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Editorial

PATRIOTISM IS NOT ENOUGH

The recent strike by workers at the Tema oil refinery has helped to throw into very sharp relief the industrial discontent that has gripped the country within the last few months. This last strike is one in a series following those by workers of the breweries, the Accra City Council labourers, journalists and others, but because of the sensitive nature of their work, the strike by the refinery workers was more noticeable in its effects. This has given rise to the instinctive feeling that these strikes are disruptive and harmful especially in the desperate economic situation in which this nation finds itself.

But those who are tempted to condemn such industrial actions should pause to look at the other side of the picture, not from the vague viewpoint of the national economy, but from the viewpoint of the ordinary workers. Whatever the rights and wrongs in the details of these industrial actions, it should be obvious that the drastic measures taken by the government in devaluing, for example, and the very candid admission of colossal mismanagement of the economy for the past three years at least have rendered the business of day-to-day survival a veritable feat for most people. And this goes from the lowest paid workers to the highest paid professionals.

One does not know whether government planners have taken the trouble to find out from the market and calculate exactly just how much it costs to feed an ordinary family of five per day, or even how much an individual, however lowly his status or ordinary his tastes, needs for a simple meal. However, the Chief of Defence Staff is reported as stating that the government is aware that one needs C15.00 to get a good meal these days "even though a worker does not earn that much". How does the government which is the largest employer in the country expect people to make up the difference between what they get and what is required to get at least one good meal a day? And at this point one hasn't even raised the question of rent, transportation, clothing, etc.

Such a pitiful situation calls for a radical and realistic solution and not appeals "to face the music together," "die a little," or "tighten our belts". When the stark reality of systematic deprivation stares you in the face, all exhortations to patriotism sound pointless or, even worse, cynical and insensitive.

The government's response to this deplorable situation should be careful planning, and any planning which fails to respond to the basic problem of survival from one day to the other is utterly meaningless. Planning should aim at answering the specific problem of how people can live decent human lives and not some vague promise of some better future after "dying a little." What we are saying is simply this: that you cannot ignore the basic needs of the people in the short run for some long-term benefit which always seems to be eluding them.

In this regard we make bold to point out that the doling out of ridiculous pittances in the form of "cost of living allowance" ranging from 5% to 10% of salaries is a facetious gesture when it is viewed against the absurdly high cost of living in this country. The "cola" turns out not to be the palliative it was meant to be; in a situation of excruciating scarcities it is something of a provocation because it only helps to force prices up and reduce the ordinary man to further penury. When even the median gross salaries of people in this country cannot enable them to provide for the basic necessity of food, how does the government expect them to live honestly and not be tempted to filch to make ends meet — for those who have the opportunity to do so?

Those who are in a position to use all manner of dubious stratagems imaginable to supplement their income will succumb to the temptation of doing so; those who are not so inclined or have no such avenues will resort to industrial action to press their demands for a better standard of living, and there is no reason why they should not do so to ensure the survival of themselves and their dependants. Those who have saleable skills will leave this country which is fast becoming a disaster area and resettle, at least temporarily, in other countries. Some may want to see this last solution as unpatriotic but it may also be conceivably seen as the only escape from rising frustrations and a gateway to survival. For, come to think of it, apart from a few adventurers, how many young people would really opt to live outside their own countries unless they are forced to do so by intolerable conditions at home?

The situation gets worse everyday, and unless the government adopts rational and realistic measures, it will get out of hand sooner than later. A reading of the last budget shows that the government has been operating on the assumption that there is too much money in the economy. There may indeed be a lot of money circulating in the system but it is certainly not true that there is too much money, or even just enough, in the hands of the vast majority of Ghanaians. Whatever excess money there is, may be concentrated in the hands of a small minority who may have acquired it by questionable means.

The government should, therefore, as a matter of urgency abandon this false assumption of too much money in the people's pockets and plan more rationally by, for example, itemising essential needs and ensuring that there is regular supply for local manufacturers. This will in turn guarantee an adequate supply of at least some of the basic needs of people and put some brakes on rising prices. The fact is that official prices have been inoperative, and as long as every conceivable item is in short supply, even giving people more money will only send prices higher and make nonsense of the whole exercise.

This calls for an integrated and systematic planning whose object should be to ensure that adjustments in remuneration, the granting of tax reliefs, the provision of adequate supplies of basic necessities and other relevant measures all operate

concurrently to make the maximum impact. The government should recognise the situation as an emergency one and take appropriate measures toward finding a satisfactory solution.

Failure to do this will only provoke further disruptions and we should not be surprised to witness a harmattan of discontent with more and more strikes instead of fewer. Definite action is needed; appeals to patriotism cannot fill stomachs and people demand more than mere exhortations.

Politics

GHANA IN CATHARSIS: 1969 — 1978

III. THE DAWN
(Post — 5th July 1978)

By
Kwame Abaka Pobee

In the last decade we have passed through a twilight period — the period of the dark spots, when we were still searching for democracy. Then followed the period of the dark interregnum or darkness when we stopped in our search for democracy. Indeed the people of Ghana were singing "We are going. Heaven knows where we are going, we know we will... And how we will get there... We will get there..."

After groping in the darkness, the dawn has arrived. But anyone who has done any thinking at dawn will appreciate that you have no way of fathoming how the day will go. It may go right or it may go wrong. The government of the SMC Mark II has set itself at least for the next one year, the task of national reconciliation and re-integration. Why has this been necessary?

