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## Editorial

### JUDGING THE MOOD OF THE COUNTRY

Recent developments and pronouncements in the country have rung alarm bells in certain powerful circles in the nation. These events and pronouncements have been challenged by media leaders, leaders of political parties and voluntary associations as well as by prominent citizens; for they are perceived as having far-reaching implications for the acceptance by the country as a whole of the political institutions established by the 1979 Constitution and the groups of men and officials who control them.

At a pre-election rally at Cape Coast on 17th February, no less a person than the President declared that he had not authorized the revision of the Voters' Register, and the Electoral Commissioner, therefore, could not revise it without his consent. He also asserted that the Action Congress Party (A.C.P.) is a tribal party, and threatened that any party which indulged in tribal politics would not be registered at the time of the next general elections if it failed to fulfil the requirements of the Constitution.

On 16th February, the President authorized the appointment of supervising editors, editors and deputy editors for the state-owned *Daily Graphic*, *Ghanaian Times* and *Mirror*. This was a matter which raised controversy, but is now before the courts of law. Also, at about the same time, the muted but creaking sounds of conflict in the circles of the ruling party, the Peoples National Party (P.N.P.) showed up as a bitter personal vendetta between the chairman of the PNP, Nana Okutwer Bekoe, and the 'father of the party', Alhaji Imoru Egala. Finally, two members of the erstwhile Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (A.F.R.C.), Captain Boakye Djan and Major Mensah Poku, have called for a probe into the rule of the A.F.R.C. This particular call is a little surprising given the Transitional Provisions of the Constitution. A fact-finding commission can be set up, but once the findings are published, it is not clear how one can proceed to prosecute any member of the A.F.R.C. government, suspected of crime, given the provisions of Article 15. Of what value, then, is such a commission? This call undoubtedly contributes to the general unsettlement in the country. Of all these pronouncements and events, the Presidential utterances about the Electoral Commissioner and the A.C.P. are of immediate relevance for the stability of this country, for these have been widely condemned as unconstitutional and mischievous. They have also led a number of people to revise their opinions about the image the P.N.P. is trying to project as a party of 'new men', and thus of 'new ideas'.

Without doubt, short and medium term aims must have determined the timing of these pronouncements. The President felt piqued by the failure of the Electoral Commissioner to consult him before deciding to launch a campaign to revise the Voters' Register. He thus told a party rally at Cape Coast that 'his government would not give in to people who would want to load its budget with expenditure it has not planned'. Referring to the request for the compilation of a new Register he asserted: 'if it did not appear in his recent budget it cannot come on'. Many Ghanaians find these comments rather disturbing. Obviously these were vote-catching statements, but as the results of the Cape Coast bye-election indicate, the President has paid a truly heavy political price for these utterances.

The more substantial issue is whether these comments constitute a violation of the letter and spirit of the Constitution. According to the Vice-President, under the Constitution, it is only the executive that could raise money for capital expenditure involved in the revision of the Voters' Register. The opponents of the government, on the other hand, maintain that the Presidential statements undermine the Constitution in so far as in 'the performance of any of his functions the Electoral Commissioner shall be subject to this Constitution and shall not be subject to the direction and control of any other person or authority'.

But are these statements in keeping with Article 37 (7) of the Constitution? An unambiguous answer cannot be given. According to Article 37 (11), the administrative expenses of the Electoral Commission shall be a charge upon the Consolidated Fund, recommended by the executive and voted upon by Parliament. Even though the President put his case in crude political terms, it is not at all clear that, strictly speaking, these official statements constitute a violation of the letter of the Constitution.

The President also warned the A.C.P. about its tribal nature. Another statement made by Alhaji Imoru Egala, also from the same platform at Cape Coast, that only the PNP is a national party makes the political outlook somewhat ominous. The conjunction of the two statements, one by the President and the other by the 'father of the PNP', leads to the conclusion that only the PNP can be registered for the next general elections. It is earnestly hoped that the plain threat of a single-party system which may be inferred from this conjunction of statements

was unintended. The right to register a political party is not given to either the President or the 'father' of any political party.

The Constitution requires that the leadership or membership of a political party is not restricted to members of any particular tribal or ethnic group or religious faith; or the name, symbol, colour or motto of any party has any exclusive or particular tribal or ethnic group or faith. Also, no political party should be formed for the sole purpose of securing, whether directly or indirectly, the welfare, advancement or interests of the members of any particular tribal or ethnic group, religious faith or community. The power to determine these matters, subject to the final determination by the Supreme Court, is given to the Electoral Commissioner. Parliament is also empowered to regulate, by law, the functioning of political parties.

Acting in accordance with the advice of the Council of State the President appoints the Electoral Commissioner and the ad hoc Electoral Commissioners. The salaries and allowances payable, and the facilities and privileges available to the Electoral Commissioner and ad hoc Electoral Commissioners, are expenditures charged upon the Consolidated Fund. These shall be determined by the President on the recommendations of a committee of not more than five persons appointed 'in that behalf by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Council of State'. Beyond these indirect controls the President has over the Electoral Commissioner, it is extremely difficult from any casual reading of the Constitution to see that the President has any power to handle matters relating to registration of political parties.

It is regrettable that the President claims powers he does not have. This was probably a slip; but if it is so, it is inexcusable for it is a slip which must have come out of a spirit of intolerance. It is most probably because of this expression of rage and intolerance that a number of people did not pause to think that they have a remedy under the Constitution. These statements are disturbing, partly, because of the intemperate language used, and, in a more serious sense, because of some of their constitutional implications. Having said all this, it is important to have some perspective on recent developments. Except in the case of the ACP threat, these pronouncements do not constitute a clear violation of the letter of the Constitution. But in each case, a public outcry has been raised.

Why?

First, it would appear that in dealing with the PNP, one is dealing with a party with a past. As spiritual heirs of the C.P.P., one is dealing with a past of political intolerance - a past that evokes memories of single party rule and press censorship. The past needs to be exorcised if the government is to be trusted and seen by all the people as their government. Problems are being created for the government in the persistent attempts being made by the old guard to re-establish their ascendancy. The voice of the 'new men' in which many Ghanaians had hope seems to be muted, one reason why the government is being increasingly seen as partisan.

Secondly, seven years of military dictatorship have ended, and political forces have emerged which are pulling in all kinds of directions. This has created an atmosphere of chronic uncertainty, insecurity, unsettlement and fears for the future. If the mood of the country is to be judged correctly when any initiatives are being taken, these points need to be borne in mind. It would appear that the President and his colleagues are misjudging the popular mood, hence the suspicion and mistrust which greet official acts.

The present government admittedly came to power on a party platform. But at this point in our history, perhaps more than at any other time, a government of the country needs to be seen and accepted as a government of the whole nation. The task of bringing about this is the government's, and the government's alone. There is enough good will in the country for the government; for a government with such a clear mandate does not lack support. However, positive steps need to be taken by the President and his colleagues to channel whatever goodwill it has into the building of a legitimate, popular and sensitive government.

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**LEGON OBSERVER**

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## Economy

### THE BUDGET AND WAGES

by

James C.W. Ahiakpor

It is hard for anyone with the faintest understanding of macroeconomics not to feel irritated at the apparent inconsistencies in the current budget. One of such inconsistencies is government policy on wages and salaries. After having opted to fuel more inflation by printing more cedis to add to the existing over-supply; and after acknowledging that such action has been the cause of inflation in Ghana, especially over the last few years, the government goes on to declare: "... the major facts that should determine the extent of wage, salary and price increases should be the increase in productivity and the overall real growth of the economy".

#### Relation Between Wages and Prices

Perhaps the inclusion of "price increases" in that quote was an inadvertent error. But the bit about wages and salaries may be interpreted to mean either that the government does not care about the welfare of the people, or the Honourable Minister of Finance has forgotten the basic relation between nominal wages and prices. These should move upwards together or else real wages fall if wages are held down. Thus after promoting more inflation through increased money supply, the government should be prepared to, at least, maintain the existing meagre real wages and salaries by allowing nominal wages, or pay-packets to rise accordingly.

#### Raise Wages and Salaries

The claim that increases in nominal wages do cause inflation has long been debunked by David Ricardo, early in the nineteenth century. It can be shown that if wages are raised without any corresponding increase in money supply the burden mainly falls on profits.

Unemployment may result if real wages happen to become greater than the marginal product of labour or are above equilibrium. But given that existing real wages can hardly compare with those of fifteen years back, we need hardly argue that consequence; in fact, it would appear that salary and wage-earners are beginning to work less these

days in an apparent attempt to equate their productivity with their real wages. Clearly, asking them to raise their productivity in order to justify their higher wage demands is either to miss the point, or to act in accordance with some nostrum picked up from an economic text without perhaps fully appreciating the context.

### Some Implications

Since the government carries a large wage bill in Ghana, it may be proper to consider what implications the obvious need for wage adjustment may have for it. First, we need to rule out any further deficits arising from such wage revisions. Rather government should re-allocate its resources. Now, from the numerous waste pipes uncovered by the various Auditor General's reports, it should be possible, if government is so willing, to close such pipes and transfer its resources to making up the badly eroded wage power of its workers - mostly the lower and middle income brackets.

