uganda became independent of Great Britain. But those systems are yet to be reorganized in ways that could make them more responsive and appealing to a broader spectrum of Ugandans. What follows is an assessment of the systems' success or failure as agencies of socialization in Uganda in the context of their historical establishment and development.

THE PRINT MEDIA IN UGANDA

Isoba (1980) stated that religious missionaries played an important role in developing the press in Uganda. In 1897, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) started a mimeographed English-

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *An earlier version of this article was presented at the International Communication Association Conference, Chicago, IL, in May 1986.*

JOURNAL OF BLACK STUDIES, Vol. 20 No. 3, March 1990 342-361

language quarterly, which later became a printed periodical; this was the forerunner of Uganda's print media. This periodical was a medium of information for missionaries in Uganda and those who had gone home on furlough. In 1907, the CMS missionaries started a publication in Lugand, one of Uganda's indigenous languages, which was intended as a means of disseminating Anglican Church-related information to the local people. The Roman Catholic Church missionaries, known as the White Fathers, also started a Luganda-language daily newspaper in 1911.

The first commercial newspaper in Uganda was an English-language daily founded by a former superintendent of the CMS's industrial missionary work. In the 1920s, African-owned and operated newspapers were started. Each survived for a short while and ceased publication, mainly for lack of trained personnel, capital, and satisfactory circulation. The government and various religious bodies also published newspapers and periodicals in several Ugandan languages; most of these could, at best, be described as "off-and-on" irregular ventures.

The need for a public information service was realized by the colonial administration in Uganda when the Department of Information was established in 1952. The work of the Department was greatly enhanced by the introduction of a radio broadcasting station in 1954. The Department's responsibilities included the collection of information and its dissemination through the local press. The Department also dispatched news bulletins and feature materials on Uganda to the overseas press.

According to the Committee of Enquiry into the Organization, Policy and Operation of the Government's Information Services:

> The functions of the Government information services should be to help interpret and explain the policy and actions of the Government to the people of Uganda; to assist the Government to keep closely in touch with the reactions (which may include misapprehension) of the public to its policies; to help in the creation of a well-informed public opinion and to encourage and assist the people of Uganda to take an increasing interest in the responsibility for the economic, cultural and political development of their country [Uganda Protectorate, 1958:3].

To fulfill these functions, the Department of Information was divided into several sections, one of which was publications. This section produced a number of newspapers and booklets in English and in some Ugandan, vernacular languages. The government wanted to make its voice heard across the country. Ways of ensuring that the government's voice was heard – and clearly, too – included the colonial government's restrictions on the rising nationalist leaders' access to the government's mass communication systems.

Some of the nationalists started their own publications through which they called out for independence. The African press was closely watched by the colonial government. Many of the African newspapers' editors and publishers were as often in jail as out of it, whether for "seditious" publications or political activity (Ainslie, 1967). On the whole, according to Isoba (1980), the Uganda press development was hindered by lack of trained personnel, undercapitalization, inadequate premises, inefficient and outmoded machinery, and lack of distribution channels. There was furthermore, very little foreign investment in Uganda's newspaper industry.

Between 1897 and 1967, 29 newspapers and periodicals were published in Uganda. The government newspapers and the several publications owned and operated by religious missionaries concentrated on local and national news. By 1967, the two largest newspaper were the *Uganda Argus*, a daily with a circulation of about 20,000, founded in 1955, and *The People*, a weekly with a circulation of about 15,000, founded in 1964. Both of these papers were in English and provided some international news coverage supplied by international news agencies such as Reuters, UPI, AP, AFP, TASS, and others (Herrick et al., 1969).

