

The Legon Observer

Fortnightly Organ of the Legon Society on National Affairs
(Established July 1966; Published Every Other Friday)

Vol. X No. 1

1 — 14 September 1978

Price: C1.00

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Editorial

THE ISSUE OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The S.M.C. has, to the disappointment of many, committed itself to the support of an interim national government for not less than four years. This policy has grown directly out of the economic and political crisis which has gripped this country for the last four years or so. The economic aspect of the crisis started with the realisation that amid unprecedented high prices for the country's exports, particularly cocoa, the economy was grinding to a halt, with consequences too terrible to think of. The political aspect was initiated when General Acheampong made his infamous call for Union Government under the pressure of the economic crisis.

Although surrounded by a thick fog of obscurity, the concept had two clear features. First, Union Government was to be a no-party system and, secondly, two tiny but well-organised groups in the nation, namely, the army and the police, about 30,000 strong, were to be given separate and distinct representation whilst the remaining civilian millions were to be represented in their formless mass. It also had a hidden feature: it was to be a facade behind which Acheampong was to impose his presidency on the country on the basis of a one-party system.

Though there had been no public debate whatsoever on the constitution since 1967-69, when Acheampong appointed the Koranteng-Addow Committee on Union Government, he instructed it only to recommend the form Union Government should take and not to initiate a debate on it or to take views as to its acceptability. Koranteng-Addow's formulation of Union Government is what has now become the policy of the S.M.C.

The first objection against National Government, then, is that it has never been properly and publicly debated, let alone accepted by the country. The behind-the-scenes consultations held by the S.M.C. cannot be an adequate substitute for such a debate.

An equally important objection is that far from resolving the crisis facing the country, National Government as presently conceived can only aggravate it. The crisis itself has been the direct and inevitable result of the no-party type of government we have had since January, 1972, a type of government that necessarily denies the mass of the people any organic relationship with the rulers. Yet it is such relationship which enables the citizenry to channel their needs to the seat of government and to get them converted into policy. This is because it is only through the party system that meaningful elections in a mass electorate can be held and the government can be made responsible to the electorate.

In the absence of political parties the elector in, say, Tumu will not be related in any meaningful way to the elector in,

say, Half-Assini; national policies cannot be presented to the electorate at elections; the electorate itself will be divided into petty communities of tribal groups bickering for projects unrelated to the national welfare; and M.P.s will, far from voting in accordance with their conscience, luxuriate in corruption, as has happened repeatedly in countries in which the party system is weak. Thus a no-party system in a mass electorate is at once undemocratic, subversive of national cohesion and conducive to corruption.

A no-party system in the post-colonial African state is also a continued invitation to military intervention. For it provides no strong civilian organisations which can maintain discipline either inside or outside Parliament in the face of a host of developmental problems whose solutions demand strong discipline. We predict that under the National Government envisaged there will be such corruption and political confusion that within eighteen months there will be another military coup.

In any case no law, no constitution and no sermons are going to make political parties disappear in a mass electorate, any more than christian preaching against profit-making in medieval times caused its disappearance in Europe. Political parties are a natural political expression of differing interests in society and banning them will only drive them underground and distort the political process. Political parties have never been forced on the people of this country; they have grown in response to political and social forces generated in the society.

The idea of a cooling-off period is founded on a distorted reading of our political history. Violence in Ghanaian politics long pre-dated the formation of national parties in the country, as everyone familiar with elections in Cape Coast and Accra knows only too well. Its introduction in the 1950's was brought about not by party but by the objections of traditionalist Ashantis to the radical and centralising policies of the C.P.P. Parties merely provided the form of the conflict.

It is indeed significant that the traditionalists who objected to the radical policies of the C.P.P. deliberately constituted themselves into a "movement" and not into a "party". Nor can we forget that when the multi-party system was restored in 1969 no violence whatever accompanied it. In any case, since seven years of cooling-off from party politics after 1971 do not appear to have abated the party spirit, why does anyone think that another such period will secure the intended result?

An interim National Government is plainly not the set-up that can resolve the pressing economic problems of the country. What is needed is a strong government that can tackle problems on a long-term basis, inspire confidence both at home and abroad and can be seen to be based on the support of the mass of the electorate. Besides, the practice of writing brand-new constitutions every now and again can only deprive them of that aura, that sanctity, which inspires respect and allegiance in those they are meant to control.

The S.M.C. can lift itself out of the rut into which it is being driven by doing three things. First, it

should at the very least leave the question of the form of government open; but it may also think of changing the chairmanship and membership of the Constitutional Commission, and drastically reducing the old membership. Secondly, it should forget about the idea of interim government. Thirdly, it should not mistake consultations with a few well-organised groups for an expression of the national will.

An interim National Government based on a no-party system is neither possible nor desirable, and political wisdom lies in quietly burying it.

Politics

THOSE CONFLICTING REFERENDUM FIGURES

by.

Ivan Addae-Mensah

It was the late General Charles de Gaulle who, when he had to face the French electorate on a national issue, stated that if he failed to obtain over 60% of the support of his people, he would step down. He failed to get the required percentage, and he duly stepped down. The import of de Gaulle's action is that on matters that affect the fundamental socio-political structure of a nation, it is necessary to obtain a clear mandate.

In some countries where issues have had to be decided by a national referendum, a two thirds majority has usually been taken as a reasonable mandate. Some have even gone much higher than this.

In our recent referendum on Union Government, it was made very clear right from the beginning, that the issues at stake would be decided by a simple majority. The purpose of this article is not to argue out the pros and cons of judging a fundamental constitutional issue by a simple majority. That would be value judgement in the present circumstances. My aim is just to take the voting figures obtained in the referendum, as announced through the radio and other public information media, and finally in the Gazette, subject these to an impartial statistical analysis, and raise certain pertinent questions that need to exercise people's minds if we are to learn anything as a nation, for future exercises of this nature.

Just after the referendum, the then Head of State decreed during a television broadcast that there should be no public or newspaper discussion of the results of the referendum. So Ghanaians were deprived of a very good opportunity to discuss and lay bare the many conflicting figures that were dished out to them through the information media, up to as late as three weeks after the referendum.

Table I shows the analytical breakdown of the referendum results, based on the 140 constituencies whose results were released through the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. I am assuming here that Radio Ghana got its figures from the Electoral Commission as and when the results were being released. Table II represents figures which

were released four days after the referendum, and presented to the Head of State by the then Acting Electoral Commissioner, Mr. A. McGranally Quaye, and circulated to the press (including the foreign press). These figures could be taken as

more authentic than those obtained from Radio Ghana. I shall deal with the issues that these two sets of figures raise, before I go on to deal with those raised by the figures which were finally gazetted on 21st April, 1978, shown in Table III.

TABLE 1 — REFERENDUM RESULTS AS RELEASED THROUGH RADIO GHANA

Region	Yes	No	Total	Winner	%
Greater Accra	118,406	113,096	231,502	YES	51.15
Upper	174,157	49,261	223,418	YES	77.95
Eastern	121,040	143,822	264,862	NO	54.30
Central	108,293	70,554	178,847	YES	60.55
Ashanti	149,416	188,537	337,953	NO	55.79
Brong Ahafo	65,158	139,819	204,977	NO	68.21
North	147,342	44,663	192,005	YES	76.73
Volta	93,729	97,901	191,630	NO	51.10
Western	122,605	50,235	172,841	YES	70.94
TOTALS	1,100,147	897,888	1,998,035	YES	55.33

TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS — 4,614,767

% POLL — 43.1

NOTE: These are not the official results duly confirmed by the Electoral Commissioner.

TABLE II — REFERENDUM RESULTS AS CONFIRMED AND PRESENTED TO THE HEAD OF STATE ON 3RD APRIL 1978

Region	Yes	No	Total	Winner	%
Greater Accra	118,406	113,036	231,442	YES	51.2
Ashanti	142,795	170,122	312,917	NO	54.4
Western	122,606	50,229	172,835	YES	70.9
Volta	102,111	92,052	194,173	YES	52.6
Central	116,100	76,386	192,486	YES	60.3
Eastern	118,949	142,027	260,976	NO	54.4
Brong Ahafo	65,158	138,820	203,978	NO	68.1
Northern	143,144	48,472	191,616	YES	74.7
Upper	174,154	49,101	223,255	YES	78.0
TOTALS	1,103,423	880,255	1,983,678	YES	55.6

Total votes cast; 1,983, 678

Total registered voters: 4,614,767

% Poll = 43.0%

TABLE III — REFERENDUM RESULTS AS RECORDED IN THE GHANA GAZETTE DATED 21ST APRIL 1978 (SUMMARY PUBLISHED IN DAILY GRAPHIC OF 26TH APRIL 1978)

Region	Yes	No	Total	Winner	%
Greater Accra	118,406	113,036	231,442	YES	51.2
Ashanti	148,680	199,623	348,303	NO	57.3
Central	165,113	76,386	241,499	YES	68.4
Eastern	120,950	143,827	264,777	NO	54.3
Volta	107,499	92,366	199,865	YES	53.8
Brong Ahafo	65,613	136,457	202,070	NO	67.5
Northern	210,709	48,533	259,242	YES	81.2
Upper	245,098	49,902	295,000	YES	83.1
Western	190,359	50,256	240,615	YES	79.1
TOTALS	1,372,427	910,386	2,282,813	YES	60.1

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Total votes cast 2,282,813

Total registered voters 4,497,803

% Poll = 50.8%

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Africa

In presenting the figures in Table II to the Head of State, the acting Electoral Commissioner had this to say, and here I quote his exact words:

"This is the highlights of the results, are as follows (sic);

A total of 1,938,678 votes were cast on the two issues in the referendum as follows:

Union Government, Yes	1,103,423 votes
Union Government, No	880,255 votes
Majority	223,158 votes.

This, Mr. Chairman, is a clear and eloquent testimony of the massive support which the people of Ghana have for the Union Government. Thank you very much, and congratulations."

These indeed are words of someone who was absolutely sure of what he was talking about. But a very close look at the results constituency by constituency immediately raises some simple arithmetical problems. Out of the 880,255 votes Mr. Quaye said were cast for "NO", 170,122 were supposed to have been cast in Ashanti. But addition of the total "NO" votes in Ashanti, constituency by constituency, actually gives a figure of 191,548, which is much closer to the 188,537 originally given by Radio Ghana, and which makes the total votes cast more than the 1,983,678 which Mr. Quaye announced in his live TV performance at the Castle.

Large Number of Absentions

Even though the figures in Table II were presented to the Head of State on 3rd April, the figures in Table III, published in the Gazette of 21st April, were actually signed and dated 3rd April 1978, by the same Mr. A. M. Quaye. If Mr. Quaye knew that he had prepared a completely different set of figures on 3rd April, for publication in the Gazette, why did he present another set of figures to the Head of State on the same day? Anyway more about the Gazette figures later. Let us turn our attention to an analysis of the results as presented in Tables I and II.

The above results indicate that of the 4.6 million registered voters, only about 2 million actually voted. This indicates a percentage poll of about 43%. Now the questions that needed to be asked then and which Ghanaians were not allowed to ask publicly, were

(1) Why did the remaining 57% of the registered voters fail to vote? Was it out of sheer apathy? Was it that they were so fed up with the affairs of this country that they felt their vote would make no difference to their economic and social well-being, i.e. was it a case of "Country UNIGOV or country NO UNIGOV, we all dey inside"? Or was it that the voting procedure was so cumbersome that many people felt it was not worth the effort to go through the exercise?

(2) If their failure to vote was due to any of these, then what premium could be put on the actual voting results as regards the constitutional future of this country?

As Tables I and II indicate, of the total votes cast, about 1.1 million voted "YES" and about

0.9 million voted "NO". This means about 55% of the total votes cast was in favour of Union Government, while the opponents of the idea had 45%. These figures raise several interesting questions. For example:

(a) In view of the atmosphere in which the campaigning was done, did the results reflect the political maturity or immaturity of Ghanaians?

(b) Could the results, coupled with the fact that despite the intensive, near-saturation public education that went into the referendum campaign, only 43% cared to vote, be said to have given a clear, unambiguous mandate for a major constitutional change? Were the results a massive "YES", an overwhelming mandate as the erstwhile acting Electoral Commissioner tried to make us believe in the face of overwhelming statistical evidence to the contrary?

(c) Does the 45% opposition mean that even before the implementation of the concept of Union Government the country was already divided into almost two halves? If this is so, then how easy will efforts at reconciliation be? Will those with opposing views easily accommodate each other? And what will be the attitude of the 57% who did not even bother to vote? Can they be easily absorbed, and into which camps? Only an inept Government like the one Acheampong was leading, could have deceived itself for so long with empty slogans of "Massive Yes" and "Sweeping Victory", and treat a 45% opposition to a concept as insignificant.