### Reasons For Abolition of Price Control Organizations

One would even hasten to recommend the scrapping of such organisations as the Prices and Incomes Board and the price control units of the security services. These must go because they have so badly interfered with the incentive system as to have seriously grounded the productive capacity of the country, while in the process stimulating the (never satisfied) consumption appetite of the less privileged people in society. The worst part of their nuisance value to the economy is that they mainly make it possible for the well-placed or well-connected few to acquire the scarce goods available at cheap prices or their own consumption; as well as for subsequent sale on the black market. Meanwhile these agencies effectively cover up bad government policies which spawn shortages by diverting attention from them to the poor, inconsequential "petty traders."

### Resource Transfer

Government can also turn its attention to the corporations which, probably, have been part of the incentive to reach for the switch of the money printing machine. If Ghanaian private citizens own some of these corporations, perhaps the only difference may be that they would be better run. Even the President can also join in the resource transfer process by keeping down his tours of the country and spending more time, if not thinking through the country's economic problems, at least

reading to appreciate the numerous solutions written about this country's economic problems.

Another item that might interest the government is the Commonwealth Secretariat's Report (1979) on "The Rehabilitation of the Economy of Uganda", Volume II. In reading the report, for "kalabule" or "Gyenabu" substitute "magendo". This recommendation is made because the Ugandan economy went through almost similar extent of destruction by soldiers as did Ghana's. Since the methods of the economic destruction and their consequences are so similar to those that obtained in Ghana, some of the prescriptions for rehabilitation may be relevant for us as well.

### Some Results of Wage Revision

A revision of wages and salaries, however, should not wait for the completion of the President's studies. There would have been an excuse for keeping the present nominal wages and salaries if the government had shown any real interest in halting the raging inflation. A revision of wages and salaries, coupled with the removal of controls, including letting the cedi float and easing the restrictions on how much foreign exchange people can purchase from the Central Bank, would be giving a fresh breath to this badly strangled economy. We would then expect the following results:

- (a) Workers would spend less time running around in a desperate attempt to make ends meet, and doing more of what they are paid for;
- (b) the private sector - agriculture, commerce, and industry - would find its way clear to start moving again, and employing more workers;
- (c) prices and interest rates would begin to signal areas that are profitable to invest in;
- (d) the correct price relatives would be set between imported and domestic goods; and
- (e) some encouragement would be given to those who earn foreign exchange abroad to repatriate their earnings, knowing they can have access to them when they want. The present restrictions only encourage the reverse.

### Unconsecrated Marriage Vows

These suggestions may find little favour with some people, especially if they have enjoyed much from existing policies of government (and these

may include those who will have to effect the changes), or if they have been immersed in some set of rhetorics long enough. Even Karl Marx, in *Das Kapital*, Vol. III, appreciated the allocative role of market prices! But it is about time we started examining critically the appropriateness of economic policies by their consequences. The empty shelves of our stores, and the acute scarcity of foreign exchange are the direct results of our faithfulness to our unconsecrated marriage vows (to keep, and to hold, till death do us part to controls on wages, commodity prices, rents, and the price of foreign exchange. (We may also include the apparent lack of appreciation of the role of inventories or stocks).

#### Any Need For Controls?

It is time for divorce, or perhaps, a separation, just to ponder. The relative "sanity" in the economies of our neighbouring countries who do not cling so much to controls should, at least, encourage us to re-examine our position. Otherwise, at the rate that this country continues to decline economically, those who can afford it will leave Ghana, and those who cannot, or do not want to leave, will grumble.

One can only hope that the government would be able to contain the consequences of its current unimpressive economic programme when they catch up with it. This is, in no way, suggesting such weak-kneed and, ultimately, politically unrewarding policy of 'doling' out cedis to any section of the community in an apparent attempt to "buy" favour.

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## Politics

### THE PLEA FOR A NEW PARLIAMENTARY TRADITION

By

Kweku Folson

The editorial on "Third Republican Parliament: Dream and Reality" came as a surprise. I for one was highly suspicious of the constitutional revolution recommended by the Constitutional Commission, the hub of which was a new relationship between the executive and the legislature and a consequent role and character for the latter. But little did I think that the dangers and shortcomings of the new arrangement would show up this early.

It is correctly stressed by the editorial that the constitution-makers hoped that parliament, the judiciary and the presidency would all function as independent centres of power, though co-operating. The editorial notes trends which, if not checked, could make a desert of this hope, the most important of the trends being the assumption of Members of Parliament that their main role is to support their various parties. The editorial further notes some of the reasons for the trends and exhorts Parliament to change its ways to make the reality conform to the dream.

#### Functions of Parliament

Alas! reality is tougher than dreams; dreams follow reality, not the other way round. The trends which are already clear in the behaviour of Parliament are not mere birthpangs of a new constitutional order. They are the harbinger of fundamental problems which will arise, one after another, in the new constitutional order which is founded on the eighteenth century theory of separation of powers. I believe that any serious attempt to get Parliament to behave in accordance not just with the theory of separation powers but with its corollary, the theory of checks and balances, will consume so much time and resources that little will be left for other, some would say more, legitimate concerns of government.

Every parliament has two irreducible functions: deliberative and legislative. The deliberative, being infinitely more important than the legislative, was the first to be noted, and this was done by the first of the Political Scientists, Aristotle. This function deals with the airing of views, the debating of alternative courses of action and the resultant selection

of policies. In a modern legislature representatives of the citizenry perform this function on behalf of the people as a whole. In doing this it focuses the attention of the citizens on parliament and attempts as far as possible to echo their hopes and fears about actions taken or contemplated by public authorities, the most important of which is the government or, more precisely, the executive.

The legislative function, as its name suggests, has to do with legislation, that is, the making of laws. This function of parliaments is a relatively modern one. The old Greek idea of law as a body of rules that exists in nature and can only be declared by human beings, however mighty they be, took a long time dying, and it may with justice be said that so long as man cares about justice the idea will never completely die. But as the modern idea of law as something that is deliberately made by man asserted itself in the course of the centuries, it became clear that if liberty was to be preserved and despotism defeated then the citizens themselves or their representatives, putative or real, must be the makers of this law. This view, together with the equally important view, that the power to make the law must be limited, was fought for in parliaments, in the courts of law, and on the battlefield. Yet so successful was the struggle for constitutional government that political theorists forgot about the deliberative function of parliaments and only remembered its law making functions. The generic name for parliaments became the "legislature".

#### Legalism versus Reality

The legalism brewed by this development coloured people's conception of government as a whole. So Montesquieu, whom some people regard as the first modern political sociologist, unsystematic though he might have been, surprisingly saw government as but a mass of legal powers and functions. Thus when he formulated his justly celebrated theory of separation of powers he made of it a legalistic theory. There are three categories of governmental powers, he said. These are the power to make the law, the power to execute the law and the power to interpret the law; the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Separate these powers and vest them in different hands. These will then check one another, or make them do so, to the end that abuse of power will be prevented and liberty preserved. In this Montesquieu forgot a much older theory, the Greek - Roman theory of the mixed constitution, and the medieval version of it, the balanced constitution. According to this tradition government is not fundamentally a matter of balance of legal institutions and powers. Rather government is seen at bottom to be a play of social

forces, classes, estates and organized groups. But so complete was the victory of Montesquieu over the ancients and the mediavalists and so complete the victory of the English arms in America over George III that to this day the ordinary educated man believes the Montesquiean theory of separation of powers, especially as embodied in the American constitution, to be the alpha and the omega of constitutional wisdom. It has taken students of politics themselves nearly two-and-a-half centuries to recover from the constitutional legalism of Montesquieu and to return to the Politics of Aristotle, if in a much more sophisticated manner. I guess it will take others at least another century to catch up!

The point I am making is that the role prescribed by the 1979 constitution for parliament is flawed by its legalism. It is informed by neither political nor socio-economic considerations. It also misconceives the role of parliament under the cabinet system of government, as it does the sources of independence of the American Congress.

Under the cabinet system of government parliament has never been a law-making body of any consequence. Laws have always been made by the executive, but with the approval of parliament. The pre-amble to Acts of the English parliament is dead accurate: the monarch executive enacts with the advice and consent of parliament. In giving its consent parliament uses the occasion to air the views of the citizen on the policy embodied in the law. That is, even when it is supposed to be legislating parliament is really deliberating. When parliament in England asserted its authority over that of the King in the seventeenth century, it did so by ensuring that the King's ministers were responsible to it. When the ministers ceased to enjoy the confidence of parliament they were to be turned out. But when the parliamentary oligarchy was replaced by a wide electorate and political parties arose to organize this electorate, the power of making and unmaking governments was transferred into the hands of the electorate, leaving Parliament with its role as a deliberative assembly, indeed re-inforcing it. Since some such time as the middle of the last century, then, parliament in the cabinet system of government has merely been a platform on which the policies of government are debated, leaving the electorate to pronounce upon the record of the government at elections. This system still leaves the safety valve by which unsatisfactory Prime Ministers can be got rid of; his Senior colleagues or in extreme cases the Head of State simply forces him to resign. There are precedents galore both in Britain and Commonwealth countries to sustain this view. Those countries which followed the practice whereby parliament actively makes, and unmakes governments, like France and Italy

soon ceased to have cabinet systems of government or any governments at all. The criticism of Ghanaian parliaments that they failed to turn out governments is itself misconceived.