A government report (Uganda, 1962) gave two lists of newspapers being published in Uganda by 1962. The papers on the first list were privately owned and are shown in Table 1. The report goes on to say that there were no striking developments among the African-owned independent newspapers during 1961. Furthermore, there was no possibility of much progress in the African press unless it received injections of local capital from African businessmen and organizations. The badly needed capital would enable the African newspapers to be adequately equipped, efficiently staffed, and

TABLE 1
Newspapers Published in Uganda by 1962

Name of Paper	*Language*	*Circulation*	*Frequency*
Agafa e Buvanjuba/Masaba	Luganda	5,000	Monthly
Ageteraine	Runyankole	7,000	Fortnightly
Amut	Lango	4,000	Monthly
Erwon K'iteso	Ateso	5,400	Monthly
Kodheyo	Luganda	5,000	Weekly
Lobo Mewa	Lwo	12,000	Fortnightly
Munno	Luganda	6,200	Thrice weekly
Nwebingwa	Runyoro/Rutoro	3,500	Fortnightly
New Day	English	2,500	Fortnightly
Uganda Argus	English	14,200	Daily
Taifa Empya	Luganda	12,000	Daily
Taifa Uganda Empya	Luganda	14,000	Weekly
Uganda Eyogera	Luganda	12,000	Daily
West Nile Catholic Gazette	English/Lugbara/ Alur/Madi	3,000	Monthly

properly managed. *Obugagga bwa Uganda*, which had been published for some time, and the *Uganda Post* ran into financial difficulties and ceased publication in 1961.

The Department of Information published five vernacular newspapers to fill the gap left by the inadequate distribution of the commercial newspapers. The papers on the second list are shown in Table 2. These papers were owned and published by the government. Given an approximate population of seven million people in Uganda by 1961, the two commercial newspapers with the largest claimed circulation, one in English (*The Uganda Argus*) and the other in Luganda (*Taifa Empya*) reached only about 0.2% of the population. The government newspaper with the largest circulation, a Luganda-language one (*Mawulire*), reached 0.5% of the population.

Other newspapers and periodicals circulating in Uganda came from Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, Great Britain, the United States, and France. These publications catered to the educated elite market as did the English-language newspapers published in Uganda. Even the vernacular newspapers catered mainly to a minority of the population – the literate 30% of Ugandans. Furthermore, most of the papers were published in the city of Kampala and

TABLE 2
The Uganda Government Vernacular Publications by 1961

Name of Paper	*Language*	*Circulation*	*Frequency*
Mawulire	Luganda	40,000	Weekly
Wamanya	Runyoro/Rutoro	10,000	Fortnightly
Wamanya	Runyankore/Ruchiga	10,000	Fortnightly
Lok Awinya	Lwo	10,000	Monthly
Apupeta	Ateso	10,000	Monthly

a few were published in some of the larger urban areas of Uganda. The people who could have ready access to those papers were the urban dwellers.

Early in 1971, Idi Amin banned all foreign-originating newspapers and periodicals from being distributed in Uganda. He claimed that all those publications belonged to "confusing agents," a catch-all category in which Amin placed all people whose views were contrary to his perceptions and beliefs. The then *Uganda Argus* became Amin's *Voice of Uganda*.

By 1976, according to the Uganda Commission for UNESCO report (1976a), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was publishing four regional newspapers. These were *Apupeta*, published in Ateso for the eastern region; *Omukulembeze*, published in Luganda for the midland region; *Dwon Lwak*, published in Luo for the northern region, and *Omwebembezi*, published in Runyoro/Rutoro for the western region. The objectives of the papers were to provide agricultural and rural development information in local languages and in clear, simple presentations suitable for rural readership.

The papers, however, were not very successful. They were printed and published in Kampala and could hardly reflect life in the rural areas which they were supposed to serve. There were distribution problems, too, so much so that the papers often reached the readers several weeks after the date of publication. In 1976, the government proposed a new integrated basic education program which would include the upgrading of the government local language newspapers through, among other things, staff training. Further improvements would include the establishment of editorial

offices and simple printing facilities in rural areas (UNESCO, 1976a).

THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN UGANDA

Discussing the development of broadcasting in the former British West African possessions of Sierra Leone, Ghana (the Gold Coast), Nigeria, and the Gambia, Graettinger (1977) said that when radio was introduced in the colonies, it was solely for the colonial officials' own listening and an important over-the-air bond with the home country. Later, however, the British acknowledged the African communication patterns when they realized that radio was, in the words of Matheson (1935: 387), an "extension of the oldest form of human communication, that which is carried by word of mouth."