This writer submitted a memorandum to the Ad Hoc Committee on Union Government. At that time it was thought that the whole exercise was irrelevant and diversionary. I still think so. It was irrelevant because the *raison d'être* of the coup of 1972 was not that the constitution or the type of government was responsible for the economic situation that brought about the coup. Indeed we know now that the coup was said to have been planned six months after the Progress Party took office! Vanity aside, it is ample proof that the original reason for the coup was and is in great doubt. The union government's one-sided debate and the referendum accelerated the progress towards national disintegration. Thus Ignatius Kutu Acheampong and his government are solely to blame for the divisions and centrifugal forces in our society. It is a charge they will have difficulty rebutting.

The task of reconciliation has many facets. The army will have to refurbish its image; we know they have the capacity to do it and hope they will do it. When that is done, they will be reintegrated into the mainstream of Ghanaian society. The new SMC is doing everything to pacify the

students and the professional bodies and other sections of the society. They have the goodwill of the people and they can succeed. But the SMC cannot restore chiefs and the Trade Union Congress to their rightful places in the society.

The chiefs of Ghana have traditionally backed the government of the day. They probably feel threatened now that the days of the independent ethnic states are over. The central government and local government have naturally usurped their powers. Chiefly power has been on the decline and with recent history fresh in our minds, no positive effort should be made to bolster it up if we do not want to abolish it outright. It should wither away.

The Trades Union Congress is an important institution. The leaders, as opposed to the rank and file, prided themselves on playing the part of "statesmanship" during the July 1977 crisis. When a leadership cannot even recognise an opportunity to form a workers' government and lets it slip through its fingers, then it is time for change. The judgement of history will be severe and they would deserve it. Nevertheless the country should start a debate as to the kind of TUC it wants just as much as we have discussed the kind of military we want and the kind of professional bodies association we need and want.

The Party System

One major task that the SMC has set itself is helping to organise the country for four years after they hand over to civilians in July 1979. They have decided that there should not be party politics during this period and the army and the police will not participate in the government.

It has been said that the party system in the past had failed us. That to solve our economic problems we should not have parties so that the national interest will be paramount. It is claimed that this partyless state will make us original. But once choice is allowed in elections for the presidency and the National Assembly, I submit, there will be groupings. This is because the presidential candidate from Nsaba after visiting Pusiga will have to leave an organisation there to look after his interests. The other candidate will have a similar organisation too. And after the election, why should the unsuccessful group dissolve itself particularly when we know in five years time there will be another election?

Some people talk of the National Interest. What is it? Since there is no one way of solving an economic problem, why should you think that those not in power have not the interest of the nation at heart? Again, who is the best man for the job? It is very doubtful that whoever becomes the president will necessarily be the best man in Ghana. National governments do not eliminate dissension. It has been said that party politics brings about the winner-takes-all attitude. It may be so. But the opposition also contributes to governing. It was the late Dr. Busia who often quoted this: "They also serve that stand and wait." Even when we move from personalities to policies there is no one best policy. So we will be divided. So why do we not recognise this and make ground rules to govern the actions of these groups?

Luckily Kwamena Bentsi-Enchill in his blueprint for the party game in Ghana, written 10 years ago, has given some guidelines. He has further amplified his original thinking in the book "Institutional Challenges of Our Time". One may not agree with all that he has said, but his is a starting point in our continuing search for democracy and a suitable government to rule ourselves. He said this about parties: "The game of politics needs its rules, its watchful referees, umpires and linesmen. It is not enough to make arrangements about the Presidency, Parliament and the Courts. It is equally essential to take firm decisions in advance concerning political parties". This from someone who had experienced the multiparty system in Ghana and the one-party system in Zambia makes sense.

It is fallacious to think that only national governments can solve economic crises. Japan and Germany, both shattered after World War II, have not had national governments and yet they have done marvellously well. Even in a situation in which there is one clear objective, namely, the acceptance of one God as the Omnipotent, et cetera, there are various groups all purporting to worship Him in their own way. Even amongst Protestants there are many divisions. It is not unknown for bishops, even the highest ones, to do all in their power to prevent church union. So why do we want to force this one in which the ends are as different as the means?

It has been suggested that without parties the best man for a constituency—meaning a local man—will be put up rather than somebody foisted on them by the party executive. Apart from 1965, this kind of thing has not really been a problem. We should not misunderstand the job of the National Assemblyman. If one looks at a year's legislation in the past it would be found that their objectives were national rather than local. Local interest can best be served by a vigorous and dynamic and responsible local government. The morning after the dawn should see the development of a real local government or the as yet nebulous concept of community government. The poor performance of our local government institutions has been the bane of politics during our 21 years' existence.*

Constitution Making

At the moment of writing, a constitution making committee is sitting to prescribe a constitution for Ghana. Constitutions in a way, by themselves are not important but it is the people who work the constitution and the performance of certain institutions in checking excesses, that matters. President Charles de Gaulle could have been an obvious dictator in operating the constitution of the Fifth Republic of France. But he was not.

One of the cardinal principles that the people who work our constitution should remember is that "No condition is permanent". It should be put on the desk of every head of state or prime minister or minister or head of a public corporation. Richard Price has stated that "Government is in the very nature of it a trust, and its powers a delegation for particular ends". Remember our chiefs held power in trust. And it was incumbent on them to keep faith with the people. That is all that is

*This article was written before the announcement about District Council elections was made.

demanding of our leaders.