### Sources of Independence

Parliament has now been relieved by our constitution-makers of a function it was never realistically called upon to perform. It is now being called upon to assert its "true" independence, and the only precedent to support this call is the American Congress. Unfortunately for this call, it is not the law which is the source of the relative independence of the American Congress but American society. The sturdy independence of the puritans who migrated to America; the fiercely independent communities they set up; and the expanding opportunities of a vast continent - these have ensured a tradition of individual independence in Americans. The sheer size and diversity of the country that is America, and the long history of the original states as different colonies which later voluntarily abandoned their independence have combined with the availability of resources to make federalism a real political force and this, in its turn, has made of the Senate an institution capable of rivalling the presidency. The immense wealth of the United States which ensures that there are independent sources of political finance together with the other factors to ensure a relatively weak party system. These factors are much more important than the theory of separation of powers IN making Congress relatively more independent. This view is clearly borne out by the experience of South American republics whose enthusiastic imitations of the American system of government have generally collapsed like a pack of cards.

Here in Ghana it is difficult to see what social, economic and political basis can sustain an independent legislature such as will be able to stand up against a strong or even a weak presidency. The only viable political unit with a history of strong independence in this country is Ashanti; and it is instructive that it is the only one to have tasted the central government politically. There is no federalism here to throw up powerful governors and senators who can compete politically with the president. And, in any case, such is the size of this country and the paucity of its resources that it cannot sustain a strong federation nor provide independent sources of political finance.

Hence we have a relatively strong party system in which finance, policy and candidatures, the three bases of party discipline, are all centrally controlled. These are factors which nurtured the

parliamentary traditions associated with the cabinet system of government in this country. It is not likely that they will undergo any drastic change even in the long run.

It is important to stress the contribution made by the sheer wealth of the United States to the independence of Congress. For the factors making for independence are powerfully re-inforced by the enormous resources put at the disposal of Congress. To enable Congress to be a real watchdog on the executive, it has set up powerful committees. The power of these committees derives from the fact that they have the resources which enable them to perform their function properly. The resources include parallel bureaucracies, research facilities, ample space, personal aides especially for Senators, and funds. It is not for nothing that the library of Congress is one of the world's leading libraries and that each Senator may have as many as thirteen aides, all paid out of the public purse!

The 1979 Constitution has also duly set up committees to help Parliament discharge its function of checking the executive. It is now left to see where the resources to make a reality of their work will come from especially in our parlous economic state.

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Even if the individual MPs will not have the resources, the committees must have them in the form of research facilities, space, bureaucracies parallel to those of the Ministries they are supposed to watch and the funds to do the work. The cost of all this is simply mind-boggling.

### Executive Dominance

Even in the United States, with all the factors favouring congressional independence, the real limitations on the legislative power of Congress are impressive. Most of the important laws originate not from Congress but from the White House. Little wonder that in his classic study of the American Presidency Corwin refers to the President as "Legislative Leader", nor should it be wondered that there are loud complaints of an "imperial presidency". The White House has a veritable army of aid to keep a watch on its legislative proposals to Congress; the army ensures by a battery of high-pressure tactics that the proposals are passed. The president has a galaxy of political instruments which he uses to ensure that his will prevails in Congress, indeed to overcome the legal separation between Congress and the president. One formidable instrument is his wide powers of appointment which he uses to punish his political enemies and reward his friends. Similarly, he uses his power over a large number of economic programmes - small business and area development loans, defence contracts, and public works, etc. - to consolidate his power and influence in Congress. To be reminded that these measures go a long way towards ensuring that the legislature sustains the President in a country where there are numerous alternative sources of power is to be reminded that in Ghana, with its lack of such sources, it is vain to hope that parliament can seriously resist the President.

Put another way, I am arguing that the legal provisions of the present Constitution load the dice against the legislature politically. In the cabinet system the political checks against the Prime Minister are more real than those against an Executive President. In the cabinet system of government executive power is vested not in the Prime Minister but in the cabinet as a whole, and the latter is collectively responsible to the legislature for the use of this power. Though there have been protests against "prime-ministerial" government, it is still true that a Prime Minister who alienates his Senior Ministers will be forced out of office. It bears repetition that the purpose of Parliament in the mass electorate is not either to disrupt the government's policy by rejecting elements of it or to usurp the electorate's right of electing the government but of constantly presenting alternatives to the electorate for the day

of judgement. Among the instruments that have been fashioned to carry out this function, two are worth mentioning here. There is, first, the instrument of question time. Every sitting day of Parliament any member of Parliament can ask any Minister any question permitted by the Standing Orders about any aspect of the Minister's administration. The questions range from the Minister's own administrative acts to those of the most humble official in the smallest village of Ghana. There is no device better calculated to put civil servants on their toes than this. Students of parliamentary life in Ghana in the past know how effectively it has been used.

The other instrument worth mentioning is the office of Leader of the Opposition. The cabinet system works in such a way that leaders of the important parties are themselves important parliamentary figures, indeed leaders of their parties in Parliament. The leader of the largest party in opposition becomes the Leader of Opposition. It is his duty to keep a watching brief on the Prime Minister himself, and on the government as a whole. Thus, just as the Prime Minister leads his team, so does the Leader of Opposition; just as the government is organized, so is the opposition; and just as the Prime Minister focuses attention on himself, so does the Leader of the Opposition. Under the cabinet system opposition to the government is organized, coherent and purposeful. An alternative government is always available. The government is thus faced with an effective political check.

The position under an executive presidency is entirely different. Executive power is vested in one man. There is no question-time to hold the administration continuously in check. There is no office of Leader of Opposition. Since the President is not in Parliament there is no point in the leader of the largest party outside the government being there either, and outside parliament there is no official role he can play in the system. Similarly, since the Ministers are not in Parliament their opposite numbers outside the government see no point in being there either; indeed, there are no opposite numbers to Ministers in this system at all. Under such a system there can be no real meaningful debates in parliament since Ministers are not there to expound and defend their policies. The creeping habit of Ministers and even MPs calling press conferences to announce measures and issue criticisms, far from being an aberration, is built into the system we have adopted.

### Play Without A Theatre

The absence of important and ambitious party leaders from Parliament prevents it from performing one of its most notable "latent" functions.

Under the cabinet system the Parliament is the most important theatre of politics. It is there that reputations are made and unmade; in Parliament people of character and ability sooner or later distinguish themselves from the rest. The process is a continuous one, and by the time a leader of a party comes to be chosen, two or three people would have been thrown up by this almost Darwinian process of natural selection. This is what Laski called the "selective function" of the legislature. The legislature under the executive presidency, as now, cannot perform this function. Much of the motor that makes Parliament the live-wire of national politics evaporates, and neither exhortations nor legal allocation of power can fill the vacuum.

To sum up. Under the present constitution the president is allocated a lot of legal powers. Parliament is also allocated a lot of legal powers to check the President. There are however no social, economic and political underpinnings for the legal power of Parliament. These factors rather re-inforce the legal powers of the president. He alone, among party leaders, has a political platform: the others have virtually none. The legal arrangements make simple return to the old parliamentary traditions impossible, but it is equally impossible to fulfil the dream of parliamentary independence. We see the future but darkly,

## Africa

### IS AFRICA'S REFUGEE PROBLEM UNDERSTOOD? - I

By

Richard Greenfield

In November 1979, the Secretary-General of the United Nations dispatched, in some alarm, his deputy Secretary-General to visit North Eastern Africa - specifically Ethiopia, the Sudan, Somalia and Jibouti - and report on the refugee crisis in the region. This step emphasises that the stark realities of the African element in the "world refugee problem" may at last be beginning to be recognised at the official level. The true position is that by far the largest number of refugees in the world - nearly 50 percent, however the term is defined - are African, and the vast majority are not as might be expected on the frontiers of racism in the south, although there are many there, but in independent Africa itself. Clearly, such a situation is most serious.

### Who Are Refugees?

It is academically difficult to define exactly who qualifies as a 'refugee' - does he or she have to have crossed an international frontier, for example, and if so, how recently? Nevertheless, the highest estimates, which include refugees recognised and subsidized by the United Nations High Commission for refugees; refugees recognised but not in receipt of sustaining stipends; self-settled or 'invisible' refugees; displaced persons within national frontiers but taking refuge from famine or civil war, and those out of Africa in the Arabian countries and further afield - suggest that as many as 1 in 50 of Africa's population might qualify.

Meantime the world's liberal conscience still feasts only on the tragedy of the 'boat people' and, in the sad recent words of an American Bishop, "cannot seem to cope with more than one calamity at a time".

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The harsh reality was tactfully but succinctly summarized in New York recently by an African diplomat who commented as follows, after listening carefully to the U.N. High Commissioner's report to the 3rd Committee:

This world body has rightly mobilized resources to assist the surviving and more publicized boat people and the stricken thousands of Campuchia. No decent man or woman will do anything other than applaud the vigorous humanitarian actions which are currently being undertaken. But, Mr. Chairman, it is a sad reflection, perhaps as much on ourselves as on the sensation-seeking elements in the mass-media, that is held more 'dramatic' to die in a boat in a storm, than on foot in the deserts of Africa. It is however, just as tragic and final. Certain questions must be asked. Is Africa receiving a fair share of the assistance already available? And how can the overall effort best be expanded and improved?