According to an interim report of a committee appointed by Great Britain's Secretary of State on Broadcasting, the development of colonial broadcasting and its justification was envisaged

> not only as an instrument of entertainment for Europeans and others of similar education and means who can for the most part listen in [sic] to Daventry and other stations on short wave receiving sets, but also as an instrument of advanced administration. An instrument only, and perhaps not even primarily, for entertainment, but rather for the enlightenment and education of the more backward sections of the population, and for their instruction in public health and agriculture, etc. [Uganda Protectorate, 1939: 10].

Using the above citation as an introduction to its recommendation, a commission established to investigate broadcasting possibilities in Uganda went on to say that fully developed broadcasting service in the protectorate would bring a great number of Africans into direct touch with government than any other medium. It would be especially valuable in dealing with those subjects which affected the welfare of Africans, such as the combating of human, animal, and plant diseases, and the improvement of housing and the water supply (Uganda Protectorate, 1939).

Broadcasting was visualized as eventually becoming sufficiently developed to be used as an instrument of advanced administration. In that sense, it would provide a ready and efficient means of advising and instructing people in a manner which would otherwise only be possible by the provision of greatly increased staff, the cost of which would be prohibitive. Broadcasting would, therefore, serve three basic functions: propaganda—straightforward talks explaining the government's motives; education, where "one instructor could teach fifty or more schools"; and entertainment, including the transmission of African culture to new generations and the provision of a variety of recreational activities (Uganda Protectorate, 1939). The only way of reaching the mass of the African population, the report held, was through broadcasting.

RADIO BROADCASTING IN UGANDA

In 1954, the British colonial administration established the Uganda Broadcasting Service (UBS). Through this nascent system, short programs in English and in four of Uganda's vernacular languages were broadcast in the late afternoon and evening. On Saturday and Sunday, the broadcasting time was extended to include programs in three additional Ugandan languages as well as programs in Hindustani, an Indian language, for the sake of a fairly large Asian community in Uganda.

The program fare in almost all of the languages was mainly news, educational information, and entertainment—music and drama. Without an accepted and indigenous *lingua franca*, English became the most ubiquitous of all languages used by UBS. Indeed, radio was used by the government as an information channel for the primary benefit of the British personnel in Uganda, the Asians, and the small but growing group of Uganda elites. More than half of the broadcasting time was allocated to programs in English which took the 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. time slot. The Ugandan languages programs were broadcast in the afternoon.

In 1958, the *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Organization, Policy and Operation of the Government's Information*

Services (in Uganda) reinforced the importance of radio broadcasting. The report said:

> It is the experience of governments in all parts of the Commonwealth that broadcasting can become a powerful force in everyday life, helping to solve important social and economic problems in the development of territory. . . . The cost must be looked at in terms of the contribution broadcasting can make to the education of people, the prevention of the spread of disease, improvement in the methods of agriculture and better living standards. It can draw the ear away from hostile propaganda from abroad; it can, perhaps above all, cultivate a spirit of unity and evoke an awareness of political issues. In addition it can bring fresh experience and enjoyment to large numbers of people and provide a means of contact with remote districts where the written word is seldom available [Uganda Protectorate, 1958: 21].

The report was, however, somewhat critical of the early broadcasting efforts in Uganda. It cited the lack of a more comprehensive news service as well as the low standard of translation and presentation over the microphone. Other criticisms were the lack of sufficient programs reflecting the life, interests, and culture of Africans outside the towns; insufficient attention to the needs of women listeners; and lack of diversity of views on current political affairs.

The report also noted that local talent in many fields was not being fully encouraged and developed. Also, little was being done to establish broadcasting as a patron of the arts. On the whole, the report summed up, the significance of many of the important elements in Ugandan life and society was not being adequately brought out in the programs.

On the future of broadcasting in Uganda, the report recommended a set of aims which were:

1. To provide a service in both English and vernacular languages which can be heard clearly in all parts of the Protectorate;
2. To transmit a balanced programme of information, education and entertainment in English and vernacular languages paying due attention to local interests and customs;

3. To develop the use of English as a unifying factor and a stimulus to progress;
4. To encourage local talent and make full use of local music and drama;
5. To assist education by introducing special broadcasts for secondary schools and teachers in training [Uganda Protectorate, 1958: 22].

