

*Radio Mercur frustrates authorities . . .*

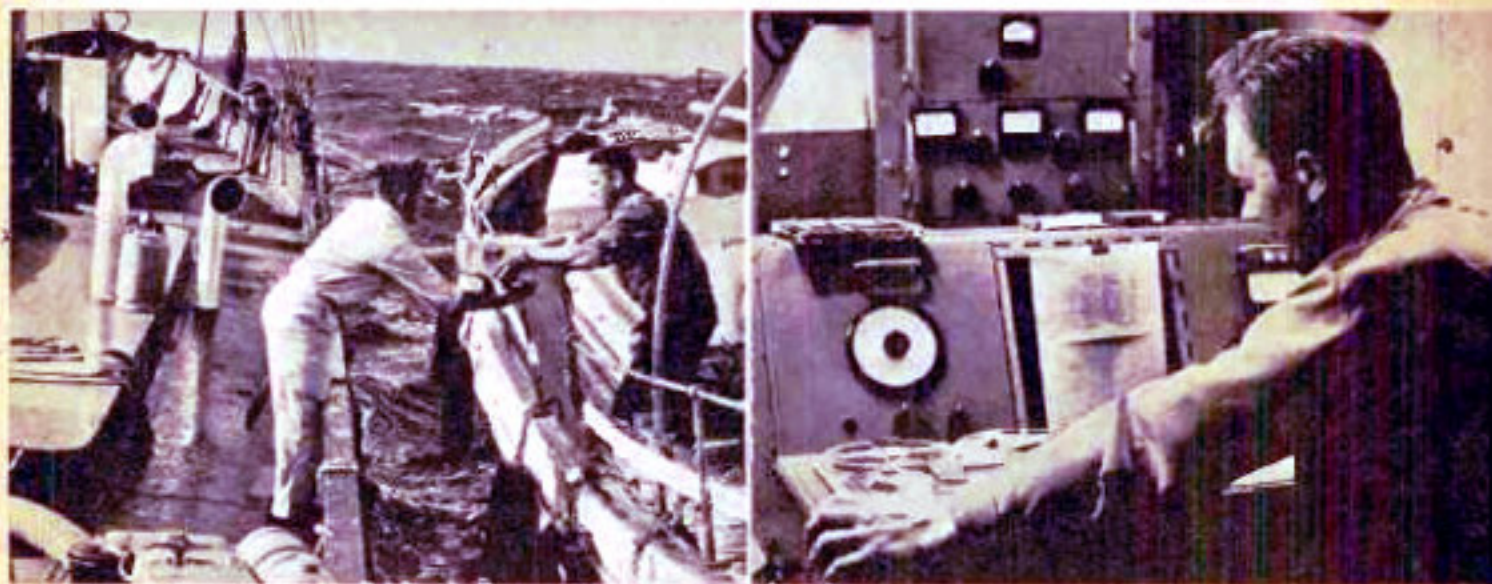
## Bootleg Station on High Seas

**A** FEW miles off the Danish coast, in the Baltic Sea, floats a unique "illegal" radio station—the talk of all Scandinavia and the frustration of the Danish government. Like most of Europe, Denmark's radio is state-owned, hence non-commercial.

In 1958 several Danes and an American started their own commercial radio station, and so far the Danish government has been unable to silence it. Their FM transmitter is aboard a ship anchored beyond the three-mile limit in "international" waters. Called the *Cheeta*, the ship flies a Panamanian flag. The station is Radio Mercur, chartered in the tiny, independent country of Liechtenstein. It treats Scandinavians to a potpourri of light music, comedy and English broadcasts of news and tourist information. Phil Irwin, formerly with WOLF in Syracuse, N. Y., is station manager.

All programs are recorded in Copenhagen. A crew of four mans the 60-foot, 109-ton vessel, which has an extra heavy anchor to keep her in position. Each afternoon, regardless of weather, *Cheeta* is visited by the station's motor launch with the next day's taped programs.

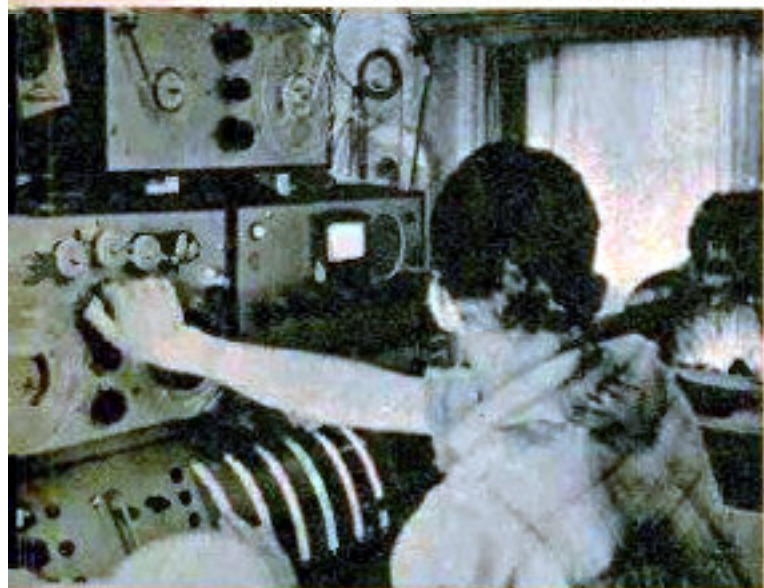
The sale of FM receivers has boomed in Radio Mercur's listening area. Range is about 50 miles on 89.55 mc. *Cheeta's* mast serves as a tower for the Yagi-type 4-element antenna that can be aimed at Sweden for Swedish language broadcasts. The effective radiated power is 1500 watts.



Launch pilot hands box of tapes containing next day's programs to *Cheeta* crew member. Daily trip from shore takes from two to five hours, depending upon weather. Right, transmitter operator plays tapes below decks. Transmitter itself is cooled by tap from the small ship's own ventilating system.



Photos by W. R. Yecklin



Out of reach of authorites, Cheeta (above) racks at anchor in Baltic Sea. Note antenna atop mast. Left, engineer tapes programs in Copenhagen studio. Only taping is done ashore. Transmitter is at sea. Right, Phil Irwin, an American, does English language show with model of transmitting ship on table.