It is tempting to speculate that the facility with which news reports from South-East Asia hum over wires and race afar by telex and satellites is still a function of the massive communications structure originally created to report the Vietnam war. A structure which, because of the conserva-

tion inherent in much of human nature everywhere, has continued to be sustained by its comfortable technicians long after one of the protagonists achieved victory and the other accepted a Peace Prize. It is possible, indeed probable, that this is a yet another case of the 'reluctant expatriate syndrom', i.e. the lingering on of some less than first rate functionaries, who have little or nothing to contribute to one specific developing world situation. Be that as it may - and if it is true it is quite destructive - when the question of fair share of organized amelioration of human tragedy is approached, a more scientific answer is at once possible and available.

#### Aid To Refugees

Surprisingly, even in this area, the media can sometimes prove quite unreliable. The December 1979 edition of *New African* asserts confidently that United Nations Aid to Africa's refugees is on the increase, but if the editors had done their homework, they would have referred to page 3 of U.N. document A/AC 96/570, from which the table below is extracted. After this, other articles in the paper such as that, for example, which suggests that refugees in the horn of Africa would all go home if they were not obstructed, become suspect.

	1978		1979		1980	
	Expenditures		Revised estimates		Projections	
	U.S. '000	%	\$ '000	%	\$ '000	%
Africa	56,336.7	38.7	68,501.7	31.8	50,322.7	21.9
Americas	6,520.8	4.5	7,293.4	3.4	6,513.3	2.8
Asia	48,788.6	33.5	109,092.1	50.6	127,853.1	55.5
Europe	19,201.1	13.2	8,530.0	4.0	6,658.0	2.9
Oceania	115.8	0.1	142.9	0.1	159.5	0.1
Education of Southern African Refugees in various countries	—	—	1,200.0	0.5	—	—
Headquarters programmes	12,731.2	8.8	16,064.8	7.5	16,040.8	7.0
Global and Regional projects	1,714.6	1.2	4,573.4	2.1	22,694.2	9.8
	145,408.8	100	215,398.3	100	230,241.6	100

(Quite apart from the fact that the curious co-incidence that the correspondent has the same name as the Information attache of the Embassy of Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia - who while he may or may not be objective is clearly not disinterested - is not revealed to New African's readers).

In summary, 3/5ths, 3/10th and now less than a twelfth is the share of the vote which goes to assuage Africa's need - hardly evidence of mounting concern! At this moment in time there are very probably more refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Sudan - and, (separately) in the Somali Democratic Republic, than in the whole of South-east Asia - where well over half of the available funds are to be spent. Africa is getting less than justice.

### What Is Africa Doing About The Problem?

That said, a vastly more important question is, what is Africa doing about the issue herself. Last May saw a conference on the situation of 'Refugees in Africa', at Arusha, Tanzania. The O.A.U. was one of the sponsors; the others included the E.C.A., U.N.H.C.R., the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Church and voluntary agencies etc. There were problems; Ethiopia asked that only refugees from white racist persecution be considered, but that was not acceptable to the recipients of her own refugees. She lost out too when she wanted all non-African relief agencies - Oxfam etc - to be excluded. She did better, attracting support from Equatorial Guinea and elsewhere, when she voted against a blanket ban on the bombing of refugee camps and objected to the use of the phrase - human rights; but again the last. It is however to the great credit of the OAU - critics please note - that Africa, despite the embarrassment which certain regimes fought to avoid, nevertheless emerged from the conference with almost certainly the most developed and humanitarian regulation for the treatment of refugees in the whole world. Reinforcement (repatriation without consent) is forbidden and the acceptance of political (not of course criminal) refugees from a sister African state is actually defined as a friendly act.

Africa has indeed done well in formulating her own approach to the problem of refugees. But yet another question has now to be asked. Do refugees themselves constitute the core of the problem - are they not really a symptom merely? And if so, are there not more serious issues to be faced?

A large proportion of Africa's refugees and displaced persons are to be found in north eastern Africa. Some examination therefore, of the back-

ground to their particular plight, as case studies, would seem in order. The remainder of this article will discuss one of the more acute problem-areas - the Republic of Djibouti.

### The Problem In Djibouti

Before its independence in 1977, the tiny desert republic of Djibouti was known as 'French Somaliland' and then 'the Territory of the Afars and Issas'. The Issas are Somali. The population, estimated in 1978 at about 300,000, was then already starting to swell, as groups of Afar from Ethiopia moved into the villages along the railway line which runs from the Bay of Tadjura on the Red Sea coast up to Addis Ababa in the highlands of Shewa, Ethiopia. There were 3,000 in July 1977, but by the end of 1978 their number was reported as something over 12,000. In mid-1979, it had swelled to nearly 18,000 and arrivals continue at the rate of 200 or more a month, except that last year, significantly larger numbers arrived after the machine-gunning of political prisoners - mainly Oromo - in Dira-Dawa on last and 2nd May, 1979 an event which, Western Germany apart, attracted little attention in the wider world. As at 7 January, 1980, more than ten per cent of Djibouti's population are refugees. Most are Somali, Afar, and Oromo (sometimes also called 'Galla' by the Shewans and world anthropologists and 'Abbo' by the Somalis) but they include a number of Ethiopian Amhara who fear persecution because of former membership or suspected membership of banned political groupings, such as EDU, EPRP or ME'ISONE, and a smaller group of deserters from the Ethiopian army and the People's Militia.

The Djibouti authorities tend to regard the refugees as a security risk as well as a responsibility. They have endeavoured to group them into two village camps located near Dikhil and Ali Sabieh, close to the border with Ethiopia. The UNHCR and the World Food Programme assist the Djibouti Government by the provision of food and water and the organisation of health facilities. Foreign donors particularly the Arab States and USAID have also helped. Mental-physical health is a serious problem. A reception point has been set up on the border where the railway crosses the frontier. Today, the refugees, who arrive on foot, are fed and usually vaccinated against smallpox before transfer to the camps.

### Life In Refugee Camps

In each camp small quantities of rice, sugar, cooking oil and millet are distributed fairly regularly. Almost inevitably there have been allegations both of corruption and ethnic imbalance in

the composition of the refugee committees, leading to supposed injustices in the distribution of these rations. It is an important point, however, that food as well as water has to be provided for the refugees although the Republic of Jibouti has virtually no domestic food production of its own. Its harsh, arid climate and the inhospitable terrain - lava strewn desert and scrub - do not permit the cultivation of crops. There is no alternative employment for refugees, except political instability in the wider region has created a major unemployment problem. Nor is there known oil; the railway and the port have heretofore been the main sources of livelihood.

In addition to approximately 7,000 refugees in each of the camps (September 1979), there are some 4,000 urban refugees in the 'Quartier' shanty slum-suburbs of Jibouti city and theirs is a truly piteous plight. United Nations authorities, obviously, can take no steps that might embarrass any host government and there were poor and hungry enough in Jibouti well before the arrival of refugees from Ethiopia. The former naturally resent any apparent priority being given to foreigners and for this reason very little is done for the refugees. There are no stipends and a plan for food distribution centres has had to be shelved. There have been cases where refugees have died of malnutrition and sunstroke on the streets and begging and rubbish-rummaging are rife. A significant proportion of the refugees, it should be remembered, come from the cool highlands of the Oromo country and are poorly adjusted to the sun-baked coastlands of the Red Sea. Moreover, unlike the Afar and Somali, it is these unfortunates who have few local 'kith and kin', apart from a tiny and overstrained Oromo community in Jibouti city. More than 1,000 of the urban Oromo refugees were formerly attending secondary schools and a few were university undergraduates. Their education had been in the English language but there are no opportunities for continuation in Jibouti, where in any case French is the medium of instruction. There is not even available reading matter.

#### Plethora Of Problems

Jibouti presents a microcosm of problems occurring elsewhere, particularly those of 'urban' refugees. In the city, tensions have developed and the police and others have even been accused of using demoralised and desperate refugees as forced casual labour. Such urban refugees as are able to come forward are registered by UNHCR, but with no stipends available, there is little point in this. A clinic has been opened recently but medical supplies are also inadequate. Nor are the drugs and medicines procured always suitable. An Ethiopian Re-

fugee Committee which established an office two years ago is in contact with UNHCR and has issued a number of pathetic appeals, to date to little avail. The most recent was on 30th October 1979, after the Ethiopian Minister of the Interior, accompanied by the administrators of provinces bordering the Republic as well as senior officials from the Ethiopian Transport, Trade and Foreign Ministries, had begun a week of negotiations in Jibouti. One result of these has been increased pressure on the refugees to agree to an 'amnesty' and to repatriation, (supposedly voluntary in accordance with the Arusha accord).

The committee of the thoroughly frightened and demoralised refugee community, while making it clear "we are not against returning to our beloved country. Indeed it is our sole aim....." nevertheless refuse the offer on the grounds that the conditions which caused them to flee, "suppression of human democratic rights, mass arrest and genocide.....", still appertain. A disturbing aspect of their long statement is a clear loss of confidence in "some individuals of the UNHCR branch office in Jibouti", although it does admit that "the UNHCR has tried to solve our problems regarding food, shelter, health care, scholarships etc which we appreciate". It adds, "these problems still exist...." In fairness, the U.N. staff are over worked - and are even more so in the Sudan and Somalia which are the subject of the second part of this article. Could it be that the amenities of the 'settler city' of Nairobi, and its altitude of 5,000 feet above sea level and resultant climate explain not that it has stipends and Afar fewer refugees, but in proportion and absolutely for more U.N. Officials. Surely not!