Although there was no doubt that the ideal broadcasting system was an independent corporation similar to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the late 1950s were not the appropriate time for such a development. This conclusion was based on the fact that the program services in Uganda were not yet sufficiently established and that the necessary staff were yet to be recruited and trained in broadcasting techniques. The system was to be gradually developed with regular reviews and consultations with the BBC.

The Uganda Broadcasting Service was established as a separate government department responsible for all broadcasting in the country. It was placed under a Minister of Information and Broadcasting whose portfolio enabled him to take an overall view of the country's affairs, problems, and government policy as a whole and to provide appropriate broadcast information support (Uganda, 1958). The service was renamed Radio Uganda, owned, operated, and controlled by the government after Uganda attained political independence from Great Britain in 1962.

The first postindependence government report covering the period of 1962/1963 observed that

> Radio Uganda, the Government vernacular newspapers, and the new medium of Television continued to explain and publicize Government policies to keep the masses well informed of local and international events. Radio Uganda which broadcast in 14 languages had an audience of about two million people. Radio and television services apart from carrying news bulletins, talks, discussions, and features put out a lot of educational and entertainment programmes [Uganda Government, 1964: 5].

On July 1, 1962, Radio Uganda added a second broadcasting channel giving rise to an increase in program output including

programs in six more Ugandan languages. Thus, by December 1962, Radio Uganda was broadcasting in 13 languages and the weekly total number of hours broadcast had risen from about 19 hours in June to 112 in December 1962.

With broadcasts in so many languages, new problems arose. For example, if a program was on the air in one language, what were the listeners in other 12 languages supposed to do? To overcome this kind of problem resulting from the glut of languages, broadcasting was reorganized into four regional programs, each with a capacity to initiate its own programs. These were:

1. The National Programme, intended for the more enlightened audience, putting out programmes of a regular general interest and nation-wide appeal broadcast in English, the national language;
2. The Midland Regional Programme, to serve the Luganda-speaking areas of Buganda and the Eastern Region, excepting Teso District;
3. The Northern Regional Programme, to serve the whole of the Northern Region and includes Teso;
4. The Western Regional Programme, to serve the Kingsdom of Ankole, Bunyoro and Toro and the District of Kigezi [Uganda, Government 1964].

All of the programs were transmitted simultaneously from Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, on two shortwave channels to booster stations located in each region. The Red Channel broadcast the national and northern regional programs, while the Blue Channel broadcast portions of the national program as well as the whole of the midland and western regional programs. Occasional programs in Hindustani, an Indian language, were broadcast over both channels.

By 1968, the broadcast time per week had reached 170 hours (Ladefoger et al., 1972). Of these, 50 hours were devoted to English programs, a language used by only 0.2% of the population; 34 hours were devoted to Luganda programs, a language used by about 16.3% of the population of Uganda. The remaining 86 hours were parceled out among the more than 14 other major languages of Uganda.

Herrick et al. (1969) reported that Ugandan-languages programs on Radio Uganda covered a variety of topics including health care, sanitation, agriculture, and livestock management. They were developed by Radio Uganda personnel and were sponsored by the respective government ministries. The rest of the time was filled by entertainment programs of music and drama. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Radio Uganda operated the school broadcasting system, which, in 1966, was used by more than 1,000 schools mainly for teaching English.

Estimates based on the records of imports, local manufacturing output, and the government's effort to encourage the availability of inexpensive transistor radios indicated that in mid-1968, there were about 500,000 radio sets in operation in the country. Most of these were privately owned (Herrick et al., 1969).

A UNESCO (1976a) Uganda Committee Report noted that, to the Uganda government, broadcasting and other government information services were powerful weapons in the economic and social development of the country. The broadcasting system was a catalyst in the implementation of the development projects specified in the country's five-year national development plans. A considerable amount of capital investment was, therefore, set aside for expanding and improving the broadcasting and information services. The improvements included technical facilities for internal radio broadcasting services, and an external broadcasting service was introduced.