We need to develop the fourth estate of the realm in the coming morning. One of the tragedies of the past 21 years has been the state of the Fourth Estate. Like in so many spheres of Ghanaian life, we did not deserve some of the editors and the press that we have had. The painful tragedy is that some of the editors thought we deserved them; certainly not this our Ghana. When an editor is happy that another newspaper is in difficulties with the government—difficulties not of its own making—then the fourth estate could be said to be tottering. Even if the paper was "discourteous" and "disrespectful" to the government, what of it? Courtesy and respect are not gained as of right; you have to earn them. Editors must know even if they present things discussed at an editorial board, it is still their personal opinion; and when it is presented with sanctimonious pontification, it is even more insufferable and nauseating.

Accepting Defeat

We need the institution of a press that can start the avalanche that makes the president of the most powerful nation in the world fall, because he had not kept faith with the people. We do not need editors who think by mouthing that they believed strongly in what they wrote, then that was all. It is not all because Hitler believed in what he did. We do not live in isolation; we live in a society. It is the judgement of the society that matters, not one's subjective and warped self-assessment. Certainly not the self-assessment of a self-opinionated apology of an editor.

The next set of Ghanaian leaders should be able to know when they are licked, and step down. That was de Gaulle's greatness. When Edward Heath wanted to stay on after the hung elections, the *Times* of London wrote just one piece that it was not British, and Heath knew the game was up and he left the scene. When you win a referendum of a so-called 54 to 46% majority and you call it a "massive vote of confidence" and then carry on, this is the behaviour of the leader we do not want next time round. And when you have said that you backed a leader because he was humble, riding in a Peugeot 504, when he in fact started off in Datsun 1200 and later found that he was riding in a Mercedes 450 what should the true Ghanaian do? He should resign and not stay on and say like Pontius Pilate, "I can find no wrong in this man." When the government of which you are member is dilatory and dishonest, you do not stay. You go out. When you are asked to draft obnoxious decrees or they promulgate one without your knowledge, if conscience is anything, then you must go. That is, of course, self-sacrifice in terms of money and prestige, but it is noble. Enough about our future leaders.

The ordinary citizen would have to eschew the 13th January man. We know now who he is. If there is any man he should emulate it will have to be the 5th July man. That the Military Advisory Council, if what we hear is true, could decide to redeem Ghana from the redemptionist and to return to barracks is not only commendable but noble. It was more than an act of courage. It

was the act of a group who have undergone self-criticism and decided to purge themselves. That is the Ghana Armed Forces in catharsis. But the ordinary Ghanaian citizen will behave well only when he sees his leader behaving well. If he finds that the order to tighten your belt is accompanied by the commander wearing an elastic belt and elastic braces then there is no way he can pull his weight.

It is distressing to hear comments like: "we would not really care who is governing us provided we had adequate and reasonably cheap food." That we live to eat is too simplistic a view of our purpose here on earth, if there is a purpose. We eat really to live, and living has many facets. One of these facets is to establish a just and an equal opportunity society. I submit that a dictatorship that can give us adequate food cannot reach this aim. The dawn must herald in the bright day so that even in our life time the dark spots and the darkness would pale into insignificance; and the dark spots and the darkness turn out to be a period of sad aberration.

It is not an accident that we got our self-government first in tropical Africa during the post-war period. People outside the country believed in our innate ability and we also believed in ourselves, to rule ourselves fairly and justly. This is our moment of truth. It is time for us to turn the searchlight on ourselves so that we can all realise our hopes and aspirations and make Ghana a better place for ourselves and our children.

LIVING (AND GOVERNING) WITH GHANAIS

By

Opia Mensah-Kumah

In recent times, a dangerous and pernicious doctrine has been peddled in this country, namely, that the misfortunes of this country are not the making of the government but the making of a certain entity called "Ghanaians". If a government fails to gain support for a particular programme for increasing agricultural production, it is not the government's fault; it is rather "Ghanaians" who have failed to rally to the call.

If government members turn corrupt and start disbursing state funds and property in their own favour and in favour of their cronies, "countymen" and girlfriends, it is not the fault of the government; it is again "Ghanaians" who have gone and tempted the poor and hapless officials. If the government coerces and bullies the press into imbecility and sycophancy (a redeployed commissioner of state is alleged to have physically assaulted a senior member of the journalists association), nobody should blame the government, or even the journalists; the blame should be placed squarely on Ghanaians, who have not risen to defend the journalists.

The misdeeds of "Ghanaians" are indeed legion. The way one hears talk about "Ghanaians", one would think they are a breed of creatures living on Mars or Venus somewhere, and who intervene in the affairs of this country merely to cause mischief.

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have the following vacancies as Senior Staff appointment:-

CIVIL WORKS SUPERVISORS:

Applicants should have a minimum of ten years experience in a supervisory position in construction of concrete structures both large and small. He should be able to control a work-force of up to 30 people including Carpenters and Masons. A trade background would be preferable and he should be able to read and work to drawings. Those presently earning less than £8,000.00 per annum are unlikely to be suitable.

MASTER FITTERS:

Applicants should have a minimum of ten years in a supervisory position in maintenance and repair of either Leyland, Land Rover or Caterpillar equipment. He should have served an apprenticeship or some other form of mechanical training. He should be able to direct and instruct on a practical basis groups of fitters and to maintain job cards and requisition spares from parts books. Those presently earning less than £7,500.00 per annum are unlikely to be suitable.