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# Social

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN GHANA AND WORLD POPULATION PLAN OF ACTION II

By

S. K. Gaisie

One of the major recommendations of the Ghana Population Policy is that "the government will adopt policies and establish programmes to guide and regulate the flow of internal migration, influence spatial distribution in the interest of development progress". Although there is a considerable movement of the population of Ghana as revealed by population census data on place of birth statistics, no population policy has been adopted by any Government of Ghana for the purpose of regulating the internal migratory movements. All the existing Development Plans have been silent on this important issue.

### Internal Migrations

✓ Although it is important to note that "measures should be avoided which infringe the right of freedom of movement and residence within the border of each state as enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments" the World Population Plan of Action recommended that "A major approach to a more national distribution of the population is that of planned and more equitable regional development, particularly in the advancement of regions which are less favoured or developed by comparison with the rest of the country".

✓ The WPPA also notes that "Population distribution patterns should not be restricted to a choice between metropolitan and rural life: efforts should be made to establish and strengthen networks of small medium size cities to relieve the pressure on the large towns, while still offering an alternative to rural living. Countries are therefore advised to embark on "intensive programmes of economic and social development..... in the rural areas through balanced agricultural development which will provide increased income to the agricultural population; permit an effective expansion of social services and include measures to protect the environment and conserve and increase agricultural resources". Creation of job opportunities in the rural areas through industrial public works programmes should be given a high priority because "it is not sufficient to consider how to bring the people to existing economic and social activities; it is also important to bring those

activities to the people"

Thus, "Internal migration policies should include the provision of information to the rural population concerning economic and social conditions in the urban areas, including information on the availability of employment opportunities". Hence the need to integrate population data in social and economic development programmes.

### International Migration and Population Policy

The 1960 census showed that there were 827, 000 persons of foreign-origin in Ghana. Thus for every one foreign born immigrant in 1948 there were nearly five in 1960. Ghana was therefore described as "a country of immigration". Such migration was made up mostly of Africans from the neighbouring West African countries, notably Togo, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Upper Volta, Benin and Liberia. The liberal attitude towards immigration during the colonial period was, to a large extent, maintained during the post-independence period when the Convention People's Party Government was in power. Persons of African descent were permitted to enter the country without any difficulty and the years following the political independence (i.e. from 1957 to 1961/63) have been described as "the period of accelerated immigration" into the country. The first attempt made by the country to enact firm immigration laws was contained in the provisions of the Aliens Act 1963 (Act 160). The act was meant to consolidate, with modifications, enactments relating to the immigration, residence, employment and deportation of aliens. The act sought, inter alia, that every alien should possess the necessary legal documents, such as a passport, work permit etc. which legally permit him or her to take up residence in the country. In 1965, Section 2 of the Act was amended under a government order entitled Aliens (Amendment) Act 1965 (Act 262). The Amendment Act states that "a person other than a citizen of Ghana shall not enter Ghana except by one of the recognized or normal places of entry into Ghana". It has been noted that the new immigration laws were not strictly enforced and that immigration into the country continued along unauthorized routes.

In 1965, the then President of the Republic of Ghana established an inter-departmental Advisory Committee headed by the Government Chief Statistician to consider a population policy for Ghana. The committee recommended among other things that ".....in consonance with Ghana's policy of friendship with all countries, and especially in the interest of African Unity it would be undesirable for the government to take any direct steps to stop immigration of Africans

nto the country. It was therefore, decided that the government should enforce regulations already in force on immigration .....” This recommendation had still not been implemented by the time Nkrumah’s regime was toppled (i.e. 24th February 1966). The military regime (i.e. National Liberation Council) passed a number of decrees relating to various aspects of immigration, particularly those sectors of the economy where immigrants were not allowed to operate. The order contained in the **Aliens Act 1963 (Amendment) (Decree, 1968)** prohibited aliens from entering into or remaining in any of the diamond areas of the country. Other decrees prohibited aliens from operating in certain economic sectors (National Liberation Council Decrees (NLC.D.) 323). The immigrant quota review was another measure which the military government instituted to regulate the immigration of foreign workers. The review sought to restrict the inflow of expatriate workers into business concerns to those with scarce skills which could not be obtained from local sources.

The population policy in respect of control of immigration is spelt out in paragraphs 5.28 and 5.29 of the Policy document entitled **Population Planning for National Progress and Prosperity: Ghana Population Policy**, March 1969. It stated, among other things, that “uncontrolled immigration of labour, especially of the unskilled type, reduces employment opportunities for citizens. It was intended that immigration will be used primarily as a means of obtaining needed skills and stimulating social and economic development. The Government had introduced measures to ensure that would-be immigrants had work permits before entering Ghana so that services that could adequately be performed by Ghanaians were reserved exclusively for Ghanaians. Additional measures under consideration included procedures for strictly enforcing the work permit scheme recently introduced, a new system of alien registration and periodic reporting.....”

Eight months later (i.e. November 18th, 1969) the Progress Party government which took over the administration of the affairs of this country from the NLC in August, 1969 published an **Aliens Compliance Order** in the Government Gazette. The provisions of this Order stated that all aliens resident in Ghana who did not possess the necessary immigration papers as required by the **Aliens Act (160) 1963** and the **Aliens (Amendment) Act 1965** should obtain them within a period of two weeks from the date of publication of the Order, failure to do so necessitating their deportation from the country. Majority of the aliens left and the 1970 census showed that the proportion of the immigrant

population decreased from 12.3 per cent in 1960 to 6.6 per cent in 1970. It is, however, not possible to prepare any estimate of the number of immigrants who returned to the country after the overthrow of Busia’s regime, and neither the number of Ghanaians who have been leaving the country during the past three to four years for social and economic reasons. The exodus of skilled Ghanaians to the outside world must be given serious thought by the Government of the Third Republic.

### Fertility and Population Policy

✓ In the preface to the “Population Planning for National Progress and Prosperity: Ghana Population Policy”, the then Commissioner for Economic Affairs stated among other things that “Following the publication of this policy paper, the Government will implement appropriate action programmes which will enable us ultimately to **bring down the rate of population growth to manageable limit**”. It is also explicitly stated in the **Policy Document** that Ghana’s population policy and programme will be developed as “..... organic parts of social and economic planning and development activity.....and as integral parts of efforts toward social and economic development, improvement of health and nutrition, elevation of quality and extension of the scope of education, wider employment opportunities, and better development and use of human resources in the interest of a more abundant life”

Thus, Ghana’s population policy is geared generally towards a reduction of fertility in order to attain tolerable rates of population growth which will stimulate rapid social and economic development. In addition to economic concerns, quality of life, health of mothers and children, and the general well-being of the population have been emphasized as some of the basic reasons for slowing down the rapid growth of the population through family planning. Among a large number of questions which spring to mind are a few which are pertinent to the issue under discussion: To what extent does the concept of family planning fit in with national development strategies? Can family planning solve the population problem without any drastic reorganization of the existing social, political and economic systems?

As indicated above, the major aim of the Policy is to reduce fertility through family planning by providing “information, advice and assistance for couples wishing to space or limit their reproduction”. It also stated categorically that family planning programme in Ghana will be ‘educational and persuasive; and not coercive’. The World Popula-

tion Plan of Action also recommends that all countries "Respect and ensure, regardless of their overall demographic goals the right of persons to determine; in a free, informed and responsible manner, the number and spacing of their children"

✓ The population problem has, however, led in many instances to an attempt to reduce birth rates without improving social and economic conditions. It is assumed that slower rate of population growth will automatically lead to rapid increase in per capita income and make more goods and other basic necessities of life available for the needs of the people. Thus, population limitation will contribute to the improvement of human welfare. Is there any institutional framework to ensure this? Per capita income has increased over the past three decades, but more and more people suffer from deprivation. Concern for the population problem in Ghana should therefore lead to re-examination of economic and social systems. Attempts to reduce growth rates may be undergirded by efforts to institute a more just and egalitarian social and economic framework since improvement in the standard of living of the common man may be essential for an effective population policy. Thus, for a common man to become acutely aware of the population problem he must participate actively in the social, economic and political activities of the country.

The above is consistent with the recommendations of the WPPA which states: "Governments which have family planning programmes are invited to consider integrating and coordinating those services with health and other services designed to raise the quality of family life, including family allowances and maternity benefits and consider including family planning services in their official health and social insurance systems....." and "countries wishing to affect fertility levels give priority to implementing development programmes and educational and health strategies which, while contributing to economic growth and higher standards of living, have a decisive impact upon demographic trends, including fertility. International cooperation is called for to give priority to assisting such national efforts in order that these programmes and strategies be carried into effect"

The Population Policy currently being implemented by Ghana, as noted above, has tended to be exclusively limited to family planning and by their very nature, family planning programmes have not been adequate for controlling population growth in many developing countries. The available evidence shows that in every country where goods and services have been distributed to reach a large proportion of the population, there has been

significant declines in the national birth rates. On the other hand, in almost all the developing countries where only a few enjoy the benefits of economic growth, the birth rates have remained high regardless of the existence of family planning programmes. Venezuela and Mexico are examples of situations where birth rates have remained constant in the face of unjust distribution of benefits accruing from rapid economic development. It has been observed that relatively more equitable distribution of income in Taiwan than in Philippines has contributed in no small way to significant decline in fertility in the former country, as compared with that of the latter country. Similar comparisons "can also be made between Barbados, Argentina, South Korea, Singapore, Uruguay, Cuba, Costa Rica or China on one hand, and Venezuela, Mexico and Brazil and many other developing countries on the other". There is, therefore, the need for social, economic and political institutions based on new social values; values which will put man over and above material things and stress the importance of quality of life if population growth rates were to be harnessed.