As an alternative to the shortwave system, a mediumwave service was introduced to enhance the fidelity of radio signals received. The change was necessary because, according to the UNESCO (1976a) Uganda Committee Report, "medium wave radio broadcasting gives considerable [sic] reliable radio signals on simple and inexpensive radio receivers throughout the broadcasting period, thus bringing the service within the purchasing power of low income earners, the majority of whom are in rural areas" (p. 65). Four high-power, mediumwave transmitters were erected in the eastern, northern, and Buganda regions. Almost all of the programs, however, still originated from Kampala, rather than from the regional stations where the transmitters were located.

TELEVISION SERVICES IN UGANDA

The Uganda Television Service was established in October 1963 with the basic objective of expediting national development. By 1968, five years later, more than half of the telecast time of 29 hours per week was devoted to news and educational programs. An average of nine hours per week was sponsored by the Uganda Television Educational Service. The aim of these programs was to familiarize students—to whom English was a second language—with the technical and scientific terminology and usage in the English language.

Other programs, produced in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture and Community Development, emphasized civic and social education. They were primarily aimed at audiences gathered in community centers where the government had installed television sets. In 1967, approximately 7,500 television sets were in operation in Uganda, over half of which were owned by Europeans and Asians. The entertainment programs were imported mainly from the United States (Herrick et al., 1969).

With regard to television systems in Africa, Ainslie (1967: 183) said:

> Africans are faced with the difficulty that foreign documentary material is felt to be unsuitable, and local facilities are simply not available for features on any ambitious scale.... It is not surprising then that most stations find themselves stuck with "entertainment" after all. Some try to lay down a policy that will exclude what they regard as the most corrupting aspects of commercial material. Uganda boasts that it has never screened a crime file or a western.

According to Ainslie (1967), Uganda's output of indigenous programs is one of the biggest in Africa, amounting to some 60% of all programs telecast, with much of it on videotape. Apart from "Night Club" (a teenage "pop" show), and football (soccer) matches, Uganda made its own documentary programs about great Ugandans. The other locally produced programs in Uganda included "Weekend Report" on general and political news, "Women's Page," and "1965," a report on social advances in Uganda in the fields of agriculture, industry, and schools during 1965.

The impact of television, according to the UNESCO (1976a) report, was not felt among the people until 1971. "The Government of the Second Republic of Uganda," the report continued, "was quick in recognizing the very important role television can play in the development of the country. The Government, therefore, invested substantial sums of money in the improvement, extension and re-vitalization of the television services in the country."

In addition to going from black-and-white to color telecasting, improvements included the installation and construction of new production facilities and transmission stations. Looking at a map of Uganda, which shows the spread of television reception, one might conclude that the whole country is adequately covered. A detailed analysis of such a map would reveal, nevertheless, that television currently reaches only scattered enclaves of urban centers throughout the country.

Theoretically, approximately 90% of the population of Uganda could receive television services. However, the lack of rural electrification eliminates virtually all of this 90% from receiving the television signals. Even in the urban centers, television sets are mainly in the community development centers and educational institutions rather than in the homes of individual families. The relatively few privately owned sets are in the hands of a very small minority of richer individuals in those urban areas.

DISCUSSION

None of the three modern systems of mass media, as currently structured, is an effective agency of socialization in Uganda. For example, television programs sweeping across the country over large and small rural communities are perhaps perceived only by the spirits of departed ancestors. Until there is general rural electrification, and until the people's socioeconomic status significantly improves through higher income, television in Uganda is likely to remain strictly an urban phenomenon. Thus importance as a vehicle for stirring the evolution of a common culture in Uganda is minimal

TABLE 3
Uganda Educational Institutions and Enrollments

Type of School	*Number of Institutions*	*Enrollment*	*Staff*
Primary (Elementary)	3,969	1,088,915	34,413
Secondary (High Schools)	117	62,790	3,038
Teacher Training Colleges	30	7,724	427
Technical Institutes	15	4,475	314
Higher Colleges	3	3,260	348
University	1	5,030	324
Total	4,135	1,892,194	38,864

in the foreseeable future. The television media system, therefore, remains an unlikely agency of national socialization in Uganda.