Gross Discrepancies

One other factor that has to be borne in mind is that the Government actually lost in the nation's capital, Accra (not Greater Accra Region), and five of the eight remaining regional capitals including Kumasi, Cape Coast and Koforidua. What could have been the implication of this fact with regard to effective governance of the country, and effective exercise of executive powers and implementation of national policies, if the recent changes in Government had not occurred, and Acheampong had gone on to effect his Union Government concept?

A.M. Quaye's figures of 3rd April make a detailed constituency analysis. A close examination of the two sets of figures shows gross discrepancies. The total number of votes cast rose from 1,983,678 to 2,282,813. The majority of "YES over "NO" votes rose by 110% from 220,268 as announced by Mr. Quaye, to 462,041 as published by him in the Gazette. The total number of registered voters, which had been published in several places by the Electoral Commissioner, Mr. Justice Abban, before and during the referendum, dropped from 4,614,767 to 4,497,803 in the Gazette, thus raising the rather unsatisfactory total poll of 43% to a more "respectable" figure of 51%.

There were some fantastic changes in the actual constituency results as declared on referendum day, and those finally gazetted. In all as many as 40% (55 out of 140) of the constituencies had their results changed by differences ranging from 50 to 12,000. Most of these changes were in constituencies and regions where "YES"

won. For example 11 out of 14 constituencies had their results changed in the Northern region, 14 out of 16 in the Upper Region, 8 out of 13 in the Western, and 8 out of 15 in the Central Region. Where "NO" won, the changes were very insignificant. In Ashanti and Brong Ahafo for example, there were very small changes in 2 out of 22 and 3 out of 13 constituencies respectively. Only Greater Accra Region results were consistent right from the beginning to the end of the referendum exercise. Table IV shows some of the constituencies where there were significant changes in the votes credited to the "UNIGOVISTS".

day, jumped to 16,297 twenty four hours later, and finally entered the gazette three weeks later as 20,297 while the "NO" votes for the same constituency changed from 3,053 to 3,262 within 24 hours, and stayed constant thereafter. Keta could have been taken as a typographical error if Nkwanta had not started from 14,162 "YES" votes, fallen to 7,791 twenty four hours later, risen back to 14,162 forty eight hours later, and finally to 16,232 three weeks later. How did Sefwi-Wiaoso "YES" votes rise by exactly 10,000, from 14,619 to 24,619, while the "NO" votes remained constant? How did Twifu-Heman-Denkrya gain 12,000 extra "YES" votes to no increase in the

TABLE IV

CONSTITUENCY	1ST-3RD APRIL RESULTS		GAZETTE RESULTS		DIFFERENCE	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Kwame Danso	6,567	7,574	6,985	3,858	+	418
Twifu-Heman-Denkrya	7,811	4,506	19,811	4,505	+	12,000
Efutu-Awutu-Senya	9,892	3,334	19,892	3,334	+	10,000
Abura	3,509	2,971	5,509	2,971	+	2,000
Suhum	6,945	4,617	8,945	4,617	+	2,000
Walewale	6,882	1,797	16,882	1,797	+	10,000
Nanumba	15,683	3,588	25,683	3,509	+	10,000
Bawku East	16,297	3,262	20,297	3,262	+	4,000
South Tongu	1,893	4,086	1,893	4,036	No change	— 50
Aowin-Asankragwa	16,401	4,522	26,401	4,522	+	10,000
Sekyer	7,655	10,722	6,655	10,924	—	1,000
Shama	3,574	2,155	8,574	2,155	+	5,000
Sefwi Wiawso	14,619	8,589	24,619	8,589	+	10,000
Amansie Central	5,952	1,621	3,818	9,494	—	1,134
Yendi	8,302	5,963	18,302	5,963	+	10,000

Whereas the changes for "YES" were usually very huge and almost invariably on the credit side, the changes in the "NO" votes were around 200, and in one case the "NO" votes actually decreased by over 3,000. The case of South Tongu is particularly interesting. The results actually announced on Referendum day, and those presented to General Acheampong, agreed with each other. These were YES: 1,893 NO: 4,086. Total votes cast 5,979. The results published in the Gazette were: Yes, 1,893, No, 4,036, a decrease of 50 in the number of votes cast. The total number of votes cast, if the second set of figures were right, should have been 5,929. But strangely enough, the Gazette figure stayed at 5,979. This needs a lot of explaining. Aga'n, for Keta, the "YES" votes were 1, 675 and "NO" 7,629, but the total number of valid votes cast were given as 19,304 in the Gazette. Could this be a typographical error, or did the Electoral Commissioner decide to take 10,000 out of the "NO" votes without remembering to take the same figure out of the total votes cast? I would have been prepared to consider the above cases as typographical errors, if the figures for Anlo had not also been given as "YES" 728, "NO" 7,496, total votes cast 18,224; if "YES" for Bawku East had not started from 8,737 on Referendum

"NO" votes? How did Walewale, Nanumba Goja Central, Yendi and a whole host of others have increases in "YES" votes of exactly 10,000 when the "NO" votes always remained constant?

I put these same questions to a highly influential friend of mine, who happened to be a staunch "UNIGOVIST", and he tried to explain to me that the increases were due to the arrival of "Proxy Votes" after the referendum day. If that were so, then Mr. McGranaky Quaye has a whole lot of explaining to do, how he could get all the proxy votes and prepare and sign a Gazette document on 3rd April for publication on 21st April, and on the same day, that is 3rd April, submit another set of figures which apparently did not include the "Proxy Votes", to the Head of State.

The whole bizarre exercise of feeding the Ghanaian public with inconsistent and conflicting figures started immediately after the original Electoral Commissioner, Justice Abban, had been forced to escape from his office. There were many discrepancies in the figures given by the two national papers and the national radio, in the course of the counting of votes. Let me give a few examples from the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times of 1/4/78 and Radio Ghana.

Constituency	Media Source	YES	NO
KETA	Times	836	7,629
	Graphic	1,575	7,629
	Radio Ghana	1,675	7,629
KWAME DANSO	Times	6,567	3,574
	Graphic	6,567	3,574
	Radio Ghana	6,567	7,574
GONJA EAST	Times	10,862	11,488
	Graphic	10,862	11,488
	Radio Ghana	10,862	1,488
NKWANTA	Times	14,152	1,568
	Graphic	14,152	1,568
	Radio Ghana	7,791	7,777

The cases of Kwame Danso in the Brong-Ahafo region and Nkwanta in the Volta region are particularly interesting, because at the time the newspapers were giving Kwame Danso as having voted "YES", information was also going out through the radio that in the Brong-Ahafo region, only one constituency, Atebubu, had voted "YES". In the case of Nkwanta, whereas the total "YES" votes as given by the newspapers is twice that of the radio results, and the "NO" votes about one-seventh of the radio results, the total number of votes cast, as given by the three media, are virtually the same, that is 15,720 from the newspapers, and 15,568 from Radio Ghana. This should raise some interesting questions.

Some Strange Mathematics

Again, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation committed a most elementary form of misinformation during this same exercise: When they were putting out news bulletins that six out of nine regions had voted "YES", they were at the same time giving a regional breakdown which actually indicated that five out of nine regions had voted "YES". Again at a certain stage G.B.C. started putting news bulletins across that over 1.5 million people voted "YES" and about 830,000 voted "NO". These figures actually gave 'YES' a 64% vote and 'NO' 36%. And yet by some strange twist of mathematics, in the very next sentence in the news bulletin, G.B.C. went on to say that 'these votes represent a 56% YES' vote and 44% NO'.

It is significant to note that their percentages agree quite well with the percentages given on 3rd April by the Acting Electoral Commissioner. However, the 1.5 million "YES" votes GBC announced on 1st April, finally turned out to be very close to the figure that the Acting Electoral Commissioner gazetted. The figure of 1.5 million "YES" and 830,000 "NO", which Radio Ghana dished out in its news bulletins, and which gave a total of votes cast of about 2.3 million was very different from the figure of 1.9 million which the then Acting Electoral Commissioner presented to the Head of State, but very close to the final figure of 2,282,813 which was published in the Gazette of 21st April.

Now, where were these very important information media getting their statistics from? Were they not from the same source? If they were not,

then who was supposed to be responsible for giving authoritative information to the various organisations to be given to the public? If their figures were from the same source, then why the discrepancies? The point I wish to make is that national elections and referendums are so important and so sensitive that in really sensitive situations, inaccurate information can easily spark off unnecessary trouble between two contestants or supporters of opposing views. It is therefore absolutely important that the information media give out results that can be relied upon for accuracy and authenticity.

All the people who were connected with the declaration of the referendum results, including the present Commissioner for Information Col. Parker Yarney, therefore owe a duty to Ghanaians, to answer all the pertinent questions I have tried to raise in this article.

GHANA'S PECULIAR VERSION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

By
A Correspondent

A close analysis of the form of Interim National Government now being canvassed in Ghana reveals several peculiar features and many legal and practical problems. Previously known national governments in other countries have often resulted from the voluntary and patriotic decision of several political parties with sizeable, though variable, voting and parliamentary strengths to suspend the primary objectives of their purely party political interests and advantages, (not their differences, ideologies and structures), so as to deal in a united or common front with a national crisis.

An economic crisis may be handled in this way as happened in Britain with the first National Government during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The more frequent resort to this form of Government has, however, often been necessitated by external dangers such as hot-shooting and generalised wars during which a state of emergency, a state of siege and/or martial law are declared, thus curtailing or even suspending, in any case, normal partisan activities in order to concentrate on, and promote, the war effort. In all such circumstances, it is usual to introduce stringent controls which are accepted by all equally or without exceptions. Such are curfews which cannot be enforced selectively. Such also are manpower mobilisation and rationing of commodities which are applied to all citizens alike, irrespective of age, sex or social status.

Since attaining independence, Ghana has experimented with various forms of national government without any real compelling need for them. Such was the case with the declaration of the "One Party State" but more particularly, during the NLC, NRC and SMC regimes. All these instances have produced variable, disappointing or even disastrous results. Those have been

the periods in the short history of independent Ghana during which public criticism and the accountability of highly placed officials have been singularly lacking. Nepotism, incompetence, graft, high-handedness and even criminal negligence have been some of the characteristic features of those periods of banned political activities. Privilege, preferential treatment and preference irrespective of merit, the lack of public spiritedness, dishonesty, moral turpitude, the rule of exceptions, and lots of other unhealthy attitudes and practices replaced party political activities. Perhaps, these are some of the unwavering reasons for this form of irresponsible government being so dear to the hearts of those whose past and present public conduct can no longer stand the scrutiny of party political activities. It appears that the national interest is being sacrificed on the altar of the self-esteem and the selfish interests of an insignificant minority of the larger society.

Political Merry-Go-Round

The new form of pseudo interim national government now being canvassed will only institutionalise these features. It will simply inherit or be burdened with all these past problems and ills. But that is not all. The new government will be under pressure to excel past regimes in these evil practices rather than to cure them since all indications are that the same old, corrupt public figures who can no longer face the electorate because of their repeated deceptions and political gyrations will still manoeuvre themselves into the centre of the stage of their peculiar political game of musical chairs or merry-go-round. Such a government is likely to be the most pitiable of all the past national governments the country has ever endured. It will lack the material and spiritual resources which were, to varying degrees, available to its predecessors.

Yet it will also be denied the only saving grace of all governments, namely, sovereign power or authority to act decisively. The dead hand of the departed SMC will continue to control it from the grave. This will be an ingenious or perhaps an unwitting way in which to discredit and therefore to foredoom to failure the next civilian experiment after a total of almost 12 years of the various forms of national governments as characterised by banned party political activities since 1966. This hybrid version of national government therefore needs to be examined a little more closely and dispassionately in order to lay bare its merits and demerits.

This form of government having held sway since 1966 (with a brief interlude from Oct. 1969 to Jan. 1972) only to bring the country to her present unenviable stage of economic, moral and political impoverishment, it is too much of an assumption to expect miracles from it after July 1979. It will only complete the destruction of the country. Yet the reconstituted SMC plans, and indeed promises, to hand over power to this very type of Interim National Government which will "rule for not less than four years" before Ghanaians start all over again in 1983 at the earliest to rediscover

the same thorny problem of the form of constitution or government they would want to adopt for themselves. To say the least, the plan is thoroughly ill-conceived and ill-advised. It will merely institutionalise the purely provisional, moral turpitude, in-built confusion and instability. As envisaged, the plan embodies other serious legal and practical problems some of which are highlighted in the paragraphs which follow below.

Within every State such as Ghana, there necessarily exists one person or a group of persons called the Government whose commands or laws must receive explicit or, at least, implicit consent and obedience. As of now the SMC is, precisely, that body which exercises unlimited sovereignty or supremacy and which can justifiably not tolerate any legal limitations except those it imposes on itself and which it alone can also remove at will. In other words, the law-giving power of the SMC is, by definition, unlimited. This is as it should be, for, "sovereignty either is or is not".