Although, Ghana's Population Policy document states that "A National Population Policy and Programmes are to be developed as an organic part of social and economic planning and development activity", there is little evidence to date that the National Family Planning Programme has been adequately integrated with socio-economic development. It is perhaps important to mention at this juncture that in the national Five-Year Development Plan for the period 1975/76 - 1979/80, it was only the Ministry of Health which indicated its intention to cooperate and coordinate its activities with the activities of the Ghana National Family Planning Programme and that of the other voluntary agencies: "In order to reduce maternal and child morbidity, maximum emphasis will be placed on the development of Maternal and Child Health Services, Family Planning and Nutrition". The Ministry also emphasized that it would devote maximum attention to the "Family Planning services as a means of promoting maternal health and well-being. Family Planning clinics and services will be integrated into all Ministry of Health services. All health workers will, therefore, be trained in Family Planning methods..... Ministry of Health will cooperate with the National Family Planning Programme and will actively collaborate with and encourage voluntary agencies working in the fields of Maternal and child Health and Family Planning to expand their services". On the other hand, the chapter on "Manpower and Employment" does not make any mention or any attempt to integrate family planning activities into the

manpower development strategies although one of the functions of the Ghana Manpower Board is to "review from time to time the policy of the Government on population and to co-ordinate the population activities in the country generally". But no attempt was made to integrate family planning into the whole gamut of social and economic development strategies as enunciated in the defunct Five-Year Development Plan.

### Population and Development: New Strategies

For many years development has been concerned exclusively with maximizing aggregate rates of GNP or per capita GNP growth. Development was, therefore, synonymous with GNP growth and the evaluations of comparative development performance were often based on simple ranking of annual GNP growth rates. Economic growth based on this concept of development has not been benefitting the needy, and with the size of the marginalized groups increasing, the poverty gap is being widened and inequality and dehumanization are on the increase and the poor are finding it more and more difficult each day to improve their standard of living.

It is high time, therefore, that we re-examine the fundamental nature of the economic objectives of Ghana. The economies of most of the developing countries are patterned on those of the rich nations. Ul-Haq suggests that the new development strategy must reject the thesis that poverty can be attacked indirectly through the benefits of an economic growth rates filtering down to the masses. It must be based on the premise that poverty must be attacked directly.

During the past decade, therefore, the concept of development has been broadened to encompass more than just the material and financial side of peoples' lives - touching upon their sense of self-esteem, dignity and freedom as well as their economic social well-being. Development must, therefore, be a multidimensional process often involving - in addition to basic improvement in incomes and outputs - radical changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures and in some instances, in popular attitudes, custom and beliefs. The concept of development as a structural change is the emerging new orientation which emphasises social well-being.

The problems posed by the rapid expansion of the Ghanaian population must be examined within the socio-political context. The problems arising from rural-urban migration, for example, may be tackled by formulating and implementing agricultural and rural development policies which will engender a better development strategy than those

aimed at creating more urban jobs and thereby accelerating rural-urban migration. Secondly, an integration of population variables into development programmes may be a much more effective way of providing solutions to problems stemming from high population growth rates. For instance, introduction of more labour-intensive and more diversified farming may have different direct and indirect effects on demographic changes. Although such a programme is intended to reduce unemployment, and also to slow down rural-urban migration flows, the effects on mortality (through better nutrition) and geographical distribution should be considered in terms of the desired population policy objectives. If reduction of high rate of population growth and improvement in maternal and child health through family planning are facets of a population policy objectives, then there is the need to consider the extent to which improvement brought about by different kinds of employment-oriented development strategies will eventually affect fertility attitudes and decision through income change and income distribution, agricultural innovation etc. Higher incomes and levels of living may reduce infant and child mortality and this may initially accelerate population growth. It is, therefore, equally important to consider the effects of the availability of employment opportunities on fertility without direct public intervention in social and political systems. Thus, the integration of employment and population policies is of paramount importance and national plans should try as much as possible to evolve highly integrated development strategies.

Thirdly, the existing social and economic institutions must be examined in the light of the integrated approach to development strategy. Finally, evidence abounds that fertility tends to decline as consequence of substantial change in the living conditions of the bulk of the rural population in societies which have formulated and implemented policies aimed at attacking causes of poverty, inequality and unemployment. We must also bear in mind that improvements in living conditions including the entire environment of the rural population will have a great impact on demographic parameters. And there is, therefore, the need to research into the relationships between rural development, improved living conditions and demographic behaviour which together constitute the core of development problems in Ghana.

### The Need For Integrated Research

There is also a need for research on a vast range of subjects in order to unearth the nature of inter-relationships between population and development.

An integrated research effort geared towards the study of problems facing Ghanaian rural areas and urban slums is very essential for a more effective interpretation of the demographic changes by linking them with relevant social, economic and psychological variables. Invention of "barefoot" agricultural technologies and manufacture of a whole range of agricultural inputs from local raw materials are some of the research areas which should attract the attention of agricultural experts. Above all, there is a great need of co-operation between scientists (including social scientists) working in the various fields in an attempt to uplift majority of Ghanaians from abject poverty. An introduction of population education content into the existing curricula of schools, colleges and universities will go a long way in providing a firm basis for building a cadre of researchers who will be better equipped to undertake the analysis of the inter-relationships between population and development. Furthermore, there is the need to educate people about cultural norms and socio-economic structures.

Finally, the World Population Plan of Action provides a comprehensive socio-economic and political framework for a formulation and implementation of viable development programmes, including research into poverty; a dehumanizing phenomenon plaguing a vast majority of Ghanaians.

(Concluded)

*For example, Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation envisages that total coverage of water could be increased from 38 per cent to 50 per cent during the plan period (i.e. 1957-1980). Thus, about 5.3 million Ghanaians will be without potable water by 1980.*

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## Notebook

### CONSTITUTIONAL CLASH OVER VOTERS' REGISTER?

As a result of persistent calls from the public (including the Legon Observer), the Electoral Commissioner recently announced that a new voters' register was to be prepared. Since that announcement, various opinions have been expressed as to the timing of the exercise, and the necessity or otherwise of plunging the country into the expense of re-registration. Political Parties such as the PFP, ACP and the Third Force have openly expressed their views for or against the idea. The ruling PNP had been silent on the issue until Sunday 17th February, when at a rally at Cape Coast, the President intimated, in a rather unusually strongly worded statement, that if the cost for the re-registration was not reflected in the Government's recent budget proposals currently before Parliament, then the registration exercise cannot come on. The President had some pretty harsh words for the Electoral Commissioner, words which made one feel that all was not well between the two persons. We are also reliably informed that one other reason that has made the Government take rather unkindly to the Electoral Commissioner's announcement was that as a result of an offer from the F.A.O. to conduct an Agricultural census in the country, the Government has indicated that it would rather prefer that census to be combined into a general census, out of which a new voters' register, and the necessary agricultural census data could be extracted. This would cut down costs, and also enable Government finance the whole exercise from other sources.

The apparent differences of opinion which have now surfaced raise several pertinent questions, some of which touch even on the spirit of the Constitution. The Constitution clearly makes the Electoral Commission and other institutions such as the Judiciary, independent. But how far can these institutions be independent of the Government in financial matters? The Constitution clearly states that all budgetary allocations and expenditure from the consolidated fund have to be approved by Parliament.

We believe everybody recognises the need for a new voters' register because the present one is totally bogus and fraudulent. But it must also be admitted that a Government that will have to account for its annual expenditure, can ill afford going into expenditure running into millions, which has not been previously budgeted for.

The apparent clash of interest that is likely to arise between the executive and the Electoral Commissioner raises some fundamental issues that need to be thrashed out as quickly as possible if we are to avoid a constitutional crisis. We believe in the independence of the various organs of state as enshrined in the Constitution. But we also believe that independence does not necessarily mean total lack of consultation and cooperation. The crisis that is about to emerge seems to indicate the possibility that the Electoral Commissioner did not consult the Government to clear the cost-element of the registration exercise before his announcement. If this was so, then, we feel he has erred. On the other hand, we also believe that if indeed the executive intended to conduct the registration and national and agricultural census as one single exercise, then, the Electoral Commissioner deserves to have been taken into confidence, or briefed immediately after his first announcement which demanded a mere revision of the register to cover 18 year-olds. If this was not done, then we submit that the Executive was also at fault.

We wish to submit that independence of action should not be misconstrued as refusal to consult and exchange views before decisions that do not fall into spheres of competence of certain specified officials are taken. We implore the two bodies to resolve these differences for it appears the President and the Electoral Commissioner are embarking on a collision course.