The following vacancies also exist for suitable qualified people who have the drive, ability and leadership qualities and potential to be employed in junior production positions whilst receiving training and gaining the experience to enable them within a few years to assume senior positions in production management:-

ENGINEERS:

Applicants should be pursuing or have completed a full or part time course of academic training as Civil or Technician Engineers.

FOREMAN CARPENTERS/JOINERS:

Applicants should have undergone an appropriate technical education and have achieved at least the standard of ONC or its equivalent or have completed a trade apprenticeship. They should have a minimum of two years relevant experience, preferably in construction.

Initially successful applicants may be employed by Taylor Woodrow of Ghana Ltd. on the Tono and Vea Irrigation Projects in the Upper Region but after a suitable period of time will be engaged on one of the many Projects Taysec Construction Ltd. will be undertaking.

Apply in writing stating age, education, qualifications, experience and details of all previous employments to date to either:

The Personnel Officer,
Taysec Construction Ltd.,
4 Brewery Road,
P. O. Box 01010,
Osu,
Accra.



Or

The Project Manager,
Taylor Woodrow of Ghana Ltd.,
Tono Irrigation Project,
Private Mail Bag,
Navrongo,
Upper Region.

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Let it be stated here clearly and emphatically that from the day it became Ghana until the day it ceases to be Ghana, this country will be inhabited by Ghanaians. And we will have to learn to live (and govern) with them. Leaders who find Ghanaians too corrupt, mischievous, lazy, incompetent, parochial, devious or even just too smart to govern, must go and govern elsewhere.

The relationship between any leader and those he leads may be viewed as a transaction. The leadership position may be that of the captain of a soccer team, a management position in a business concern or the government of a country. The basic transactional relationship is the same. The leader transacts with the led to perform certain functions on their behalf in exchange for certain rights and privileges (the limelight, higher pay and more fringe benefits, national and international attention, etc.) In exchange for these privileges the leader assumes responsibilities which are not expected of the ordinary member of the community. The led concede privileges to their leader only because they expect him to perform certain duties in the overall community interest.

Rewarding Activities

One of the important responsibilities of a leader is to determine ways of drawing from each member or section of the community the maximum benefit for the community as a whole. Every transaction thrives best on a system of reciprocal rewards. Each party must perceive that it is drawing some benefit from the bargain. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the leader to ensure that individuals and groups within the community engage in activities which are rewarding to them and which contribute to the overall good of the community.

Individuals by themselves are not interested in sacrificing personal rewards for the common good. It is not even their duty, really. Any exhortation by the leader to turn away from activities which are rewarding to them in favour of less rewarding activities will be perceived as a punishment or a negative reward, as the social scientists say. People will not stop trading to "go back to the land" if they get more financial gain (a very positive reward indeed) from trading than from farming. It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that farming is more rewarding than trading if indeed he has determined that farming is more important to the common good than trading.

Imagine that, at the annual Board of Directors meeting the Managing Director of a Company made the following report:

"Gentlemen, I have to report the worst years in the history of this company. When I took over as managing director, this company was financially healthy and profit-making. This year, the company has registered disastrous losses.

"All this is not my fault, however. You are all witnesses that I have worked very hard. Each day, I have reported to the office at 7.30 a.m. and never have I left before 6 p.m. It is all the fault of the workers. They never do anything right. They pilfer stationery,

they report for work late, never make sacrifices for the company, and they always seem to have some relative or other sick or dead. The workers I lead did not work, and that is why we made losses."

If, after hearing such a speech, the directors do not fire the managing director on the spot, they should all be arrested. If the gentleman in question had any idea what his job meant, the speech should have been something like this:

Gentlemen, I have to report my complete incompetence in running this company. With the crop of workers who have churned up profits for this company from year to year, I have managed to lose money for the company. I have failed to motivate my workers, to draw out of them the hard work and dedication which alone make a company prosper. I have failed to establish for each worker his needs, attitudes and motives. Therefore, I have not been able to reward them accordingly.

"I must say that because I have failed to reward them, I have not been rewarded by them with respect or esteem. Gentlemen, I apologise to you all very sincerely, and do hereby tender my resignation".

Is the analogy not all too clear? Individuals and groups are basically interested in working for their own benefit most of the time. It is for the government to identify for each group its motivations and perceptions of rewarding activities, and to talk to that self-interest. Makola women will always seek to make a profit—in spite of the Prices and Incomes Board, in spite of police/military raids, and seizure of hoarded commodities. Let us face it: Makola is not one big charity bazaar! It is for the government to find ways to make Makola women make the profit they want while at the same time contributing to the national good.

Human Failings

Now for a quick word on another related fallacy. It has been suggested that the Ghanaian is lazy, corrupt, and that he wants everything in exchange for nothing. In terms of local jounalese, the get-rich-quick attitude of Ghanaians has been deplored. All these faults which Ghanaians are accused of are not the exclusive preserve of the people of this country. They are human failings. Human beings will always take the line of least resistance, especially if it is more rewarding than the strait and narrow path. In those parts of the world where citizens work to support the system, it is because leaders, past or present, have managed to fashion out a system whereby rewards come only from hard work. If we have a system in which rewards come mostly from prevarication and personal contacts, people will prevaricate and seek to develop the right contacts.