In like manner, the SMC will necessarily have to hand over power to a body no less sovereign than itself. That is, a body enjoying unlimited sovereign authority. The SMC can only express pious hopes and intentions to the good sense of such a body but cannot impose legal limitations on it after handing over power. Indeed this will still be the case even if the SMC succeeds itself as it did on 5 July 1978.

Question of Sovereignty

The present intention of the SMC to control and/or limit the sovereign power or competence of its future successor, as evidenced by the compulsory four year life span shall therefore be of no practical, long-term legal effect. It is even impolitic in the short-run. The plan should therefore be re-examined and reviewed to remove these easily foreseeable problems and disabilities which will inevitably plague the future weak Interim National Government and only bewilder the nation the more.

The foregoing brief remarks deal only with the legal sovereignty of the State. The even more serious problem lies in the area of political or actual sovereignty which has since 1972 admittedly not been a problem for the SMC as a military regime because its commands or laws enjoyed not willing but "gun enforced" consent and obedience.

Political or actual sovereignty means the willing consent and obedience of the general public. In the final analysis, this consent will be the sole source of legitimacy for the future Interim National Government. Yet such a Government is being decreed beforehand to start or come into being without mass approval, consent and support. It will rather come into being with a mangled or truncated power or competence. It will also not benefit for four years from political party activities which alone can mobilise public opinion and national effort on the burning issues of the day. It will be difficult to imagine any government more impotent and therefore more doomed to failure even before its birth than this ill-conceived

interim national government. The SMC should aim at endowing the country with a better, more viable legacy than this.

✓ The SMC owes it to itself and to the country to avoid institutionalising irresponsibility in government, confusion, in-built controversies and instability for the future. The form of political evolution of any country conditions other developments, and therefore demands clear-sighted and courageous decisions. Ghana stands in urgent need of this more than any other country in her present state of moral, economic and political despair. The SMC should therefore face these challenges squarely, courageously and dispassionately. Posterity and the verdict of history should be their guides and not the transient, confusing and self-centred interests of those who have failed to save the country, and who lately attempted to come back by way of the freak political concept then being forced down the throats of Ghanaians through intimidation, naked brutality and lavish doses of bribery and corruption.

The futile attempts and gyrations of the politically dead horses can only mislead and confuse the SMC and thus destroy the country the more. Only open political activity, public accountability and a responsible Government can revive the despairing spirits of the people. Nothing can be achieved without public enthusiasm which is impossible without public participation in national affairs and in decision-making. This explains the bewilderment of the military regime and the futility of its decrees in recent years.

The SMC should therefore set up a Constituent Assembly made up perhaps of some of the members of the present drafting Commission and constituency members, lift the ban on political activities and charge the Assembly with the task of drawing up the Constitution of the Third Republic. The members of the Constituent Assembly elected from the Constituencies can constitute the first Parliament of the Third Republic. This is the only way in which the SMC can bring into being with public participation, approval, consent and support a government which will enjoy legitimacy and to which the SMC itself can be proud to hand over power with honour and respect in July 1979.

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UNION/NATIONAL GOVERNMENT— A NATIONAL ALBATROSS?

By

M. M. Adam

After the shock announcement of the voluntary/forced resignation and retirement of the Head of State, General Acheampong, many Ghanaians heaved a sigh of relief in the hope that, with the General's exit from the political scene, a new era of peace and progress would be ushered in.

There were others who argued with some justification that the change signified nothing substantial; it was the same old boat going in the same old direction with only the significant addition of a new captain at the helm; if anything at all, they saw the change merely as a necessary first step. The crucial thing was to see the dismemberment of the SMC, the repudiation of Union Government and eventual hand-over to a popularly elected civilian government.

While these arguments raged on, the 'new' SMC initiated some important decisions—decisions which many felt were the 'harbingers' of greater events.

Significantly, all the leading members of the People's Movement for Freedom and Justice and other anti-Union Government groups were released from detention and others who, for very good reasons, had to flee the country were urged to return home and join in the new 'crusade' to salvage Ghana from the political and economic wreck she had become.

No War on Economy

The Special Aides to the Head of State were all dismissed and those 'voluntary social' organisations that had mushroomed and sprung into prominence in the heat of the campaign for Union Government were banned and their assets frozen. Persons who were given vehicles to campaign for Union Government were asked to return them and as one newspaper saw it, all the branches of the Union Government tree had been cut off and its death remained merely a matter of time. There were high expectations that Union Government which had so sharply divided the country into enemy factions would soon fade away.

Earlier on, in his maiden broadcast to the nation, Lt-Gen. Akuffo had announced certain stringent economic measures (mercifully, he had not also declared war on the economy) which at least in the short run were destined to yield good dividends for the country.

Then in his second broadcast Lt-Gen. Akuffo dropped his political bombshell, and a terribly disappointing one it was. The SMC had ruled again that it would be disastrous for this country to return to party government and it was their considered opinion, after consulting various shades of public opinion, that Ghana should have a National Government without Army/Police participation for a transitional period of "not less than four years" after which Ghanaians could decide again with all the ceremony and expense which type of government they wanted.

Perhaps what the SMC sought to do was to try and satisfy all sections of the community. The very controversial subject of the Forces' participation in government had been dealt with by their own 'magnanimous' decision to stay out. Then there was to be National and not Union Government so the opponents of Union Government would be satisfied; and for the advocates of Union Government, the removal of the party element in the proposed government should be sufficient appeasement.

Unfortunately, with all the ingenuity, the SMC failed to satisfy anybody. The Union Government camp was not at all impressed and many proponents of party politics were quick to point out that a mere re-reading of the Koranteng-Addow Report reveals that National Government and Union Government are used interchangeably—Chapter 4 Par. 149-157 pages 43-45 clearly shows this. No. 154 reads, "Union Government as National Government means eliciting from our cultural heritage the principle of giving everybody in the society the right to express his views irrespective of social background, status, sex....." (emphasis mine).

Chaotic Conditions

What the SMC has done, as observers see it, is to merely remove Gen. Acheampong but hold fast to his pet idea. Indeed, it does not demand any extraordinary gifts of intelligence to tell that the SMC is selling Ghanaians the same commodity under a different brand name!

The question that needs to be asked is why the SMC has been unable or reluctant to have a complete break with the past by abandoning this vexed concept.

Many answers readily come to mind, the most significant being that the SMC is genuinely convinced that party politics with its attendant evils of "rancour, bitterness, hatred, disunity, violence, nepotism, home-boyism" would plunge this country into irredeemable chaos, and therefore the best solution lies in a non-party government.

Lt-Gen. Akufo himself is on record as saying "We subscribe to the principle that in the present chaotic conditions in which the political and economic fortunes of this country are plunged, only a national form of government can save us" (emphasis mine).

There is little doubt that there is chaos in this country now but we shall venture the suggestion that whatever 'political and economic chaos' this country has been plunged into in recent times, has not been the handiwork of any party government or civilian administration. In the light of this we can say that the SMC cannot justifiably use the spectre of party conflict as an excuse to retain Union Government in any guise.

Perhaps, a more rational explanation of the SMC's pre-occupation with Union Government in spite of its unpopularity among a large section of the people lies in the immediate past positions taken by some of its members.

The suggestion is that some members of the SMC so religiously defended Union Government

on various platforms that now, they find it embarrassing to abandon the concept.

A few random examples may help explain the dilemma of some of these gentlemen.

On March 11 1978, then Brig. Odattey-Wellington, Commander of the First Infantry Brigade in an address to the chiefs and people of Nungua urged them to stand steadfastly behind Union Government and ignore the Afrifa-Gbedema alliance which "had nothing to offer Ghana". He stressed that it was only "the devil's advocates, anarchists and confusionists" who were "kicking against the Union Government proposals". On March 16, he was reported as saying that Union Government "would bring lasting peace and stability to the country and help in rapid national reconstruction".

Then on March 14, Major-General Yaw Boakye, Air Force Commander, at a rally at Techiman in the Brong-Ahafo Region stressed the need to ignore students who were preaching against Union Government and emphasised that party politics had outlived its usefulness in the country. He argued that unless Ghanaians adopted a system of government devoid of party politics, there could be "neither peace nor stability". At another rally at Agogo in Ashanti-Akim on March 15, Major-General Boakye appealed to all Ghanaians to vote YES in the referendum "to ensure peace and progress." Major-General Boakye delivered the same message to the people of Juansa, Domiabra, Bonimso, Nsiakrom and many other towns.

Pro-Uniongov Declarations

Speaking at Akwatia in the Eastern Region at a rally organised by the Akwatia branch of the Ghana Peace and Solidarity Council, Brig. Osei-Boateng told his audience that Union Government was a purely African system which was meant to replace party politics under which Ghana had experienced many hardships. He urged the people to reject party politics and embrace Union Government "which will bring lasting unity, peace and prosperity."

Rear Admiral Amedume also had his moments in the campaign. The Daily Graphic of March 20 quoted him in an address at a durbar organised by the chiefs and people of Ho as saying that, Ghanaians more particularly those from Volta Region "will have a lot to lose" if they reject the idea of Union Government. He enumerated a number of development projects which had been undertaken under the SMC and urged the people of Volta Region to show their appreciation by voting for Union Government.

At a rally at Cape Coast on March 22, Rear-Admiral Amedume called on priests and ministers of religion to "join hands" with the Government to provide a suitable form of government for the country. He lamented "what is even more disturbing is the attempt being made by some ministers of religion to kick against the Union Government concept whose hall-marks are unity, peace love and progress."

Lt-Gen. Akufo, speaking at a durbar at the Koforidua Jackson Park to mark the 'Akwasidae

festival, was reported in the **Ghanaian Times** of February 21, to have pointed out that "one advantage of the Union Government proposal is that it will harness the resources of the country for its development so as to ensure that no talent is wasted for political reasons". And then referring to the violent disturbances which came in the wake of the PMFJ rally in Kumasi, Lt.-Gen. Akuffo said that the incident should remind Ghanaians of what would happen to the nation and its people under a party political system.

Then on February 22 in an address at a Charter rally at Akropong, Lt.-Gen. Akuffo after reviewing the achievements of the SMC and extolling the virtues of Union Government called on the people to form a unified body to help the government eliminate "those vicious elements who do not want to see the progress of this country."

Lack of Courage

Again in a speech to round off the annual annual "Godigbeza" festival of the people of Afiao, Lt.-Gen. Akuffo said that the SMC had proposed a "unified system of government" as an alternative to party politics because under the new system "there would be no distinction between the different ethnic groups, thereby preventing any small privileged class from feeling that they have a divine right to lord it over their fellow Ghanaians". He went on, "We want Union Government which belongs to all of us. We want a Union Government which will take care of our spiritual, cultural and economic aspirations". Lt.-Gen. Akuffo wound up his speech by urging the people to give serious thought to the concept of Union Government and vote "massively" for it.

It could be seen therefore that within the SMC, there is only one person, Lt.-General Hamidu, the Chief of Defence Staff who, as far as the available records show, did not commit himself one way or the other to Union Government.

Under these circumstances, it becomes very clear that it will need some extraordinary doses of courage to enable the Akuffo SMC repudiate Union Government, a type of courage which is yet to manifest itself. In the absence of such courage, a way must be found to do the obvious without appearing to be doing it—hence the need for foisting the rather nebulous idea of National Government on Ghanaians.

Our concern here must be with the government's obvious disregard for public opinion in proposing a 'new' system of government for this country. Other persons and bodies have addressed themselves to this issue and we shall attempt to draw attention to some of the political implications of new political programme for the future.

According to the SMC programme, a reconstituted Constitutional Commission will draw up a Constitution based on a non-party form of National Government and after a Constituent Assembly has formulated a new constitution for Ghana, elections will be held and a Transitional (Interim) Government will assume office in July 1979 for a period of "not less than four years".

Presumably, after the Transitional Government has come into office, the SMC will cease to exist and all affairs of state will be managed by this Government whose sovereignty will be absolute because it will be a popularly elected government.

Now the question is, what will happen if the Transitional Government on its own accord decides that the minimum of four years that it is supposed to last is too long and therefore reduces this to say a year or two?

This question is pertinent because it is conceivable that the Transitional Government may not deem itself bound by the decrees, policies or programmes of the SMC which in any case will now be defunct.

It could be argued that the life span of the Transitional Government will be guaranteed in the Constitution but again the popularly elected government once it comes into office, could amend the Constitution to nullify the four-year clause.

Whichever way one looks at it, there is no doubt that the Transitional Government could set aside the SMC plan for a four year term and in the event of this happening, will the soldiers reserve the right to come in again to ensure conformity with their programme?

This is a burning issue which must be examined thoroughly now so that steps are taken to prevent this country from going through another bout of chaos. The experience has been too enervating; enough is enough.