The print media system is likewise crippled in many ways as a vehicle for impelling the process of evolving the desired common culture. Print media demand a particular skill — literacy — which is in very short supply in Uganda, especially in the rural areas where the vast majority of the population is concentrated. Uganda does not as yet have a free universal elementary and high school educational system. Parents have to pay school fees for their children from the elementary grades through high school. This eliminates a large segment of the population who cannot afford the school fees.

Furthermore, Uganda's educational system is pyramidal with a very wide base of elementary schools. It narrows rapidly to a scattering of high schools and even fewer institutions for higher education, there being only one university at the time of writing this article. Table 3 shows a list of the government educational institutions, while Table 4 shows a list of the nongovernment educational institutions existing in Uganda by 1980 (Uganda Ministry of Education, 1980: 5).

This means that a large number of students drop out of the system at each successive level. Some drop out for economic reasons. Those who do so within the first four years of schooling are unlikely to have developed sustainable literacy skills (UNESCO, 1976b). Many drop out after completing seven years of elementary school if they do not pass the comprehensive examinations at the end of

TABLE 4
Nongovernment Education Institutions

Type of School	*Institutions*	*Number of Enrollment*	*Staff*
Primary (Elementary)	725	110,000	3,016
Secondary (High Schools)	92	21,226	956
Total	817	131,226	3,972

seventh grade. Even those who do pass the examinations are not guaranteed places in secondary schools because the competition for the few openings available in higher levels of learning is very stiff. Usually, only the top 20% of the grade seven "graduates" go on to secondary schools.

The grade seven "graduates" are, basically, freshly minted literates. Those who drop out of school after the seventh grade face the risk of losing their literacy skill in a short time unless their new skill is continuously nourished with reading materials. The risk is all the greater for those who continue residing in the rural areas — and most of them do — where reading materials are hardly available. In such cases, the literacy skill could be practically starved to death.

On the whole, the adult literacy rate is estimated to be about 40% of the population (Uganda Ministry of Education, 1980). What is not clear is the language in which the literacy measure/estimate was made, given the multiplicity of languages in the country. The literacy rates vary with each language and this variability precludes any possibility of a national newspaper which could command a significant readership level. English, the de facto national language cutting across Uganda's ethnic societies among the educated elite, is used by less than 1% of the population, There is, therefore, little potential for any one newspaper to gain a substantial nationwide market in Uganda. Without the potential for a mass market, there is little incentive for large-scale investment in the industry. As a result, the print media system in Uganda is undercapitalized and underdeveloped.

Also hindering print media development in Uganda is the lack of an effective distribution system. Printing facilities are dependent

on electricity and are thus located in urban areas. The cost, effort, and time needed to transport these newspapers deep into the rural hinterland is so great as to severely restrict its economic feasibility. In any case, unless it was heavily subsidized, a newspaper would become so expensive that it could very well be nonaffordable by the average person, since most Ugandans are subsistance farmers eking meager, hand-to-mouth livings from the land. This leaves little surplus money for disbursement on such luxuries as newspaper buying.

According to Nelson (1968), Uganda has built an elitist press and the government must take a lot of blame for this. Government news, for example, is entirely minister-oriented and so are the reports that get published in newspapers. The government information services have failed to mobilize support for development projects, and they have failed to inspire people to work hard. Indeed, the government information services have not succeeded in getting through to the people except at very superficial levels. Instead of reporting about ordinary people in their labors, noting their successes and problems, the information services concentrate on reporting about government ministers, their trips, and their formal meetings.

Complicating an already difficult situation is the fact that the print media system, as indeed each of the other mass media systems in Uganda, has always been under close scrutiny by a very suspicious and, perhaps, insecure government. During the late 1950s, the colonial administration in Uganda said, "Official information services are an integral part of administration. They are not substitutes for policy but assist in its implementation by explaining it to the people" (Uganda Protectorate, 1958: 2).