Ghanaians will always be Ghanaians, that is to say, human beings essentially. So far, in spite of all their faults, they have not forced anybody at gun point to lead them. Those people who opt to lead them should be prepared to take them as they are—or quit.

Observer Notebook

PUBLIC MORALITY AND DOUBLE STANDARDS

In November 1971, a national scandal erupted over the fact that Mr. J. H. Mensah, then Minister of Finance, was found to be a director of a company, namely Odumase Farms Limited, contrary to Article 61(4) of the Constitution which provided: "A Minister of State or a Ministerial Secretary shall not, while he continues in office, hold any other office of profit or emolument whether public or private and either directly or indirectly." This constitutional provision was aimed at ensuring that ministers did not use their office to obtain favours for their companies, and also at saving them from embarrassment in case their companies got into dispute with the government of which they were members.

A motion of censure was brought into Parliament by the Opposition, calling on the minister to resign. Despite the very clear case established against the minister, the P.P. government did its best to defend the minister's act, and the motion was defeated by 81 votes to 24. But the efforts to defend J. H. Mensah only succeeded in persuading many people that the government was prepared to resort to sophistry and doubletalk to keep the minister on.

That action has often been recalled in the list of accusations against the P.P. government, and has been evoked, in conjunction with other acts of omission and commission by that government, to justify its overthrow in January 1972. The least one would have expected of the succeeding military government was that it would scrupulously ensure that its own members would not open themselves up to the same type of accusations levelled against the P.P. government. Ordinary justice demands that we judge both governments by the same standards, especially bearing in mind that since 1972, the constitution has only been suspended and not abrogated altogether.

It is against this background that one has to view with concern an entry in the **Commercial and Industrial Bulletin** of 9th September, 1977. The entry refers to TREBLOAR OIL PALM PROJECT LIMITED (No. of Company: 9203) authorised "(1) to carry on business of oil palm farming, milling, manufacturing, exporting, distribution and retailing of oil palm products and (ii) to carry on business as importers of agricultural machines."

What is particularly striking about this company is the composition of its directorship given as follows: Robert Kotei, soldier, of H/No. 2, Juba Ridge, Burma Camp, Accra; Albert Nkansah, pilot, of H/No. 32, Juba Villa, Burma Camp, Accra; Kwabena Apiagyei, technician, H/No. Block 9, Airforce Quarters, Burma Camp, Accra; Prince Twumasi-Ankrah, soldier, of H/No. 52, Burma Villas, Burma Camp, Accra. This last named director doubles as secretary to the company.

What is of particular concern to us is that a very prominent member of the "old" SMC and at the time Army Commander, that is a member of the supreme legislative and executive body of the land could have become a director of this company. Were his other colleagues of the SMC not aware of this? And if they were, did it not occur to them that there might be a conflict of interests between his public position and the pursuit of his business interests? Or had the rules governing public morality been so changed that what was bad in the case of J. H. Mensah could be overlooked in the case of Major-General Kotei? Or was it just a case of double standards?

Now that the new CDS, Lt-Gen. Joshua Hamidu has assured us all that the "new" SMC is determined to give the country something of a spring cleaning, we call on the government to investigate the affairs of the company to find out to what extent the former CDS may have used his position in any way to further the interests of the company of which he was director. We would also like to draw attention to the fact that of the three other directors two have held positions outside this country since the company was authorised to commence business with effect from 7th July 1976.

In fact, Albert Nkansah was appointed Defence Adviser in the Ghana Embassy in Washington on July 24, 1976 while Prince Twumasi-Ankrah was appointed as Defence Adviser in Addis Ababa in August 1977. Since the company also went in for importing agricultural machinery into the country, it may be revealing to find out how these two directors may have used their official position outside the country to further the interests of their company. We believe that this matter is of public importance and calls for a public enquiry.

Just by the way, it is a pity that the editor of the **Spokesman** who did so much to unearth the Odumase Farms scandal is no longer in active journalistic practice to give us more of such revelations. It is interesting to note that he still happens to be a member of the government of which Robert Kotei was prominent member. We expect the matter of the Trebloar Oil Palm Project Limited to be thoroughly and publicly investigated by the government, and the public will certainly watch the reaction of this particular Commissioner with more than ordinary interest.

A NON-ITALIAN IN THE VATICAN

From time to time old and familiar institutions take on a new character and begin to compel attention and exercise an influence which one had forgotten they could command. The Roman Catholic Church has been going through such a transformation since the election of Cardinal Roncalli as Pope John XXIII in 1958. The kindly, elderly prelate, chosen by his brother cardinals as a stop-gap Pope, astonished the world by pitching the Church into the rough and tumble of contemporary life through a deeply compassionate and large-hearted interpretation of his pastoral charge.

In the justly celebrated encyclical **Peace on Earth**, Pope John set out a Christian and broadly human view of the complex problems of the social

political and international order of the mid-20th century and a framework in which enduring and just solutions might be worked out. To help in some measure to equip the Church to perform the tasks which would give its witness relevance and meaning to ordinary men throughout the world, he took the first steps in the expansion of the College of Cardinals, the highest ruling body of the Church, which resulted in giving it a truly international character under his successor, and convened the Second Vatican Council to undertake a reappraisal of the organisation and teaching of the Church.