Economy

THE REALITIES OF DEVALUATION

By

J. B. Abban

The devaluation of the cedi by a little over fifty-eight percent (from \$1.00=¢1.15 to \$1.00=¢2.75), which was announced by the Government on 25th August, 1978, has serious implications on the economy, such that the country ought to be informed about the ramifications of this action. The prime objective of the brief comment which follows is, therefore, aimed at initiating the process of giving appropriate exposure to the realities appertaining to this very far-reaching policy measure.

A devaluation measure is one of the various policy instruments available to any nation seeking to correct a deficit in its balance of payments. It has never been an anti-inflationary measure as we are made to believe. The other significant alternatives which may be adopted relate to fiscal, physical and monetary policies and a regime of multiple exchange rates. Physical policy in the form of quantitative restrictions imposed on imports obtains in Ghana now. However, because of the prominence given to the devaluation measure, the comments here will be restricted to this measure and its variant, namely, a flexible exchange rate policy. Before devaluation, a system of flexible exchange rates was supposed to have been in-

stituted in an attempt to find the appropriate value of the cedi vis-a-vis other currencies.

Now, the essential characteristic of a flexible exchange rate is that the prices of various currencies are allowed to be determined from day to day by the force of competition between private buyers and sellers of currencies in foreign exchange market, free from any administrative controls imposed by the national monetary authority (see Legon Observer No. 19 of 10-23 September, 1971). In a situation where the deficit in the balance of payments proves to be chronic, the operation of this policy becomes, in effect, a devaluation measure, for the particular currency being floated, would be progressively devalued vis-a-vis other currencies, until hopefully an equilibrium position is restored to the balance of payments of the country concerned.

Flexible Exchange Regime

In actual practice, the variations in exchange rates afforded by a flexible exchange regime, have always been controlled by countries which have an occasion to utilize this system—evidenced by the Canadian and the British experiences where the particular rates have been allowed to settle within lower and upper bands. The necessity for restricting the rates within bands emanates from the fact that unhindered operation of the system is often destabilizing in nature, especially, in situations where the disequilibrium in the balance of payments is fundamental. Nevertheless, to succeed in restricting the exchange rate within specified bands also requires access to an adequate reservoir of foreign currency reserves to ensure effective intervention in the foreign exchange market at an appropriate time.

This country is, of course, in a very weak position in terms of the cave at given immediately above. Indeed, the recent Ghanaian policy of specifying different exchange rates of the cedi as compared to other key currencies, notably, the dollar, at discrete, time periods, is anything but floating exchange rate strategy. This is so, for the important reason that the operation of the Ghanaian measure lacks the essential feature in the system emphasized in the definition given above.

Aside from the rates outside the bands, the exchange rates determined within the bands, through competitive forces, would indicate the precise magnitude of change in the rates required to restore equilibrium to the balance of payments position. Thus the indication of the size of variation in the exchange rates would be based on objective rationalization of the situation. In the case, for example, where the International Monetary Fund adjustable peg system is adopted and the degree of objectivity in that decision process is doubtful as exemplified by the 25th August devaluation announcement—the Government owes a duty to the nation to explain the basis for such an action. This is even more important in this particular case where the percentage devaluation of the nation's currency vis-a-vis other currencies is unprecedented in the economic history of this country, and much more, has serious economic implications for all

citizens of the land. The urgency for an immediate Government reaction to this call emanates from the following analysis.

In situations where a country finds it necessary to adopt the devaluation measure to correct its balance of payments deficit, it has done (or should do) so for the important reason that this action would stimulate foreign demand for exports and restrain domestic demand for imports, because of cheaper exports and dearer imports in terms of the national currency.

The devaluation measure would have a positive effect on exports if, *inter alia*, (1) the export sector is significant in the economy; (2) the commodities being traded in the export market have fairly elastic demand indications, namely, that a given percentage decrease in the cedi price of an exportable commodity arising from devaluation would be offset by a much larger percentage increase in the demand for that commodity, such that total revenue is increased; (3) that the supply of the commodities involved in the export market have short gestation periods such as those originating from the manufacturing sector. Hence the export sector must essentially be manufacturing based; (4) that raw materials used by both the export and domestic-demand based sectors must be predominantly indigenous in origin; and (5) that conditions exist which allow for the dispensation of adequate incentives to the export sector.

Devaluation and Exports

The first condition is satisfied: the export sector is very significant to the country in the sense that Ghana derives its wellbeing from the exportation of primary products, viz. cocoa, timber and minerals. However, the prices of the nation's major exports, namely cocoa, gold and most minerals are determined on the international market. The price index relating to these commodities is, therefore, not affected by a devaluation measure. The devaluation exercise affects cocoa and gold only to the extent that the cedi value of taxes accruing to the Government from these sources are augmented.

The second condition must be viewed within the context of export of manufactures, timber and a few minerals, such as diamonds. Export of manufactures, if any, is insignificant in the total exports of this country and, therefore, need not occupy our attention here. However the foreign demand for timber is expected to be fairly elastic due to the availability of natural substitutes originating from the United States and Canada and, to some extent Asia, and artificial wood developed from plastics. Hence, on balance, the impact of the devaluation measure on the economy arising from this source, would be minimal.

The third condition is unfavourable in the sense that the supply of timber has a long gestation period. The timber industry would, therefore, be unable to take full advantage of the price reduction afforded by devaluation. In like manner, the fourth condition is unsatisfied; for most of the raw materials used by the industrial sector and, to some extent, the agricultural sector are imported.

The effect of devaluation would therefore be to increase the cost of production in the economy. Since manufactures represent an insignificant proportion of total exports, the total effect on this sector will not be crucial.

What would certainly be remarkable is the effect of this measure on the prices of locally-consumed manufactures, and the consequent snowballing repercussion on the level of real income. We shall have more to say about this later. Meanwhile, the last condition, though favourable, has a restrictive impact on the export sector since the incentive of export bonus, etc., affects an insignificant segment of the export sector, that is those relating to manufactures and non-traditional export. From the above observations, it is apparent that the overall effect of devaluation policy on the export sector is likely to be very minute, if positive, given the present conditions of the Ghanaian economy.

Again a devaluation policy which aims at reducing the importation of goods into a given country, would succeed if, among other things (1) the country's dependence on imported goods is considerably low; (2) the demand for imports by the nationals is fairly elastic; (3) the magnitude of aggregate demand falls after devaluation.

Necessary Conditions

The first condition is obviously negative, for the country's dependence on imports is very high. Most of the manufactures consumed locally originate from foreign countries—either as finished products or as raw materials for local industry. Hence, devaluation has the effect of increasing the prices of both imported and home-produced consumer and capital goods.

The second condition is also unfavourable: most of the imported goods have either no close substitutes or compete with home-produced substitutes whose prices are appreciated after devaluation. Hence, the overall percentage reduction in demand for imports is likely to be less than the percentage increase in the prices of these imports as a result of devaluation. This conclusion is reinforced by the negative effect of the first condition.

Finally, the third condition is initially negative. Whether the indication would be positive or not in the long-run, depends upon the monetary and fiscal policies of the Government. Hence, the contention that a devaluation policy is likely to be effective if prescribed within a 'package'—the package here, referring to the appropriate monetary and fiscal measures that necessarily have to accompany any devaluation strategy.

Before devaluation, a deficit balance of payments situation exists emanating primarily, from a discrepancy between imports and exports—the former being greater than the latter. Devaluation aims at equating imports and exports, to establish balance of payment equilibrium. In terms of a simple national income equation: $\text{National Income} = \text{Private Consumption} + \text{Private Investment} + \text{Government Expenditure} + (\text{Exports} - \text{Imports})$. We start, before devaluation, with imports being

greater than exports and thus the net contribution of $(\text{Exports} - \text{Imports})$ to national income is negative. Devaluation has the effect of raising the value of imports in the domestic currency, (that is, ₤1.15 as opposed to ₤2.75 imports if the foreign currency equivalent of imports is still \$1.00). The percentage increase in the cedi value of exports must therefore be more than that of imports if the former is to be brought into equality with the latter. The end result would be an increase in the income level of the export sector.

Effect on Prices

This income effect of devaluation must be duly recognized when judging the efficacy of devaluation policy in correcting a deficit in the balance of payments. The reason is not far to seek. With increased income, the level of imports would rise and may cause a reappearance of a deficit more substantial than the previous deficit which the devaluation measure sought to erase in the first place. This is likely to be the consequence in this country where rigidities abound in all spheres of economic endeavour. Thus, it is possible that the increase in income and imports will be so great as to swamp the price and elasticity effects of devaluation if any, especially, in the context of the current Government budget deficit policy.

The extent of budget deficits by the Government in recent times, has been such as to find expression in the proliferation of money supply presently being experienced in the country. This excess liquidity has, in turn, resulted in a situation of lingering excess aggregate demand over supply which has given fillip to the serious inflationary pressure now raging in the economy. Given the economic environment of the nation at the moment, it is clear that the devaluation of the cedi by any percentage points imaginable will not have the right impact on imports and thus ultimately on the nation's balance of payments position. If this devaluation measure will not have the desired effect, then it is bound to worsen our present precarious economic situation.

The first evidence for this would be the effect of this policy measure on prices. One needs not be a prophet to foresee the validity of this assertion. Past experience is enough in sustaining our belief in this regard. Nevertheless, the extent to which the inflationary pressure would snowball in the economy depends on the attitude of Government about the other part of the 'package'. This essentially has to do with Government's attitude towards (1) the manner in which its budgets are financed, (2) the acceptable quantum of money supply and the effective control over its main components, (3) the scale of importance of all governmental economic activities and (4) the productive sector of the economy.

The second evidence would centre on the behaviour of organized labour appertaining to income distribution. In a situation where the level of real income of citizens is constantly being eroded, it would be extremely difficult to fight against requests, especially by organized labour, for restoration, at least, to the pre-devaluation real income position.

The third evidence would exhibit itself in the form of increased costs to all sectors of the economy and thus a second round of inflationary pressure on the country. The fourth evidence would find expression in a worsening balance of payments situation, and a consequent regime of shortages—ad infinitum. The cycle would be broken, albeit in the long run, only if the Government urgently addresses itself to a 'package' of policies necessarily aimed at removing the basic weaknesses inherent in the economy.

Meanwhile, the economic prospects of this country are undoubtedly bleak, and would continue to be so if we do not fully recognize the implications of our policies and seek to discover ways and means of cushioning against them under auspices of an open forum. I submit that this is a good and opportune moment as any in initiating this approach, and the Government should set an example in this regard.

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Observer Notebook

THE NEWSPAPER LICENSING DECREE, (NRCD 161)

At his news conference on August 3, 1978, Colonel Parker Yarney assured local and foreign pressmen that the new SMC was determined to ensure that there existed press freedom in the country, subject to the normal legal limitations. This was a little surprising, coming as it did from the man who had been claiming that the press had never been freer than under the administration of General Acheampong. The BBC therefore made an excusable error when it announced in one of its bulletins of African news that, that announcement was made by the new Commissioner for Information!

At that conference, grave concern was expressed about the existence of the Newspaper Licensing Decree and a number of journalists asked for its immediate repeal. Not convinced by the Commissioner's assurances that all applications for licence would be expeditiously handled, even in less than twenty-four hours, the pressmen reiterated their request that the decree be repealed. Colonel Parker Yarney tried to explain that since the issue was of major importance, it had been referred to the Constitutional Commission. Thereupon he was reminded that since the decree had not been passed within any constitutional framework, it could also be repealed outside any such framework; and that it should be possible to undo by decree what had been done by decree. The Commissioner assured all the pressmen that he would convey their feelings on the decree to the new SMC.

Some weeks have passed since then, but nothing has been heard of the repeal of the decree. In fact, the press conference was not the first occasion in recent times that a call had gone to the government to repeal that oppressive decree. During the negotiations between the old SMC and the professionals last year, this matter came up, and it was on the strength of the assurances given then that a fresh application was submitted for a licence to resume the publication of the *Legon Observer*. This was done on August 8, 1977 and in the application, the attention of the Commissioner was drawn to the fact that an earlier application had been submitted since April 10, 1975. The licence was magnanimously granted on July 20, 1978 after a delay of over three years!

The fact that, according to the Commissioner for Information, the Bar Association's application for a licence was granted within 24 hours is not relevant to the argument. We are contending that the decree is repressive and inimical to the freedom of expression and should be repealed. Our objection is directed to the principle and not to the modalities of issuing the licence. The NRC/SMC government never gave any satisfactory explanation to the public about why that inimical law, passed in 1963 and repealed in 1970, was re-enacted in 1973. We only know of how it operated and we are left in no doubt that it was intended to silence critical

voices so that the "one-man show" could go on undisturbed.

If the new lease of freedom granted by the new SMC and announced by Col. Parker Yarney is to make any sense, it is imperative that that obnoxious and oppressive decree be repealed immediately. One would like to know what the new SMC stands to lose by repealing that decree.