#### RESIGNATION FROM PARLIAMENT

It is the right of every public servant to resign from the office he holds including the office of an MP. We hold, however, that the office of an MP is of such an august nature that MPs have a clear duty to treat it with great respect. The office is a leadership one, and its role is crucial to the present exercise of lifting the country from the morass of economic dislocation and social decay into which it has sunk.

Not so long ago it was announced that Dr. Basa Quan a'i, the ACP MP for Cape Coast, had resigned. No reason was given for the resignation at least in public. Later it turned out that Dr. Quansah had surfaced in Kenya as the director of an international educational set-up.

The behaviour of Dr. Quansah must be deplored for two reasons. First, at a time like this one, when a considerable number of professional people in the public service are scrambling out of the country, it is a great pity that an honourable Member of Parliament should encourage such a trend by himself joining the scramble. Secondly, Parliament

has been in session for less than six months and can hardly be said to have found its feet in our new political set-up. One would have thought a citizen who solemnly puts himself forward for the august position of an MP would, when elected, treat the position with some respect. To have resigned the position in less than six months without the courtesy of telling either the House, his constituents or the nation at large why he was resigning is an act which deserves condemnation.

## Letters

### Mind Your Language

SIR - There is an Akan proverb which says, Opanyin due mante, mante," meaning, the elderly person refuses to reply to uncomplimentary comments passed about him. I sincerely recommend this proverb to Dr. Limann.

For, if he says he is going to reply to what Ghanaians say about him, like Kutu Acheampong did, then he is going to forget himself and use words indiscriminately, like he did at Cape Coast. That is impolitic.

Dr. Limann, a control over emotions is very important to leaders. You were a diplomat for many years so I don't think you lack a judicious use of language, do you?

Mind your language, please.

Akufo Hall  
Legon

Kwesi Fori

### The Vigilante Jazz

SIR - The 'holy' vigilante idea of Dr. Limann must be closely examined.

The reality of the situation is that the goods are just not available and that is the root cause of trade malpractices.

Presently the so-called vigilante committee members have turned out to be questionable characters from the PNP camp. The harassment of people alleged to be indulging in trade malpractices is uncalled for. Two vigilante men have so far been jailed and one has been found dead. This should sound enough warning to Dr. Limann that the boys have deserted the path of righteousness.

Take the case of the vigilante members from Dansoman, Sahara, in the Greater Accra Region who trekked to Larteh -Akuapem in the Eastern Region, for 'vigilante' purposes. Have they finished 'vigilanting' about the numerous trade ills in Accra? If they think Accra is okay that's why they travel to Larteh and elsewhere, then they are mistaken. Let them go to Orion Cinema. There are boys as rough as the vigilante men selling a stick of cigarette at 60 pesewas.

Look, the vigilante boys can serve the community better: the sky-high refuse dumps in Accra are crying for help. Let them go and help the Accra City Council men to clear them. How about that?

His Excellency, President Limann, if you want your boys to help you, sit them down and give them the boundaries within which they can operate, and the rules and regulations they should follow. They cannot hide behind 'vigilantism' and harass villagers and political opponents.

School of Journalism and Communication  
Legon. Kwasi Ofori-Mante

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#### Mumbo - Jumbo

SIR - Dr. Agovi says in his comment on Prof. Pobee's letter ("The Retired Young Officer") that it is preferable to be actively engaged in fashioning society (making history) than to be "wise" after the event. What does Pobee say to that?

All we have in his "reply" to Agovi are some antediluvian noises about some supposedly passionless animal he calls an intellectual.

Faculty of Law  
Legon. F. S. Tsikata

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#### Which Way Ghana?

Vol. XII No. 2, 1-14 February 1980

SIR - In The Legon Observer, a Special Correspondent of yours presented to the Ghanaian public and the world at large something that passed for an analytical piece. Somewhere in that piece, and just on the spur of the moment, he shouted saying that the springing-up of organizations like the June 4 Movement, the Movement on National Affairs

and the dynamic People's Revolutionary League of Ghana, is "alarming" and, further, that some of these organizations had openly called for the overthrow of the government.

One wonders whether the Special Correspondent has any analytical understanding, which would have enabled him understand press statements issued by these organizations, especially the People's Revolutionary League of Ghana which frequently issues such statements; and, at the level of that understanding, he would have seen that none of such statements ever called for the overthrow of the government which would have amounted to sedition.

One also wonders whether that Special Correspondent has any sense of democracy which would have enabled him to see that just as it is found appropriate that a group of top professionals came out with a Legon Society on National Affairs after the 1966 coup d'etat to fight for certain ideals generated by that coup, so is it appropriate that the long suffering working people of Ghana should also come out with an organization on national affairs - the Movement on National Affairs - to fight for certain other ideals generated by the June 4 positive coup d'etat, which ideals are pursued within the prevailing legal system. What is "alarming" about people organizing themselves to pursue their interests as guaranteed by the Constitution?

The Special Correspondent's article, dwelt on a very poor narration of past events - run through with spurious value judgements - whilst making no attempt to connect such narrative with the solution of any immediate practical problem. A sort of 'what went wrong' piece.

Sir, we of the People's Revolutionary League of Ghana, which is an affiliate organization of the Movement on National Affairs, are very anxious to read serious and helpful articles with an orientation towards fighting for the realization and defence of the ideals of the progressive provisions of the Third Republican Constitution. We hate 'what went wrong' articles which do not attempt helping resolve any immediate and practical problem. This is our position.

Chairman,  
George Quaynor-Mettle  
Press and Information Committee  
of the People's Revolutionary  
League of Ghana.  
P. O. Box 791 Mamprobi,  
Accra.

### Security Problems

SIR - On Wednesday 13th February 1980, Flight Lt. J. J. Rawlings, Chairman of the erstwhile AFRC issued a Press statement in which among other things, he drew attention to the phenomenon of anonymous pamphlets now in circulation throughout the country, and distributed largely through the post. The message of these faceless pamphleteers, he rightly pointed out, threatened the unity of this country by preaching hate and tribal politics in the Ghana Armed Forces. He went further and specifically blamed the Military Intelligence and the other state security agencies for this state of affairs. In sum, Flight Lt. J. J. Rawlings raised a very serious political issue, namely the looming disintegration of this country, and the possible manipulation of the whole security apparatus of the Republic of Ghana in this exercise of disintegration.

I had expected, in addition to the usual dosage of official denials of such accusations, that the State Security agencies would assure the people of Ghana that they were in control of their traditional role to the Republic, and that everything was being done within their power to trace the sources of these pamphlets, as well as surface their anonymous writers. Instead, on 15th February 1980 one Captain Victor Ansaah, Acting Director of the Public Relations Directorate of the Ghana Armed Forces called a press conference and, according to *Daily Graphic* of 16th February 1980, told the nation that four students of the University of Ghana, Legon, and a member of the Assets Disposal Committee were being held by the Military authorities for allegedly distributing leaflets in a restricted area. Significantly, the five people were caught in person while distributing the leaflets in broad day light. Moreover, Captain Ansaah disclosed that the pamphlets were issued by the "Press and Information Committee" of the Revolutionary League of Ghana, an organisation which the Captain admitted, had been lawfully registered to operate in the country since January 1980. The message of the pamphlet itself was basically to call on our Armed Forces to reject 'tribal politics' in their ranks. In the face of all these facts, Captain Ansaah confidently proclaimed to the people of Ghana: "It is therefore wrong for the Chairman of the erstwhile AFRC, Flight Lt. J. J. Rawlings, to blame the security agencies for misinforming the government"!

Shortly after the first round of the recent Presidential elections in June 1979, there were unconfirmed reports of moves in high political circles to create a Government of national unity consisting of all the major political parties. Part of the reason

for this was the genuine claim that the country faced grave security problems. Of equal weight then was the general belief that the country also faces serious economic problems that could not be solved by one political party or administration. Fortunately, the P.N.P. refused to budge, or were determined not to be 'tricked out' of the victory they could see or sense just around the corner. However, these suspicions of state insecurity persisted, and were brought to a head when Dr. Ekow Daniels, Minister of Internal Affairs, in a radio and T.V. broadcast, stunned the country with the sensational revelation connected with the Ussher Fort jail break episode. Moreover, as a member of the UNC, I am in a position to know that considerations of national security and the state of the economy, considerably influenced the Party's decision to enter into the present alliance with the P.N.P.

It is my considered view that this country has wasted by far too much energy, money, and time on the so-called "security problems" of the post-Rawlings and AFRC era. It has led to all kinds of silly political alliances, the precipitate retirement of people of military merit, and the misuse of state machinery to misinform, and inflict half-truths and lies on the people of Ghana. I thank God that I am in a position to see through these events. I am not worried about their effect on my contemporaries because I can count on the intelligence of the average Ghanaian - although, I must admit that there are people who are well-placed to know better, but who have refused to give this country the benefit of their disinterested honesty. However, I am rather disturbed about the future, about Ghanaians, whose only evidence of events of our time, will perhaps be the cold distortions that are daily recorded in our print media. It is in the name of these people that I call on my countrymen to reject once and for all, the systematic campaign of lies and falsehood, that are now being perpetrated in the name of the civilian experiment. If this state of affairs is encouraged, we shall be courting instability and diverting our attention from our primary goal of economic development. For those of us who are not directly in control of any state machinery of information or have no influence beyond the walls of our offices and classrooms, let us reflect on what a neighbour recently told me: "the period of reigning over people is over. These are times of service. But who willingly goes to another and begs to serve him?"