The achievements of the Vatican Council, which met under Pope John's successor, Paul VI, may have fallen woefully short of the high expectations—in many cases quite unjustified—entertained by many people within the Church, and outside it. But in one direction at least, the Council kept the hopes of a wider commitment alive. This was in connection with the growing effort towards creating a new unity of faith among all members of the Christian persuasion. In the wider Christian community outside the Roman Catholic Church, preliminary soundings in this direction had already been made by the time the Vatican Council met. Official commitment by the Council to make the question of Christian ecumenism a matter of serious study served to link the Roman Catholic Church with the wider movement already under way.

If under the 15-year rule of Pope Paul VI the

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exciting promise of a more sensitive response by the Church to some of the more pressing social problems of the day all but faded, the loss was in some measure made up by the emergence of a distinctive Catholic voice in debates on international issues. His long career in the Church's diplomatic service, one of the finest in the world, gave Pope Paul a keener appreciation of the complexities of these matters than most crowned heads, and under him pronouncements from the Vatican in this field could be expected to command professional respect, if nothing else, in the Foreign Ministries of the world. In Pope Paul's last years, in a few areas like Southern Africa, the Catholic Church was beginning to commit itself to positive action of the kind with which its sister churches, either independently or by joint action through organisations like the World Council of Churches, had already become associated.

So at the time of Paul VI's death this year, in spite of the many unfulfilled expectations, the Catholic Church had managed to keep the interest it had kindled in unexpected quarters twenty years back. From the remote medieval structure it had become an out-reaching organisation, international alike in its ruling hierarchy and some of its pre-occupations. As the conclave met to elect Pope Paul's successor, the question was being widely asked whether the Roman Church could rise to the new image of itself as a truly Catholic, international body by breaking with tradition which had kept the pontificate an Italian monopoly for well over four hundred years.

In the event the caution and innate conservatism, which had made the work of the Second Vatican Council such a disappointment, prevailed. Cardinal Albino Luciano, the Patriarch of Venice, was elected. Perhaps the saddest thing about his death only a month or so after his elevation is that nothing much beyond the promise of what he stood for can be set down for him. But he left the world in no doubt about the legacy of his two immediate predecessors. He spelt out clearly that his choice of John Paul I as his papal name was an act of commemoration of their personal qualities and work.

The Conclave which met in the second week of October faced a truly awesome task. But the cardinals do not appear to have come to it with undue perturbation or any notion of doing anything startling. A statement reported as having come out from Cardinal Benelli, Archbishop of Florence makes out that the Conclave initially tried to proceed by the well tried route by trying to settle on an Italian candidate. When that failed, they calmly set aside a guiding rule unchanged for some four hundred and fifty years and elected the Polish Cardinal, Karol Wojtyla, Archbishop of Cracow, as the new pope.

If the manner of it was monumentally unfrilled, the outcome was nonetheless dramatic. Intended or not, it was a fitting climax to the developments in the Church which for the past twenty years have made it a subject of absorbing interest for Catholic and non-Catholic alike. The last non-Italian Pope was the Flemish Pope Adrian VI who was elected in January 1522 and died

20 months later, in September 1523. At the time of his election the Church was divided into fiercely embattled camps, and from beginning to end his rule was bitterly opposed by Italian Catholics. Pope John Paul II's has come at the end of a long period of self-examination and dedication in the Church. A non-Italian member of a ruling group which has for some time indeed lost its absolute Italian majority, he comes to head a "Catholic" organisation which has by his election proved itself truly international.

IAN SMITH AGAIN

The settler regime in Zimbabwe, aided by its accomplices in the western world, has delivered yet another shocking blow to Africa. Reports of the raids on Zambia and Mozambique confirm that Ian Smith and his henchmen are determined to defy world opinion and continue to perpetrate their crimes against the people of Africa with impunity.

All previous attempts to parley with Smith have demonstrated his dogmatism, lack of integrity and reluctance to allow majority rule in Zimbabwe. His current tour of the U.S.A. (see last issue of L.O.) at the time when the U.N. General Assembly is making its annual review of world events is a move calculated to deceive the peoples of Africa into believing that Big Uncle Sam will make Ian Smith see reason where the perfidious Albion has failed.

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But by now we know the interests that are at work in Zimbabwe. It is equally clear that only a fight to the finish will rescue Zimbabwe from the clutches of a dying white settler hegemony. In this wise, there is the need for the O.A.U. member states to re-appraise the support they have so far given to the Liberation Movements. Unless even more support is forthcoming, Zambia and Mozambique are going to be compelled to take on more than their fair share of this truly continental burden. Indeed it is ironical that President Kaunda's heart-rending decision to re-open the rail link with Zimbabwe should have been followed so soon by this provocative and genocidal raid on Lusaka. Has Africa no anti-aircraft guns to pluck down as few as four military jets?

What must be realized is that the whole of Southern Africa is now in the vortex of a hot war. And that includes the heart of Afrikanerdom, South Africa itself, where there are daily reports of armed clashes along the borders and urban guerilla activities in the main population centres. Africa has a clear duty in these circumstances, namely to fuel the war machine of the liberation armies so that they may blot out of the face of our continent for all time the spectre of white racist minority rule. With so many of our countries under military rule, it would in fact be intolerable if the urgency of the military situation does not get understood in ruling circles.

What indeed is the use of police armoured cars (not to mention those of the army) parading the streets of Accra and wasting scarce fuel, when our self-respect demands that Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa should be freed at once?