HAS THE SMC ABANDONED THE REFERENDUM OF 30TH MARCH 1978?

One of the issues that has been haunting the general Ghanaian public is whether the present SMC has abandoned the Referendum of 30th March or not. This issue has become all the more enigmatic because in neither of the two statements made so far by the new Head of State has any reference been made to the Referendum. Nor has any of the dailies commented on it.

We have taken a close look at this question and are left in no doubt that the SMC has indeed abandoned the Referendum of March 1978 even though they have not, for reasons that may or may not be apparent, stated so publicly.

The principal evidence for this conclusion is provided by a comparison of paragraph 3(b) of SMCD 164 and the same clause of SMCD 173. These two decrees spell out the composition and the terms of reference of the Constitutional Commissions set up to draft a new constitution for the country. Both were, however, issued at different times and signed by different people. SMCD 164 was made on 10th May 1978 and signed two days later by Gen. I. K. Acheampong. Paragraph 3 of this decree defines the terms of reference, and 3b which mentions one of the factors to be taken into consideration by the Commission reads: "the Report and Findings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government and the results of the National Referendum of 1978 on Union Government" (Emphasis ours). The second decree SMCD 173 was issued after the fall of General Acheampong. It was made on 1st August, 1978 and signed by Lt-Gen F.W.K. Akuffo ten days later. This decree, it should be particularly noted, is described as an amendment to SMCD 164, and its paragraph 3b reads simply: "The Report and findings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government".

The import of this amendment is that the Commission is not enjoined to take into consideration "the results of the National Referendum of 1978 on Union Government". Surely, the omission of this phrase cannot be said to have been accidental or purposeless; it can mean one thing, and one thing only, that the present SMC has rejected the results of the Referendum of March 1978. If we are wrong in our interpretation, we stand to correction.

In any case, whether we are right or wrong, we would like to take this opportunity to ask the SMC to conduct an impartial enquiry into the conduct and results of the Referendum in question. There is a strong and very widespread impression that a great deal of public money was dissipated on the exercise and atrocities were perpetrated. These allegations must be confirmed or refuted in the interest of the creation of an atmosphere of tranquillity, stability and mutual confidence.

DEPRIVATION OF CITIZENSHIP

The recent decision of the Government to deprive Mr. M. F. Fattal and Mr. M. Fattal, two naturalised Ghanaians, of their Ghanaian citizenship raises a few questions. Although the deprivation of citizenship may be justified on the ground that the activities of the two persons were "prejudicial to the public interest", the procedure used to deprive them of citizenship gives cause for some concern.

Under S.10 of the Ghana Nationality Act, 1971 deprivation of citizenship is a judicial and not an executive or legislative act. Only the High Court may, on an application made in that behalf by the Attorney-General, deprive a citizen, other than a citizen by birth, of his citizenship on the ground that the activities of that person are "inimical to the security of the state or prejudicial to public morality or the public interest".

The conduct of the Fattals may have fallen into one of these categories. It would, however, have been better if the Government had gone to court to have the Fattals deprived of their citizenship. By doing so by a Decree (SMCD 172) the act of the Government smacks of arbitrariness because it creates the impression that the Government was not sure that it would succeed in a court of law.

It is hoped that the Fattals' case will be treated as a special case and that in future the provisions of the Ghana Nationality Act, 1971, will be followed in such cases.

Depriving a person of his citizenship is a serious matter; it may render him stateless. On the other hand, a certificate of naturalisation should be granted only after a very careful and meticulous consideration of an application. It must be ascertained that all the qualifications for naturalisation are fulfilled, namely: eight years of residence in Ghana, good character, ability to speak and understand a Ghanaian language, proof that the applicant has made or is capable of making a substantial contribution to the well-being and progress of Ghanaian life, that he has been assimilated or can easily be assimilated into the Ghanaian way of life, and that he intends to reside in Ghana in the event of his being naturalised. He must also demonstrate his allegiance and loyalty by renouncing any other nationality.

It is doubtful whether all the many Lebanese and other aliens who have been naturalised as Ghanaian citizens in the last ten years or so have all the qualifications for naturalisation. It is notorious that many, perhaps it is more accurate to say most, of them cannot speak and understand any Ghanaian language, are not assimilated, and cannot easily be assimilated into the Ghanaian way of life, and in fact do not intend to be so assimilated.

Most of them applied for naturalisation for business reasons. In that respect they have been very wise and successful! Most of the big Lebanese enterprises were not affected by the Investment Policy Decree, 1975 (NRCD 329) and the Ghanaian Enterprises Development Decree (NRCD 330)

because they were owned by naturalised Ghanaians! They can thus continue, if they so desire, to fleece Ghana to augment the wealth of Lebanon, which they still regard as their only real home.

How did such people get naturalised, one may ask? Did they really renounce their former nationality? Recently the Government invalidated the naturalisation of twelve aliens because their naturalisation had been improper and the necessary procedures had not been followed. Such an error cannot be clerical nor due to some isolated aberration or lapse on the part of a subordinate officer. The certificates of naturalisation must have been issued by, or on the instructions of, or signed on the advice of a top man. That person should be made to answer for what happened.

It appears that after 21 years of independence Ghana has not got any settled and consistent concept of citizenship. Since 1957 there have been at least four principal Nationality Statutes (1957, 1961, 1967, 1971) and several amendments of these statutes. The result is that to determine Ghanaian citizenship other than by birth one often has to go through a maze of laws. In fact in 1972 the NRC had to enact a decree to provide special naturalisation to those who might have been suffering hardship as a result of being deprived of their nationality by one of the statutes referred to!

The nationality laws of Ghana need a comprehensive scrutiny. Indeed naturalisation of all aliens since 1966 should be reviewed. It may be too harsh to deprive those who did not qualify for a Ghana citizenship of their citizenship. But at least this will enable the Government to develop a settled policy on nationality and to close all the loopholes in the present law.

THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT— IS IT DEAD?

The recent spate of strikes in Ghana has made many people wonder whether the Industrial Relations Act 1965 (Act 299) is still alive. Within a period of a few days postal workers, employees of the breweries and workers of six divisions of the GHOC went on strike. In fact strikes occur more often than we hear of. Almost all of these strikes are technically unlawful since the necessary procedures and notices are not given before they are declared. Almost all of them are also without official union approval.

Certainly there must be something basically wrong with a law which is so frequently violated with impunity. The Industrial Relations Act was designed to make strikes unlawful except where it is declared in accordance with the provisions of the Act. It establishes the Trades Union Congress as the representative trade union movement in Ghana and ensures that the members of the congress—the various national unions—are organised all over the country, have enough funds and are viable and strong enough to deal with employers on equal terms.

But even more important for settlement of industrial disputes is the collective bargaining system

created by the Act. Each workplace must have a joint negotiating committee which consists of representatives of both the employer and the workers or the union. Negotiations on all matters connected with "the employment or non-employment or with the terms of employment or with the conditions of labour of any of the employees" are required to be conducted through the joint negotiating committee. Either party can request the other party to enter into negotiations on any of these matters.

A collective agreement concluded by a trade union through a joint negotiating committee binds all employees in the class affected by their agreement and their employers and constitutes terms of their contract of employment. Where negotiations fail to reach an agreement, the Commissioner (Minister) for Labour is required to appoint a conciliator and if necessary may appoint an additional conciliator.

If the conciliation fails to bring about an agreement the Commissioner may refer the matter to arbitration provided one of the parties consents to go to arbitration. The findings of an arbitration, if confirmed by the Commissioner prevail over any other contract and binds the parties.

In other words, a Union can declare a strike or an employer a lockout if

- (a) both parties do not consent to the matter being referred to arbitration, and
- (b) the party declaring the strike or the lockout, as the case may be, has given four weeks notice of its intention to do so.

It appears only strikes or lockouts declared in accordance with this cumbersome procedure are lawful under the Act. Any other strike or lockout is unlawful and a person who "declares or instigates or incites others to take part in a strike or lockout or acts in furtherance of a strike or lockout declared by this Act to be illegal shall be liable, on a summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty-five pounds (£25.00) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or to both such fine and imprisonment".

One can see why the Industrial Relations Act has ceased to be an effective deterrent to strikes or lockouts. In these days of galloping and almost uncontrollable inflation, the collective bargaining system appears to be too cumbersome and slow to deal expeditiously with urgent demands of impatient workers. On the other hand, because of low productivity and a host of economic difficulties, many employers are not in a position to pay or offer any more remuneration or fringe benefits. And the penalty for an illegal strike or lockout £25.00—is too low to be an effective deterrent.

It is clear that after 20 years (the predecessor of the 1965 Act was the Industrial Relations Act, 1958 (No. 56)) the present collective bargaining system may be in need of some drastic changes. We understand a committee is considering such changes. While we hope they will come out with good suggestions, it must be remembered that so long as the present economic conditions in

the country prevail, there will be strikes or lock-outs whatever may be the law. Strikes should not be attributed to the irresponsibility or avidity of workers but to the irresponsibility and indiscipline of those who have mismanaged the country's affairs and dissipated its resources.

Letters

OPEN LETTER TO THE SMC ON THE SEMANTICS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Sirs,

There may or may not be anything in a name; but there frequently is something in what a name names. In politics tremendous consequences may hang on what a name names. So it is of considerable moment to be clear about the meanings of cardinal terms. At the present time, no term in our national political vocabulary is more crucial than the term "national government". This, of course, is due to the fact that you have proposed that this country should have a national government for four years or more.

Now, as you know, a great many citizens of this country entertain the gravest misgivings about your proposal. Unless I am much mistaken, the root cause of the worry is the assumption that the proposal for a national government implies the outlawing of political associations. The part of the revised terms of reference for the enlarged Constitutional Commission in which you instruct them to produce a draft constitution for an Interim National Government in which "representation shall not be based on membership of political parties" has seemed to many to leave no room for any alternative interpretation.

But, Sirs, one thing ought to be made clear to everybody. It is this: To say that representation shall not be based on membership of political parties just does not imply that there shall be no political parties. That this is so can be seen from the following simple consideration. From the fact that, most assuredly, representation in the future constitution will not be based on religious affiliations, it does not follow that religious groups will be outlawed in this country. It should be noted as a corollary that even when there are political parties in a state one can talk of a government formed in that state not on the basis of parties; and this would mean simply that selection of people to serve in government is not made on the criterion of membership of whatever political parties there may be in existence. This kind of thing is not unknown in the contemporary world.

It does seem that in current political discourse in this country, the notions of a government not formed on the basis of parties and a non-party government are being used interchangeably. But, as a matter of fact, the term "non-party government" has a broader meaning than the other expression. A government not formed on the basis of political parties may, of course, rightly be called a non-party government, but so also may a government formed in such a way as to reflect the relative strengths of the parties in a nation.

This last remark brings us directly to the expression "National government". It is a commonplace of political semantics that this expression normally refers to a government embracing all the parties in a state. If there is genuine freedom of thought, of expression and of association in a state, such a government would be likely to be national not only in semantics but also in terms of national realities. On the other hand, a non-party government in the drastic sense of a government in the absence of parties may not be national at all. For example, for upwards of six years we had in this

country a government led by a General who, apparently, was a considerable specialist in the art of one-man operation. That government was non-party all-right, but no one I hope, would have the temerity to say that it was a national government.

A transitional, interim, conclusion of this discussion so far is this: For all that is contained in the revised terms of reference for the Constitutional Commission, they would be within their rights to propose an arrangement in which the future government would be required to reflect the relative strengths of whatever political parties or associations there may be, not, of course ignoring other possible indicators of political opinion. In assessing the relative strengths of parties in such an arrangement one would not need to be restricted to considering just the allegiances of elected representatives; one might also have regard to actual voting strengths - all this being done not necessarily with mathematical rigour but within reason.

It is important, Sirs, to realise that such an arrangement would be altogether compatible with the **objective meaning** of your order to the Commission to devise a system of elections that shall not be on the basis of political parties. All that this instruction requires is that candidates for elections shall not be nominated by parties or associations. This means that technically all candidates will be independents, but it does not exclude the possibility, even the advisability, of a candidate belonging, and declaring himself to belong, to a national political association. It is surely desirable that a candidate should be elected not on the strength of whatever attractions his personality may have, but on the basis of the policies, both national and local, that he advocates; and, certainly, choice of alternative policies would be much facilitated if the potential variety of policies can be simplified on the lines of the kind of nation-wide pooling of alternatives which political associations can bring about.