In 1969, a spokesman for the government of independent Uganda told members of a press club in Kampala that their role was threefold:

> Firstly, never lose sight of and never prostitute the nature of the service which the press is there to perform. Secondly, educate your readers to understand the nature of the revolution, and lastly, concentrate on objective reporting of facts [Akena-Adoko, c. 1969: 6].

The government reserved the right to interpret what was, or was not, objective reporting of facts. Any journalist whose views differed from the government's interpretation committed a criminal offense.

The British colonial administration in Uganda and all of the governments of independent Uganda, to date, expected the operators of the mass media systems to toe the government line, directly or indirectly. Often, media personnel were imprisoned or deported for criticizing the government or questioning its methods and style. In the days of Idi Amin's regime, several journalists fled the country, others found alternative employment, some were found dead, and many simply disappeared.

During Obote's second attempt to lead Uganda from 1980 to 1985, the mass media were closely watched. In 1983, Ojulu noted:

> The Uganda Government has recently come down with a very heavy hand on privately owned publications. . . . The Vice-President and Minister of Defense, Paulo Muwanga summoned an impromptu press conference and . . . warned that he would make the publication of some papers "not just difficult but impossible." The next day, three vernacular papers folded.

With all the limitations and problems facing it, the print media system would not be a likely vehicle for national socialization in Uganda in the foreseeable future. Like television, newspapers are essentially an elitist urban phenomena. Just as lack of rural electrification constrains television, so does the lack of literacy capabilities in the rural areas constrain the print media. These obstacles, therefore, leave radio broadcasting as potentially, as least for some years, the most feasible medium of communication to reach the majority of the rural population in Uganda. This, however, does not mean that the medium has been sufficiently developed to allow for its immediate and widespread exploitation. Mills and Kangwana (1983), in a report on a UNESCO community radio pilot project for Kenya, said:

> The UNESCO project was designed to take account of a situation in which sound broadcasting faces many problems. In terms of

> coverage and utilization, the medium is more important than television in African countries, but even so the continent has only about 3 percent of the world's transmitters, and on average only about 7 percent of the population has access to broadcasts from these transmitters, which are generally located in or near to town and cities. Very few transmitters cater specifically for the rural areas where most of the population lives and where the need for the benefits of communication infrastructure is greatest [p. 31].

They cited at least two reasons why programs originating from the towns and cities beamed to the people in rural areas have often failed to achieve their objectives. First, the distances of some rural areas from the national transmitters are such that only weak and at times unintelligible signals are received. Second, there is the lack of a nationwide common language for effective communication with the rural population. Even the few local language programs broadcast are produced by city dwellers who are not fully acquainted with the way of life in the rural areas and its needs.

Radio, nevertheless, has the potential of being a vehicle for the evolution of a common culture in Uganda. It could be made available to a greater proportion of Ugandans than any other system of mass communication. Transistorized radios are considerably cheaper than televisions and they operate from inexpensive batteries. As a one-time purchase, they represent a long-term investment compared to the purchase of newspapers. Unlike newspapers, radio is not constrained by lack of literacy or distribution facilities and services.

Since 1954, when radio broadcasting was established in Uganda, the system has been expanded considerably. By the end of the Amin regime in 1979, radio blanketed the entire nation. No estimates of the size of the audience by 1979 were available to the present author, but it can reasonably be concluded that the audience must have grown beyond the 1969 figure of two million listenership.

Technologically, there is a base for effectively reaching the majority of Ugandans in their various languages. There is also an implicit recognition of radio's potential as a unifying factor, for example, through the schools' broadcasting program seeking to make a uniform input into the schools' curricula throughout the

country. The question is: How can radio's capacity to appeal to and involve a greater segment of Uganda's rural population be adequately utilized?

The clue to answering the above question might very well lie in some of the indigenous, or traditional, systems of social and mass communication. These systems are integral to the country's social structure from which they derive their efficacy and to which they contribute vitality and, perhaps, survival. Radio broadcasting has to become as fully integrated into the social structures as the indigenous systems are. The search for ways of achieving radio's full integration into the adaptation to Uganda's social structure is the concern of the present author's continuing study and research.

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