Education

"INTERNATIONAL" VRS "PUBLIC" SCHOOLS

by

Albert Sumani Ibn Wumbei

For some time now there has been a debate on the country's educational system. This debate takes the form of attacks on the International school system on the one hand, and a defence of the system, on the other. This article is aimed at analysing how this dual system of First Cycle education operates. It is the contention of this writer that the system of education does not provide equal opportunities for the maximum development of children's potential abilities.

The genesis of the International schools can be found in the opening of schools in the 1950's to cater for the needs of the expatriate staff in Ghana. The various nationalities were represented in these schools, hence the name 'International'. It was felt that the system of education as was operating was not good enough for children of expatriates. Later on individuals and organisations began to run similar schools. The schools became very popular and by 1966 a total of 30 schools with an enrolment of 6,324 could be found in Ghana. In 1970/71 the number of schools increased to 63 while the enrolment came up to 9,776. By 1976/77 the number of registered schools had come up to 128 with an enrolment of 19,061 (this excludes purely nursery schools).

It is important to note that very high fees are paid in some of those schools while no fees are charged in the public schools but parents still prefer to send their wards to the former. People are patronising the International schools to such an extent that the word 'International' has become almost a magic word on the educational scene in Ghana. Why this sudden boom in the International school business?

When we study the trend of the Common Entrance examination over a period of about seven years, we are likely to understand why there is this rush for the International schools. The table below shows the general performance of candidates in the Common Entrance Examination between 1965 - 1971.

one, and by middle form 4 about 40% of those who entered primary one would be left. Again about 4½% of those who entered primary one are able to enter secondary schools from middle forms one, two, three and four, but the bulk of them enter from forms two and three.

Furthermore, we may note that 70% of the children in schools in Ghana are in classes one to form two in the Public school system while 2% are in International schools. Even though they represent only 2% of the school going population they take up over 4% of the places in the secondary schools. In 1968/69 5.26% of the places were taken up by International school pupils. In 1969/70 they represented 6.30% and in 1970/71 they represented 4.17%. Over this

TABLE 1.1.

PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

YEAR	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
ENTRY	45,526	63,292	59,758	49,385	41,162	66,818	74,531
Pass	10,166	9,034	8,904	9,510	10,654	12,133	13,059
%	22.3	14.3	15.4	19.3	17.4	18.4	17.5

The table shows that in 1965, of the 45,526 candidates who sat the Common Entrance Examination, only 10,166 could get places in secondary form one, representing a pass rate of 22.3%. In 1966, 63,292 pupils sat the examination, and 9,034 passed, representing 14.3%. In 1967, 57,758 took part in the examination and 8,904 passed (15.4%).

Having seen the general pass rate, it is important to find out which categories of children are represented in the pass rates. Table 1.2 gives us the pass rates of a sample of two International and two public schools.

TABLE 1.2

PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAM

SCHOOL	1975	1976	1977
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL A	98%	98.5%	100%
" " B	100%	100%	100%
PUBLIC SCHOOL A	N.A.	10.5%	30%
" " B	30%	30%	40.5%

The table shows that over the 3-year period the International schools have shown considerably high performances, while the Public schools have been performing badly. The conclusion we can draw from this table in relation to the earlier one is that with the general pass rate being about 17.8% the International school pupils dominate the pass list.

A recent research revealed that about 70% of the children of school going-age in Ghana receive primary education. About 59% of those who started from primary one are able to reach primary six. About 49% of them reach middle form

period the average percentage was 5.24%. If we take this average and compare it to the 2% which represents the International schools in the whole school population, then, we can justifiably conclude that they have over 250% chances of passing the common entrance. Alternatively, if we compare the general pass rate of 17.8% and the pass rates shown in Table 1.2 we can conclude that almost all children in International schools stand the chance of entering secondary schools.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL HIERARCHY

Secondary schools in Ghana are ranked in order of 'good', 'average' and 'mushroom'. The position of a school in this hierarchy depends on the overall examination results over a period of time. When children are asked to make choices, 'good' schools attract the largest number of students; the 'average' ones receive second choices, and the 'mushroom' ones serve as only a last resort for pupils. This means that in order to get into a good school a child has to score very high marks, not just the normal pass mark as required by the West African Examinations Council.

The schools considered as very good admit pupils who score very high marks in the Common Entrance Examination, and since most of those who score high marks are from the International schools, it stands to reason that they will take up most of the places in these good secondary schools. Since 1968, in Achimota, Wesley Girls High School and Mfantipim, over 50% of the places in form one have been taken up by the International school pupils annually. In Aburi Girls, Accra Academy and St. Mary's more than a third of the places are taken up by pupils of the same social background. On the other hand, when we take schools like Mawuli, Opoku Ware and Ghanatta and Ghana Secondary/Technical we realise that less than 20% of the places every year go to these International school pupils. But more striking is the case of Amniampong secondary school which for the period under consideration has never had even one pupil from the International school.

The phenomenon we are trying to analyse cannot be completely understood if we do not take a look at the background of children in these two systems. The tables below show the background of a sample of children from the Public and International schools.