The idea of representation not based on membership of political parties would acquire added substance if it is combined with the important proposal for the state-financing of elections which was made in the Report of the *Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government* (p.100, para. 341). State resources at regional and local levels could be easily mustered to provide electioneering facilities to contesting candidates. One is thinking here of facilities for candidates rather than parties. The excessive influence that political parties tend to wield over their members in parliament is due in large part to their dependence on the party propaganda machine in the matter of election campaigning. Given the existence of parties, they would, of course, find ways of making their existence felt in any electioneering; but it cannot be doubted that if candidates are able to enjoy a relative independence from party finances in their election campaign, this circumstance would endow them, if and when elected, with a measure of independence of thought that would be bound to enhance the quality of parliamentary debates. Such independence would not necessarily be incompatible with allegiance to a party. (It should be noted, though, that with state-financing of electioneering, it would become more necessary than usual to discourage frivolous candidates. Accordingly, quite stringent conditions on candidature would need to be laid down).

I am mindful, Sirs, of the fact that your proposing a National Government was motivated by the quest for national unity and stability. I quite agree that when parliamentary elections are organised on a rigidly party-financed basis and government is formed by the winning party to the exclusion of all losers, national unity and stability can become an elusive target. Undoubtedly this kind of politics has not

been conducive to the achievement of these aims in our national history so far. If this is what you mean by saying that the nation is not ready for party politics, then your position is one which, by all contemporary indications, is shared by most shades of opinion in the country. And I for one would hope that the nation will not be thought to be ready for this kind of politics so long as there is a significant variation in political opinion. But it is an implication of what has been said above that the expression "party politics" is ambiguous. In one sense the politics of any state in which there are political parties or associations can be called party politics. But, as shown already, party politics in this broad sense need not issue forth in a party government; it is fully compatible with a national government. Therefore not every species of party politics can be considered to be prejudicial to your constitutional proposal. There is, consequently, need for a clarification of just what you mean when you rule out "party politics".

A quite fundamental semantical problem in this last connection is exactly what is meant by a political party. Suppose a political party is defined as any organisation of freely associating citizens concerned with the mobilisation of opinion for the purpose of influencing the conduct of national affairs or of participating in government through parliamentary representatives in pursuit of stated national goals. The existence of parties in this sense would clearly not be prejudicial to the prospects of forming a National Government of the sort that has already been mentioned in this discussion. Only if a political party is defined as an organisation which in addition to doing all the things referred to in the first definition also nominates parliamentary candidates will the existence of political parties be inconsistent with such a national government. It can hardly be maintained that there are any overwhelming reasons why a political party should be defined in this latter way. But if it is nevertheless so defined, then a proposal to rule out political parties need not arouse the hostility of champions of the right to association, since, of course, it would not touch the right to form or belong to political associations. We might say, in fact, that in the first sense noted above a political party is just any political association in a state. To suggest that parties in this sense should be disallowed would be to contemplate a most severe curtailment of the fundamental rights of citizens. It is difficult to conceive of any reasons of the Common Good that could justify such an idea. Not national unity and stability, certainly; for, as we have already seen, a genuinely national government is attainable even in the presence of parties, and if a genuinely national government will not improve the prospects of stability, nothing will.

The weakest portion of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government, which in some parts is very thoughtful indeed, is the part where they confronted the issue of the citizen's right of free association. "In respect of the freedom of association" declared the committee, "the constitution should rule out the right to associate for the purpose of forming a political party" (p.126, para. 470 (iii); see also p.103, para. 359). It would have been exceedingly helpful if after saying this they had gone on to explain what exactly they meant by a political party in this context. They did not. Yet if one considers another suggestion that was made by the Committee, a very acute semantical problem emerges. On page 100 they consider the question of the establishment of a National Movement to serve as a platform to articulate national programmes (para. 340). They then remark on the next page: "The use of a national movement for this purpose has much to commend it and is worthy of further consideration" (para. 343). The problem is: if a

national movement for the purpose of articulating national programmes is not a political party then what is a political party in the first place? May we suppose that, perhaps, they were operating with a definition of political party which permits citizens to associate for the purpose of forming national movements to articulate the national programmes advocated by them without violating the proposed ban on political parties? The careful reader of the Report will see that the Committee was envisaging a state of affairs in which only one such movement, formed by the powers that be, was to be permitted. I cannot believe that if they had explicitly addressed themselves to the question of what exactly is meant by the expression "political party" they could have recommended the outlawing of political parties and at the same time found much to commend in the idea of a national movement. It is not inconceivable that semantical clarity might have promoted second thoughts as to the advisability of recommending the outlawing of parties.

These comments on the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government are intended merely to illustrate the great importance of being clear about crucial political terms. Let us, Sirs, now consider the implications of outlawing political parties, this term being understood in the sense in which it embraces any political association whatever. In a country such as ours where there is a high level of political awareness and sophistication, such a course of action would entail a hell of a lot of prohibiting and policing. Anybody who takes it into his head to ban political parties in Ghana, especially when general elections are in the offing, is going to have to ban all friendship associations, all peace and solidarity groups, all youth associations, all social and literary clubs, all mutual aid groups, all town improvement societies, all student unions and so on. Given the fertility of political imagination that was displayed in the art of inventing designations for political groupings during the campaign for the ill-fated Referendum on Union Government, one can extend this list indefinitely. If this is not daunting enough, consider what problems one would face with, say, the churches and all the assortment of revivalist movements that have sprouted in the country in recent times. Any serious attempt to stop orthodox political movements would inevitably convert some, at least, of these organisations into veritable political movements. The problem of what to do with any such movements would be quite a delicate one.

Nor is that all. One can predict with almost infallible certainty, Sirs, that if you ban open political associations you will have a good number of secret ones on your hands. Think how extensively fatal it would be to the rights and liberties of Ghanaians to have to keep such a watch over their lives and activities as to enable all such movements to be detected and abolished! No, even if one could make a success of the job of banning political parties in the new Ghana to be, the victory would be a Pyrrhic one, politically and morally.

May I at this stage, Sirs, draw your attention to the logic of your own procedure in enlarging the Constitutional Commission. On your own showing, the enlarging was done so as to make the membership of the Commission reflect all the shades of political opinion in the country. How, Sirs, did you discover these shades of opinion? As far as one can see, you must have made deductions as to the shades of people's opinion from their known association with certain past political parties. I am not saying that this was the only consideration, but it certainly seems to have been an important consideration in your choice of personnel. For instance, any moderately informed school boy will pick the Ex-C.P.P. and Ex-P.P. elements in your additions with

ease. If, then, association with dead political parties can be so useful in helping one to perceive the colours of the political spectrum, how much more accurate and efficacious would membership of live ones be! What procedure would you recommend to the future Prime Minister or President embarking on the enterprise of forming a National Government in the absence of open political parties? If he were to follow your own procedure with respect to the Constitutional Commission, he would have to fish out information about the secret political movements, which as I have pointed out above, would arise, come rain or shine, in order to form a government that shall reflect all shades of political opinion and pursue policies showing a like sensitivity. He would be most misguided to fix his attention on the elected M.P.s to the exclusion of the underground political organisations to which they may belong. So, then, we have the following situation: If you outlaw open political parties you would have to have recourse to secret ones in any serious effort to make your actions reflect all shades of opinion. That should be a sobering thought.

In drawing towards my final conclusion I would like to point out, Sirs, that there appears at the present time to be something like consensus on the need for a National Government in this country. The only contentious issue is as to the interpretation of this concept, specifically, with respect to the role or non-role of political parties or associations. Some people seem to think that a National government presupposes the non-existence of political parties. That is a simple fallacy. One may, of course, hold independently of any such fallacy that political associations are undesirable in Ghana in the next few years and should therefore be disallowed. If this is any part of what you intended to convey to the Committee, then the relevant printed words are inadequate to your intention and should be supplemented with more determinate prose. The required determinacy would obviously entail defining the notion of a political party. My contention is that such a proposal would have no moral or political merit or any merit of any kind; it would, besides, be ultimately futile. But at least a determinate statement would enable Ghanaians to see clearly what dismal constitutional future is decreed for them. On the other hand, if the outlawing of political associations does not form part of your message, then for the prevention of all troublesome doubts, kindly say so. Many people, including possibly some members of the Constitutional Commission, are afflicted with uncertainties as to the exact meaning of certain crucial parts of the Commission's terms of reference as they now stand.

Sirs, you have started a great adventure to try to reverse the nation's speedy drive towards perdition by the dangerous driving of a former driver of the state machine. Do not let semantical unclarity put spokes into your wheels.

Yours faithfully,

Kwesi Wiredu
Department of Philosophy,
University of Ghana
Legon.

P/S. By the way, a government allotted a life span of at least four years (i.e., four years or more) cannot be called "a transitional, interim" government; for that is approximately the time ration for governments even at the best of times. It is only the proposed constitution that can be called transitional etc., since constitutions are usually designed to last for rather more than four years.

K.W.

The Arts

ACHEAMPONG AND THE PROFESSIONALS' "REVOLUTION": A REVIEW OF TWO PLAYS

by
Kojo Senanu

There is an illustration on the cover of the programme notes for the Ghana Playhouse's recent production of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. An illustration which depicts the figure of a 'professional', in tie and coat, pilloried. Under the illustration comes the Playhouse's adaptation of Ibsen's title of the play to read: *A Public Enemy*.

Since there is in fact a scene in Ibsen's play in which a meeting, called by a medical doctor to tell his fellow citizens about the pollution he has discovered in the local baths is violently interrupted by a group deliberately planted by the local mayor, the topical relevance of this production in erstwhile Acheampong's Ghana could hardly be missed. In fact when I first heard that Andoh Wilson, the director, was contemplating a production of this play, I wondered how he could dare a public performance which would obviously make critical comments on recent events in Ghana. Of course Andoh Wilson probably counted on the incompetence of the Acheampong regime not to be able to appreciate the mirror held up to it by this production. But, on the other hand, if Wilson was counting on using the stage and Ibsen's play to show the Ghanaian elite the perennial fate of the professional (who wants to place his expert advice at the service of his fellow men) and by so doing, commiserate with and console the Ghanaian professional, he must have found out that he holds too optimistic a view of that elite. For as it turned out, Acheampong had so isolated and emasculated the professional movement by the time the production actually came on in early June at the British Council Hall in Accra that, the night I saw it, few of the professionals were there to indulge even a kind of narcissistic enjoyment of their fate in Ghana.

A recent revival of the production for a largely student audience at the University of Ghana, got a much more enthusiastic reception. And perhaps that is as it ought to be. For Ibsen himself did not overestimate the role of the professional in public affairs, although his sympathies were obviously with the protagonist of his play Dr. Thomas Stockman. He said of Stockman: "Dr. Stockman and I got on most excellently; we agree about so many things, but the Doctor has a more muddled head on his shoulders than I have,....." It is an indication of Ibsen's complex attitude to his hero that he should have given him a line which no doubt many Ghanaian professionals would accept as a slogan for their stand against Acheampong: "The strongest man is he who stands alone." But, as the events of the past twelve months or so in this country have shown, that is only a half-truth. Ibsen knew more than that. He gave another line to Stockman which, unfortunately, George Wilson cut in his production of the play. In Ibsen's original, when it becomes clear that the town's authority has outmanoeuvred Dr. Stockman (just as Acheampong succeeded in doing in July, 1977) and rendered his individual fight for the truth virtually futile, Ibsen makes Stockman say: "I must have at least twelve street urchins - real guttersnipes - to experiment with,....." In other words, the fight must be carried on by the younger generation with a broader social basis than that of a professional elite. How true this is of our experience in the struggle against Acheampong.

I suppose we ought to thank the inefficiency of the Acheampong regime, and our own good fortune in Ghana, that such a topical play could have been produced at all while Acheampong was still around. George Wilson and his group of amateurs have always done inimitable service by this country through the choice and timing of their production. In *A Public Enemy*, George himself plays the mayor, the villain of the piece, with a more sympathetic understanding than one would have imagined possible. Suddenly one sees in him the breed of sly 'special advisers', who are all for reconciliation and are perpetually paying night visits, but who, in fact, are ruthlessly power-hungry. Ebow Daniel's Stockman is interesting but slightly mannered with age. Rose Fynn, as his wife, is elegant and turns out a more attractive character than Ibsen's slightly neurotic Mrs. Stockman. Two newcomers to the group, Joe Baiden-Amissh, as the spineless newspaper editor and Eric Asem, as the small-time entrepreneur, also give good and impressive performances. So entertaining an evening does the production offer that if ever it is revived again in Accra one hopes it is better patronized.

Of course one element which provided a backbone for the Acheampong regime was the power of money—its power "over men and women, over international corporations" and over the destiny of the nation. By extension this became the power of the local businessman, the cedi-millionaire whom the regime spawned overnight.