Finally, what this country needs, I believe, is a new vision of political leadership. A vision of leadership that is positive and confident especially in these distressing times of economic deprivation

and lack of political consensus. A positive vision of leadership which would provide us with a sense of pride and direction, and combine action with positive utterances in its bid to mobilise the people for national development. Let us stop behaving as though we have no overriding aim, no overriding purpose.

Institute of African Studies,  
University of Ghana,  
Legon.

James Kofi Agovi

## Miscellaneous

### TRAVELLING IN GHANA

By

K. Ako-Nnubeng

No matter, what setbacks I went through on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 10 to 12 September, 1979, these days will forever be remembered by me for the experiences I underwent in sharp contrast to the easy monotonous life I had hitherto led. I was up at cock-crow on Monday 10 September, shaving, bathing and dressing in order not to miss the six o'clock transport bus, and even though my destination was Nsawam-Adoagyiri - I bought the full ticket to Accra. This procedure is regarded safe, as many a time, there is not enough room even for passengers travelling to Accra. Thus, those who wait to go to intermediate stations like Nkawkaw, Anyinam, Kibi or Nsawam, are often told, at the last moment, to seek other means of transport.

The Monday bus left Juaso at 6.35 a.m. and by 7 a.m. was at Nkawkaw; by 8 o'clock it had reached Kibi, and at 8.40 a.m. I had actually alighted at Adoagyiri. I walked slowly, to the Orthopaedic Training Centre, and got there at 9.15 a.m. I had gone there by appointment and so I was readily attended to.

While the work of repairs to my artificial limb was in progress, I read some old copies of the Readers Digest that were lying about, and passed the time pleasantly with an article in the 1978 September issue entitled "Travels with Stevenson". The workman really disturbed my reading when he announced he had completed the job. At 11.30 a.m. I left, the Centre.

The journey to the Railway Station to catch the "Sleeper" was tedious, but I have long trained myself not to accept things that can be done by others as impossible, and so I set out gallantly knowing full well that the question of getting a taxi was completely out, in these days of petrol scarcity. I got to the Nsawam Railway Station by 1.30 p.m. which was alright considering my slow walking rate. I learnt from the Station staff that the "Sleeper" had not yet passed to Accra though its scheduled time of arrival from Kumasi is 6 a.m. As a Ghanaian who has been told time and again to tighten his belt in anticipation of better times, I am quite used to being inconvenienced. We have also been told that we have the right to manage or mismanage our affairs, and we appear to have chosen the latter course these last twenty years. Musing thus, I sat in an inconsequential corner and brooded secretly over my fate and that of millions of other Ghanaians. Unfortunately, my musings were not very pleasant because I had seen good and disciplined management of the Railways during by-gone days.

I asked the Station Master to book a place for me on the Sleeping Car, but he explained that there was no communication with Accra, and here again I reminded myself that we had every right as a sovereign state to mismanage our own affairs which we were actively doing. Thus I had no option but wait patiently for the "Sleeper" and go with it to Accra, to do the booking there. The "Sleeper" did turn up at last at 9.30 p.m. and though I bought a first-class ticket to Accra, there was no vacant seat until some passengers alighted at Kotoku. Accra was at long last reached at 11.30 p.m.

At that late hour of the night, the scuffle that ensued between the alighting passengers on one hand, and those about to board it on the other, is an unforgettable scene. Like Mr. Pickwick, I was surrounded on all sides by a sea of angry faces; I was engaged in a free fight in order to salvage my luggage, receiving severe knocks from everywhere, and was at last pushed headlong on to the platform. Hurriedly, I went to the Control Office to book a berth on the same sleeper which would be returning at a time nobody knew, but all eight places had been allocated, so I booked for the following day, Tuesday. Sitting on a hard bench in a common shed at the Accra Railway Station is anything but comfortable, but fortunately even those who had the toughness to sleep on the bare floor were prevented from doing so by the incessant noise which raged throughout. Amidst these discomforts, day broke and the whole daylight hours of Tuesday had to be endured until nightfall, when it might be possible to hear a hint of the

possible arrival of the Sleeper. We did hear that as it had left Kumasi Tuesday around 1.30 p.m. it could be expected to reach Accra around 10.00 p.m. Happily, it did get to Accra at 9.30 p.m. I was so thoroughly fatigued that inside the Sleeping Car I went immediately to sleep and could not tell the actual time it left Accra. I woke up at 3.30 a.m. to find myself in a station up the line, and by keeping awake a little, I soon found we were at Asuboni.

I cannot imagine how those in the 1st and 2nd classes would fare, but as I have said already, one learns to put up with these inconveniences, knowing that we have chosen one of two ways, and which is more, having men in high places who, before AFRC, were only concerned with enriching themselves by shamelessly mismanaging our affairs for us. To me and many others, it would be a terrible blow if the present cleaning exercise did not extend to corporations like the Railways and the Posts and Telegraphic Department who have of late embarked upon increasing the cost of everything in spite of the 'disservice' they are presently rendering.

## For The Record

FEBRUARY 8, 1980

### GHANA NEEDS PEACE

The President, Dr. Hilla Limann has said the country needs a sustained period of peace and stability to solve its problems.

He expressed concern about unrests in some parts of the society and the lack of respect for some institutions in the country.

The President was speaking at the Castle when two members of the Council of State and four Deputy Ministers took the oath of office.

FEBRUARY 8, 1980

### 15 Die in Tapa Crash

Fifteen persons, including two children, died on the spot and 20 others injured when an articulator truck and a passenger bus, popularly called 'Woatonkyene' collided at Adukrom near Tapa in the Ashanti Region.

A Police report said the truck was conveying 450 bags of cocoa to Tema from Hwidiem while the 'Woatonkyene' was heading for Gambia number one near Mim in the Brong Ahafo Region.

FEBRUARY 9, 1980

### Housing Allowance

The Government has directed that all public servants occupying non-government bungalows should be restricted to a 20% rent allowance and that the policy of public organisations renting private premises for the staff should be abandoned.

The government directive followed representations made to the government by various organisations for clarification of circular letters sent to government departments by the erstwhile AFRC on the hiring of accommodation for public servants.

FEBRUARY 9, 1980

### 'Set up Body on Uniform Salary'

The Civil Servants Association has called for the setting up of a high-powered commission to draw up uniform conditions of service for the public service.

The commission should also draw up uniform salary or wages, leave allowance, retiring benefits as well as car maintenance allowance and overtime salaries for the service.

Mr. C. H. Anamoah, an executive member of the association made the call at a durbar organised by the association at the ministries in Accra.

FEBRUARY 12, 1980

### Bill on Press is Out

A Bill seeking to establish a Press Commission under the Constitution of the Third Republic has been published in Accra.

A memorandum to the bill states that a member to be nominated to serve on the commission shall hold office for three years and may be re-appointed. He shall, however, not be eligible after six years in office in succession.

FEBRUARY 12, 1980

**Canadian Aid for Four Countries**

Ghana and three other African countries are to receive C\$5,500,000 aid from the Canadian Government for the development of agriculture.

The First Secretary (Development) of the Canadian High Commission, Mr. G. Walter, disclosed this during a call on the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. E. K. Andah.

FEBRUARY 13, 1980

**Bill on Ombudsman**

The country is to have an Ombudsman if Parliament approves the Ombudsman bill published by the Attorney General.

A memorandum to the bill signed by Mr. Joe Reindorf, Attorney General, explains that the Constitution provides that the Ombudsman be appointed within six months after the coming into force of the Constitution.

The Constitution will be six months old on March 24, 1980.

FEBRUARY 14, 1980

**Buah Denies Story**

The Minister of Trade and Tourism, Mr. F. K. Buah, has denied ever saying that the goods brought into the country from Nigeria had been paid for.

Mr. Buah was answering questions from Mr. Kwaku Baah, (PFP, Nkawkaw), leader of the Popular Front Party group in Parliament, on matters falling under his portfolio in Parliament House.

FEBRUARY 14, 1980

**State Security Bodies are Confusing Govt - Rawlings**

The Chairman of the erstwhile AFRC, Flight-Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings, has accused the state security agencies of misinforming the government, thereby creating rumours and raising false alarm of coup attempts.

He was addressing a press conference organised by the June 4th Movement in Accra. He said the destiny of Ghana was being toyed with by people playing war games and deceiving the government on matters of such importance as those concerning the security of state.

FEBRUARY 16, 1980

**Body on Parity of Salaries set up**

The Government has set up a National Salaries and Wages Commission to work out on a continuing basis, the requisite relativities based on the principle of parity of salaries for people with equal qualifications doing equal work.

The Commission has been given five months to complete and submit its "first level" parity report to the Government for implementation in connection with the 1980/81 budget.

FEBRUARY 18, 1980

**Nation Loses C100 Million**

The nation loses as much as C100 million worth of gold and diamonds annually through smuggling of the minerals out of the mines.

Professor George Benneh, Minister of Lands, Natural Resources Fuel and Power, announced this at the Mines Safety Day Celebrations at Nsuta and called on the workers to refrain from such criminal sabotage of the economy.

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