Joe de Graft, Head of the new School of Performing Arts at Legon, has made the ambitious pursuit of this power and its devastating consequences the theme of a new play in which the school's young performers made their debut at the beginning of June this year. de Graft has taken the plot of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, but has so transformed it in the process of the school's improvisatory exercises that it is virtually a new creation. Instead of *Macbeth's* ambition for the throne of Scotland, we have Mambo's ambition to get hold of his maternal uncle's multi-million business corporation. It has always struck one that Shakespeare's Lady *Macbeth*, the evil genius of the *Macbeth* partnership, resembles the three witches of that play in the influence she exerts over her husband. Joe de Graft has realised this in a brilliant 'naturalization' of the three witches of the Scottish heath into the three Ghanaian wives of Mambo (Mambo of course has an even more attractive and ruthless girl friend on the job). There was a time when the Ghanaian woman's role in the economic affairs of the country was regarded with amused tolerance by most people who talked of the Makola woman's "bra banks." In recent times, however, we have been alarmed by the number of young girls who have become front women for the thorough subversion of the economy through the use of the system of Special Unnumbered Licences. In the character of the three wives of Mambo, who goad their husband towards more and more power, de Graft provides an interesting psychological study of the new breed of Ghanaian girls. Spawned and bred in the sprawling slums of our cities they are learning to work their childhood deprivations upon the nation. And woe betide the men like Mambo who marry them or keep them as concubines.

Not that Mambo is simply a victim of his wives' dreams about luxurious villas up the hill. He is himself ruthless in his pursuit and exercise of power. There is a harrowing sequence in the play in which having murdered his uncle Brempong, he becomes so obsessed with being recognized as the de facto Managing Director of the Brempong Corporation that he would not even see to a decent observance of the uncle's funeral rites.

In the production, de Graft puts the Music and Dance section of the School to superb use at the ritual moments of the play. The funeral of Brempong, slighted by Mambo, is movingly realized in the dance sequence choreographed for Kwakye, Brempong's son and rightful heir (played by Seth Anku). The loneliness of Kwakye, summoned home from abroad by his father's death, his appeal to the powers above to succour an orphan, are classically realized in the circular dance movements and gestures given to Seth Anku.

Obviously a new professional standard is being instilled into the School. The three girls, Janet Owusu, Doris Kuwornu and Sabina Baiden, who play the wives of Mambo have a demanding role, moving through an arc which stretches from seductive prompting through ruthless goading, humorous self-enjoyment and ends with a demented torture. But they proved remarkably up to it. They have been drilled for instance, into startlingly persuasive pantomimes which evoke a room full of people for the party celebrating Mambo's accession to power. They prove indeed capable of playing games with their husband, Mambo (played with unflagging zest by Paa Quayye). Even supporting roles, like those of the technicians, played by Hayford Addrey and Timothy Bissa-Simons seem to have been carefully looked after. As an 'outdoor' production, this has been a very happy and successful pulling together of talent, training and hard work.

Joe de Graft has put all of us in his debt. For the issue which his new play raises and resolves in a particularly revealing way is this: what do we do with the Mambo's springing up in our midst? With the power of money they easily subvert the fragile arrangements there are in this country for exposing their crimes and bringing them to justice. The ordinary workers of the Brempong Corporation insist that this is not a case in which one can say the strongest man is he who stands alone and opposes those who have usurped power. The Brempong Corporation, like the nation, affects the lives of millions. Since Mambo is going to be playing again soon in Accra, perhaps more people can be persuaded to go and see the light it throws on Acheampong and the Professionals' "Revolution".

LSNA Statement ON THE 'LEGON OBSERVER'

...Following the cessation of the "Legon Observer" the Legon Society on National Affairs on October 3, 1974 issued a public statement explaining the circumstances leading to the suspension of the publication and correcting some erroneous impressions which certain persons had tried to create. In that statement, we assured our readers that as soon as it became possible we would be back.

We are now re-appearing and to refresh the minds of our readers on what really happened to the Legon Observer, we reproduce below the full statement we issued on October 3, 1974 and narrate the developments since then.

On Monday, 22nd July, 1974, the following letter was delivered by hand to Professor K. A. B. Jones-Quartey at his office at Legon:

"Liberty Press Limited
P. O. Box 1957
Accra, Ghana

Legon Committee on
National Reconstruction,
P. O. Box 11,
Legon.

Dear Sir,

We have to inform you, with regret, that due to circumstances entirely beyond our control, we are unable to carry on the printing of the Legon Observer as from today.

Yours faithfully,
LIBERTY PRESS LIMITED.
Signed Yiadom Kumi
MANAGING DIRECTOR"

On the following day the president of the Legon Society on National Affairs Professor Adu Boahen with Professor K. A. B. Jones-Quartey, a past president, went to discuss the contents of the letter with Mr. Kumi and his wife, the other director of the Liberty Press Limited.

In a subsequent report to the Society given on Tuesday, 23rd July, Professors Adu Boahen and Jones-Quartey said they had at that meeting expressed disquiet to the two directors about this sudden and drastic decision taken by the company, and had sought an explanation from them. The Managing Director said he had always derived immense pleasure and pride from printing the Legon Observer during the eight years of its existence. But now he felt reluctantly obliged to terminate this relationship, because from certain reactions to the last two issues of the paper he could see the "political clouds gathering". Mr. Kumi said he felt that the continued association of the Liberty Press with the Observer was certain to do damage to the company. Nevertheless he also declared that he had been under no direct political pressure in taking this decision. He was a businessman, not a politician, and could no longer afford the threat to his business interests to which the association with the Legon Observer had exposed him over the years.

Satisfied that the decision of the company was irrevocable, the Legon Society on National Affairs had no choice but to suspend publication of the Observer until a willing and suitable printer could be found. Readers of the paper, together with the general public, were then duly informed by an announcement in the Ghanaian Times and the Daily Graphic that owing to circumstances beyond the Society's control the Legon Observer would not appear again, as from 26th July, 1974 and until further notice. We have since the appearance of this advertisement, been scouting around for printers, and will resume publication as soon as one offering acceptable terms is found.

However, since we suspended publication, a number of individuals as well as organisations have made untrue and misleading statements about the reasons for the suspension. Before going into those details, it would be useful to narrate the events preceding the suspension of publication of the Legon Observer.

On Wednesday, 3rd July, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Dr. Alex Kwapong, was summoned to appear with the Acting Editor of the Legon Observer before the N.R.C. at the Castle, Osu. As the Acting Editor was not available at the time, the Vice-Chancellor went alone. Dr. Kwapong was then informed of the displeasure of the N.R.C. with the contents of Vol. IX/13 of the Observer and asked to speak to the members of the Legon Society on National Affairs and its Editorial Committee about the Council's feelings on the matter. The Vice-Chancellor said he had told the N.R.C. that the University of Ghana

had no official connections with the Legon Society or the Legon Observer, and therefore he really had no authority to interfere in the running of the paper. He would, however, faithfully convey the sentiments expressed by the Council to the members of the Society and its Editorial Committee.

On returning to the campus, Dr. Kwapong summoned the then Acting Editor, Mr. A. N. Mensah, and the President of the Society, Professor Adu Boahen, and delivered the message from the N.R.C. The following day, 4th July the Acting Editor was summoned alone to Burma Camp and interviewed by the Army Commander, Brigadier Akuffo, who conveyed a similar message on behalf of the Government.

The next incident was the speech made by the Commissioner for Information, Colonel C. R. Tachie-Menson at the inauguration of the new Mass Media Board on Wednesday, 17th July. Colonel Tachie-Menson in his speech referred to "a very respectable journal in this country (which) prides itself on providing a free, independent, critical and uncensored discussion of public affairs...but the editorial stand of which periodical together with views expressed in its columns on the withdrawal of subsidies were so crude, insidious, biased and uninstructed in its judgment that one begins to wonder how serious that paper is to its own commitment of 'fair play.....'" (It is well known that most of the phrases quoted by the Commissioner form part of the declaration of aims and intentions in the editorial of the first issue of the Legon Observer, of 8th July, 1966).

Next the People's Evening News, of 19th July, carried an attack on the Observer which took up more than half of its four-page space, including a reproduction of the speech of the Commissioner for Information already referred to above. Among the passages of condemnation of the Observer in that issue of the Evening News was this one: As for the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah he has been a punching bag of those unconscionable and depraved reactionary academicians since 1966 and continue to be so even in his grave ..." (Passage unedited).

On 19th July, Ghana T.V. News next did an extensive coverage of the views of the Commissioner for Information on the Legon Observer, in its evening broadcasts. Then came the letter of the Managing Director of the Liberty Press written and delivered on 22nd July. On the 25th and 26th, our advertisement notifying the general public of the suspension of the Observer appeared in both the Ghanaian Times and Daily Graphic.

It was after this announcement that Mr. K. Gyawu-Kyem, Editor of the Ghanaian Times, made a statement on the suspension of publication of the Legon Observer. This appeared in the Ghanaian Times of Saturday, 27th July. Mr. Gyawu-Kyem declared in his statement that from inquiries he had just conducted personally, he had learnt that the suspension of publication of the Legon Observer was "motivated" entirely by a "domestic issue of the publishers.

The only enquiry Mr. Gyawu-Kyem made at Legon was through a reporter, whom he sent there to ascertain what had caused the suspension of the Observer. The editor told the reporter that the temporary stoppage had been due to the decision of the printer not to continue with the paper. The editor then suggested to the reporter that he could also consult either Professor Adu Boahen or Professor Jones-Quartey, or both since they were the two who had interviewed Mr. Kumi about the decision of the Liberty Press. The reporter did go to talk with Professor Jones-Quartey, who repeated what the editor

had said, and added that Mr. Kumi had stated that he had acted entirely on his own initiative, as a businessman who saw political clouds gathering over his business interests and not as someone acting under any other pressures.

... This was all that Mr. Gyawu-Kyem's reporter was told, and this was what Mr. Gyawu-Kyem managed to represent as a "domestic issue of the publishers". As everyone knows the Legon Society are the Publishers of the Observer the Liberty Press were only our printers.

Mr. Gyawu-Kyem claimed in his statement that he was issuing it in his capacity as President of the Ghana Journalists Association, and that in that capacity he was concerned for the freedom of the press. This concern, in the case of the Legon Observer can be judged by the president's decision to reproduce the Evening News attack on the Observer and on intellectuals generally. It may also interest readers at this point, to note that this statement supposed to have been issued by Mr. Gyawu-Kyem as president of our national association of journalists, was published only in the Ghanaian Times of which he is editor, and nowhere else.

But even more serious was the front page article in the 10th August, 1974 issue of the People's Evening News; entitled

"LEGON OBSERVER" NOT BANNED BY GOVERNMENT.....CEASURE OF PUBLICATION DUE TO FAILURE OF PUBLISHERS TO AGREE WITH PRINTERS' CONDITIONS'! In this article the Evening News called on the publishers of the Legon Observer to "come out with the facts." It went on:

"The People's Evening News" investigations have disclosed that the matter has SOMETHING to do with conditions for printing the paper. That the proprietors of the Legon Observer want the printers to accept their own terms without providing adequate security by way of satisfactory indemnity.

That the printers' demand for their lawyer to certify manuscripts has been rejected on grounds that some of these people connected with the publication of the paper are Lecturers in Law and find it intolerable that other lawyers should vet their work....

We demand that if these are not the facts the Observer's proprietors should come out with whatever other facts they have in their possession.

It is clear from the letter of the Liberty Press and the further discussions with Mr. Kumi reported above that our enforced silence was not the result of any of the reasons given by the Evening News. For the past six years the Liberty Press has been satisfied with the arrangements whereby our solicitor reads everything intended for publication before it appears in print. This solicitor was appointed with the knowledge of the Liberty Press and at no time has the company expressed a wish to have its own interests in this matter represented by another lawyer.

There have also been rumours about the suspension being due to an indebtedness to our printers of some £60,000. This is ridiculous. By our normal working arrangements with the Liberty Press payment was made by us monthly to cover the two or three issues of the paper for that month. There is in fact a residual debt of around one thousand cedis, the result of the sudden and unilateral abrogation by the Liberty Press of the working agreement between us, and for no other reason. Anyone who cares to check on this matter can do so.

Those who are genuinely concerned about the truth should see the Legon Observer in proper perspective. In the context of contemporary Ghana politics an independent paper is bound sooner or later to be regarded as being anti-government in its attitudes, and to incur the displeasure of those in authority. This has been the experience of the Legon Observer. But we are not daunted, and wish to assure our readers that as soon as it becomes possible we shall be back.

The Legon Observer has been in business for eight years, long enough for the people of this country to know what we have been seeking to do, namely to foster the spirit of liberty without which "Freedom and Justice" cannot thrive. At independence, this nation made a clear commitment to the high ideals of freedom and justice. This commitment has subsequently been confirmed time and again in solemn declarations and enactments, but over the years performance has not matched high-intentions. Perhaps this should come as no real surprise: freedom and justice, like liberty are always under siege, and those who cherish them should ever be vigilant to protect them. We should not be discouraged by set-backs.

The story of the Legon Observer took a new turn when after some search, we found printers for the paper. This was the Classic Printers, printers of the Echo, and it was in April 1975, by which time our licence (which is yearly) had expired. We therefore submitted an application for renewal on April, 10, 1975. After waiting for weeks without hearing from the Ministry, the late Professor K. A. B. Jones-Quartey sought an interview with the then Commissioner, Col. Tachie-Menson, to discuss the licence for the Legon Observer and other matters affecting the press generally in the country. The interview took place on July 17, 1975.

On August 4, 1975 in a letter sent to Professor Jones Quartey (Ref. SCR 1425) the Principal Secretary stated that the application for the permit for the Legon Observer was receiving attention. Following this, some members of our society made informal approaches to government and ministry officials but they appear to have drawn a blank at every stage.

This is where the matter rested until, encouraged by the negotiations between the government and the professionals we re-opened the case in a letter to the Commissioner for Information on August 8, 1977. In the Commissioner's reply dated September 5, 1977 he conceded that our application had been pending since August 1975. His letter, however, continued: "I am informed that your organisation did not follow up action on your request, and as your organisation was also at that time experiencing difficulties with your printers, it was rightly or wrongly assumed that you no longer interested in pursuing the matter". He then enclosed fresh application forms to us for completion.

In returning the completed application forms on September 27, 1977, the president of the LSNA, Professor A. Adu Boahen, sent a reply to the Commissioner's letter in which he said, *inter alia*, "Since the Ministry of Information had assured us in its letter No. SCR. 1425 of August 1975 that our letter was receiving attention, we reasonably assumed that the next step should be made by the Ministry... As far as the question of printer was concerned, we did have printers at the time of our application. In any case, since we did not apprise the Ministry of any difficulty with printers, we would have thought that the question would not influence the Ministry's decision regarding the licence for publishing the Legon Observer one way or the other." In

fact, the application form asks for the name and address of the printer and this portion was duly filled on the form.

The Ministry reacted swiftly to our fresh application and acknowledged receipt on September 30, 1977. We were again informed that the application was being processed and that we would hear from the Ministry "in due course". On October 13 and November 3, 1977, the President of the LSNA sent reminders to the Ministry asking for reaction to our re-application for a licence, and adding, "With the publication of the Report of the Ad-hoc Committee on Union Government, you will agree with me that the need for an independent and informed paper like the *Legon Observer* cannot be more acute and more urgent than ever before."

The reaction from the Ministry of Information came only on July 20, 1978 when two members went to the Ministry to pursue the matter and were handed the licence which had been signed that very day.

This, in sum, is "what went wrong" with the *Legon Observer*. It is clear from the foregoing that if our problem started with our printer, from April 1975 our inability to reappear had been due purely and simply to the refusal of the Ministry to grant us a licence.

For the Record

STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF GHANA (NUGS) ON THE PROPOSED TRANSITIONAL (INTERIM) NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

WE, the students of Ghana, have been watching with seemingly gross indifference but with patience and critical minds, the recent developments which have come about as a result of the change in leadership of the Supreme Military Council. Now, we would like to address ourselves to the subject of the country's return to civilian rule and some salient points which were raised in the Head of State's address to the nation on Monday July 31, 1978 on the same and other matters.

After serious deliberation on the matter, it has become imperative that we register our total dismay at the programme to return the country to a so-called constitutional rule as announced by him and our inability to accept it.

When the military took over the administration of the country in 1972, their declaration was that the Government that was in power was incapable of managing the economy of the country and that they (ie. the military) had come to put the country's economy on a sound footing. They accused the men and their policies only; they never alleged that the party form of government was a contributory factor to our economic woes; neither did the military allege that the 1969 constitution for that matter was unsuitable or subversive to the economy.

If therefore the military has decided to return to the barracks 'which in itself is a highly debatable fact' after realising their unparalleled incompetence in the administration of the nation and its economy, then the most logical thing expected is a quiet withdrawal to the barracks and the subsequent restoration of the freedom of association to the people to organise themselves into political parties and elect people of their own free choice to administer the affairs of the nation. We do not find it necessary to repeat once more the irreparable damage that an open-to-all, unorganised political campaign will cause. They are too glaring.

We find it difficult to believe that the programme as announced could be the result of any fresh thinking on the part of the S.M.C. We cannot decipher any meaningful difference structurally, between the concept of the so-called

Union/National Government as contained in the Koranteng-Addow Committee Report, General Acheampong's 'created child' and the National Government announced by the Head of State in his broadcast. No wonder the August 1st, 1978 editorial of the *People's Evening News*, a Union Government back-bencher, took the announcement with such profound joy.

What is worse is the clever introduction of the four-year transitional period. This new element has raised many more questions which go to compound our anathema against the trickery inherent in the concept of a government named Union or National, one which seeks to take away the fundamental right of Ghanaians to freely associate for political action and which also lends support to each person to put up a one-man show according to one's own whims and caprices. It cannot be General Acheampong's lesson is too fresh in our minds.

Countrymen, after the four years of transitional rule what will follow? Another referendum to decide on the future form of government? We must not seek to postpone the inevitable. Let us face the consequences like true fighters. We must learn to do the things the S.M.C. wishes Ghanaians to do NOW. It is not practically impossible to draft and promulgate a permanent constitution for the country before July 1, 1979.

A Transitional (Interim) Government must necessarily have to incorporate the S.M.C. It is logical and necessary. If this happens, then wherein lies the credibility of the S.M.C. that it wants to hand over power by July 1st 1979. We do not want to be forced into the belief that this new arrangement is another ruse to perpetuate or rather prolong the existence of the S.M.C. and in the process cover up any lapses that have occurred in their administration.

We are asserting that the Koranteng-Addow Committee Report which states that a National form of government excluding the ARMY and the POLICE is the wish of the people of Ghana was/is the product of the minds of sycophants and men of "doubtful ability and dubious intentions" and therefore does not represent the true views of Ghanaians.

We wish to remind the S.M.C. that the issue of the fraudulent referendum on Union Government which the S.M.C. itself has admitted as having divided the nation was based on a political scheme which sought to take away the right of the people of this country to political association.

Ghanaians and we, the students in particular, fought in diverse ways against this political enslavement under the battering of police truncheons, armoured cars etc; some have lost their lives and others have been maimed. We stood our ground not in mere protest against nomenclature or the semantics in the terminology of "Union Government as against National Government." The fight was for the right of a truly free people to associate for political action and usher us into a socially democratic state. We do not see this fundamental right guaranteed by a national government elections conducted without the involvement of political groupings. We reiterate that any meaningful National Government must be a coalition of political parties for which provision must be made in an appropriate permanent constitution and which may spread over a limited number of years.

We students of Ghana, see it as our duty to warn any group of people, no matter their status in society, that any wily attempt to rob Ghanaians of their fundamental right to associate freely for political action will launch the nation into another dangerous crisis. At this stage of our history,

we need not encourage or condone any clandestine or underground associations. Such clandestine associations may be acting as frontmen of certain group or individual interests which are reprehensible and dangerous to the people and which will be rejected in toto if they are overtly known. As the *Standard* rightly stated in its editorial of August 6, "to us there is a greater danger in the secret pacts and underground parties than in forcing things into the open in order to effectively control them." It is not too late to avert the imminent danger which will make nonsense of all that the S.M.C. desires to achieve for this dear country of ours.

If the 'withdrawal' of the Army and the Police from the so-called National/Union Government is the deal that could be offered after the promised reappraisal of the political situation, then it is too raw for our consumption. We must also be quick to point out that we are aware of the reactionary role the chiefs have played so far during the short term of office of the reconstituted S.M.C. No doubt the S.M.C. has listened to them a great deal as a group and individually as the ones with responsible opinion. But we wish to remind the S.M.C. that the very chiefs who pledged their unflinching support to General Acheampong, who pledged their stools etc. now finding themselves uncomfortable, are today parading the corridors of influence to save them from the inevitable reality. So long as there are groups that continue to grope about in the fear of their own shadows the people's legitimate aspirations will continuously be stifled under several pretences but we the students shall never allow it.

Again we must mention that at this crucial period, emotional appeals to save the country from being "plunged into the dark waters of confusion" cannot be the panacea to our political problem. It is a problem that demands realism and a practical approach and to our mind, there is only one clear way — organised political activity.

Furthermore we, the students, wish to seize this opportunity to express our bewilderment at the 'promised reconstitution' of the Constitution Drafting Commission which has turned out to mean not a reconstitution as is generally understood but an increase in the membership of a Commission whose very functions have become amorphous.

We are constrained, indeed, to come out at this time with this demand but we cannot afford to do otherwise since that will be tantamount to conspiring with state plunderers, looters and subversionists, to declare that General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, the ex-Chairman of the Supreme Military Council, his henchmen and all retired senior Army personnel who held state offices **MUST BE PROBED** outright. There is no question of any delay, and that if ever any of such people is allowed to sneak out of the country it will imply too much and we shall react promptly.

In like manner, all deportations should cease; any of such people should be held legally by the Police on charges of fraud against the state; their presence is vital if certain facts about General Acheampong and others are to be established and if a better and a more revealing testimony is to be obtained as to the dubious naturalisation of those "Levantine" businessmen.

Secondly, in view of the fact that a solid constitution for posterity which is divested of personal interest or group protection can only be drawn and promulgated when the government of the S.M.C. has withdrawn from office; and in the light of our present political experience and our desire to restore the people's confidence in the electoral system and in order not to postpone further the advancement of this country to constitutional maturity and stability by any period of time;

We the students of Ghana hereby urge the new S.M.C. leadership to do the following:

- (a) Publicly renounce the concept of Union/National Government which is based on the philosophy of "no-party state" and which has shattered the peace we were enjoying
- (b) Immediately hand over to an interim government whose duty will be to supervise the process of returning the country to a properly and popularly organised government by July 1, 1979
- (c) That the Interim Government as we previously stated should be made up of the following:
 - (1) The members of the reconstituted S.M.C.
 - (2) The Trades Union Congress
 - (3) The Farmers' Council
 - (4) The Bar Association
 - (5) One other Representative of the Professional Bodies Association
 - (6) The University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG)
 - (7) Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)
 - (8) Christian Council of Ghana
 - (9) Catholic Secretariat
 - (10) The Moslem Representative Council
 - (11) National Council on Women and Development
 - (12) The Bench
 - (13) National Youth Council

That all these members forming the interim Government should meet and elect one of their members to be the Head of the interim Government and Head of State of Ghana. That consequent to this, the S.M.C./N.R.C. Government should announce its resignation from office and hand over to the new body.

That immediately upon assuming office, the new interim Government will initiate action for the appointment of a Constitution Drafting Committee to sit, and draft a new constitution using previous constitutions as a basis and taking cognisance of our political past.

That the new Constitution should be promulgated by January 1979 to be followed immediately by an official dissolution of the committee and the official lifting of the ban on political activities.

That general elections by Universal Adult Suffrage be conducted in time to enable the establishment of a properly and popularly constituted civilian government by July 1, 1979.

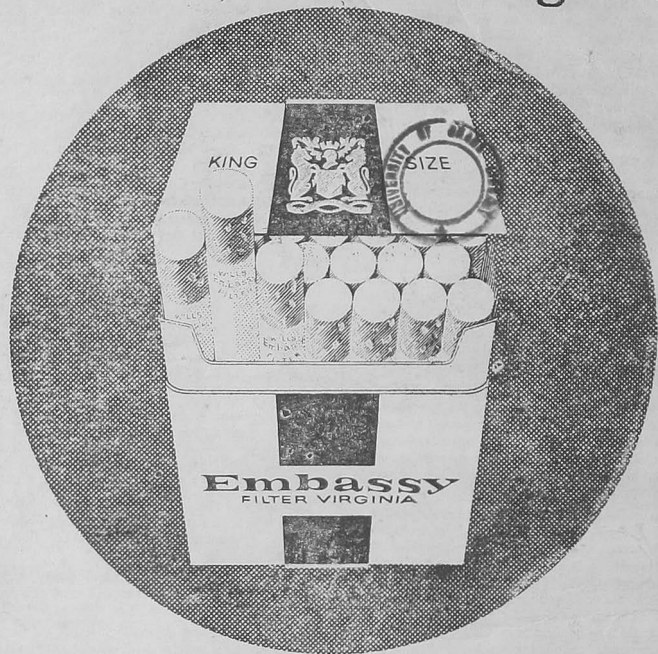
To our mind, the mood and supreme interest of the country cannot allow for further experimentation and schemes meant to build an insurance against accountability.

The interest of the nation as a whole is paramount and it cannot be subjugated to any other interest. We, the youth of this country, to which the future belongs, cannot be unconcerned about events that are going to affect our life in the future. We lay claim to a greater stake in the future of this country and are therefore demanding a permanent Constitution now as of right.

We are NOT interested in this transitory arrangement designed to cater for personal and class interests, and to eliminate any element of surprise, the Student Movement wishes to state in conclusion that reasonable steps will be taken to see to the realisation of our aspirations.

Signed: (E. A. WINFUL)
1ST VICE - PRESIDENT

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