ANALYSIS OF OCCUPATIONS OF CHILDREN'S PARENTS

OCCUPATIONS	INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS		PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
	A %	B %	A %	B %
Professional, Higher Technical and Administrative	48.5	89.6	0	22.8
Clerical workers, Junior Public servants and Teachers	17.1	8.7	10.9	21.6
Traders, Artisans & skilled workers	27.7	1.7	45.3	19.0
Semi-skilled, Unskilled workers	0.0	0.0	31.4	20.9
Farmers and others	6.7	0.0	12.4	15.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF CHILDREN'S PARENTS

EDUCATION	INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS		PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
	A %	B %	A %	B %
None	2.8	0.0	20.2	5.3
Elementary school 1 - 10 years	20.2	0.0	30.8	27.5
Secondary 1 - 6 years	27.1	8.6	29.0	35.0
Teachers Training	2.2	5.4	20.0	12.2
University or its Equivalent	45.7	8.6	0.0	20.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0



If we want to look at the tables in terms of what we term professionals and senior staff, middle level and ordinary workers then we realise at once that the occupations of parents correspond with the educational attainments of their wards. What we see straight away is that the majority of the professional and senior staff have their children in the International schools while the Public schools are taken up by the middle level and ordinary workers. Of course we are aware that incomes of government workers are based on one's educational attainments. Those who have higher education and have relatively high incomes are able to pay the high fees charged by the International schools. We may also have some people with low education who can afford to pay these fees but this number is small since you also need an awareness of the opportunities. Very often parents through ignorance pass off opportunities for their children's advancement. This awareness accounts for the high percentage of children of professionals with university education or its equivalent in the two International schools, and the lack of it is shown in the concentration of children of parents on the lower rungs of the job ladder in the Public schools.

The essay has demonstrated that maintenance of the dual system of education leads to a system of discrimination in favour of certain social groups. The idea of equality of education is a myth because it does not offer equal opportunities for all children to develop their talents to their fullest. What is prevailing now is that some social groups, by virtue of their socio-economic positions, are able to send their children to select preparatory schools. These schools are able to perform better in the competitive examination for secondary schools. These children when they pass, get into select secondary schools which prepare them adequately for 'O' & 'A' Level. In short, we have a situation in which the Interna-

tional schools act as 'feeders' to the select secondary schools which, in turn, act as 'feeders' to the country's universities.

The Public schools, on the other hand, merely act as 'feeders' to the 'second grade' secondary schools. The middle schools act as terminal points for most children while most

of those who manage to get into the secondary schools end up at either the 'O' or the 'A' levels. Most of the children who end up at either the middle school or secondary school find their way into the labour market with little or no skills.

The present system of education is creating a system of stratification quite similar to what pertains in most European countries. The fluid nature of the class system in Ghana is gradually crystallizing and the boundaries are likely to be well defined in a decade or so.

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(Secretary)

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Letters

DECLARATION OF ASSETS

SIR— There have been in the press recently allegations that Members of Parliament in the Second Republic did not declare their assets as required by the 1969 Constitution.

These allegations are unfounded. Early in the life of that Parliament there was some talk about members not willing to declare their assets. At that time no guidelines had been decided as to the form the declaration should take. Even so some Members of Parliament submitted their declarations in sealed envelopes to me. I was then the Clerk of the National Assembly.

Later on the Cabinet considered and approved a form for the purpose. The form was printed by the Assembly Press and copies were distributed to all Members of Parliament. Members who had before then submitted their declarations received back their declarations and were requested to submit fresh ones on the printed forms.

The Speaker and the Prime Minister submitted their declarations to me in sealed envelopes; so did some other Members of Parliament. Those of the Speaker, the Prime Minister and other Ministers and Deputy Ministers which were submitted to me were sent to the Office of the President. The rest I kept at Parliament House in a steel cabinet. I issued receipts for all the declarations I received. From time to time I submitted a list of the names of defaulting Members to the Speaker who requested them to comply with the law. As a result at the time of the 1972 coup only very few ordinary Members of Parliament had still to submit their declarations.

Immediately after the coup I was interviewed by the Press and I gave them the facts. In spite of this allegations continue to be made in the Press that Members of Parliament did not declare their assets. I do not know the sources of information of those who make the allegations. In the absence of any pronouncement from official quarters to correct the erroneous impression being created, I deem it my duty as the Clerk of the National Assembly at the time to restate the facts for the benefit of the public.

Lynes Quashie-Idun & Co.,
Accra.

C. A. Lokko

PERMANENT COOLING OFF PERIOD

SIR—General Akuffo's "new" SMC has tried, since July 1978, to impress upon Ghanaians their determination to see Ghana through a cooling off period. In furtherance of this aim, the SMC has prescribed a bitter political pill for the nation in spite of several protests from articulate groups.

However, for a permanent cooling off period such as the one the SMC so ardently desires, I suggest the following additional clauses to the Armed Forces regulations:

"We members of the Ghana Armed Forces, having taken cognisance of the fact that we usurped power from a democratically elected government in January, 1972; convinced that by such unwarranted action we have only succeeded in plunging the country into economic chaos; fully aware that our image before the Ghanaian public is so much in disrepute because of the profound disregard we have shown for human dignity;

absolutely certain that there has been total lack of candour

in our pronouncements as well as total disregard for the value of education; Do hereby resolve that:

we consider it high treason for any soldier or group of soldiers of any rank to usurp power in the form of a coup of any kind in future; we deem it completely illegal to involve ourselves in politics at the expense of our military duties and the security of the state. Consequent upon the above two resolutions, we further resolve that:

Any group of soldiers who so contravenes these resolutions should face a full military tribunal with the possible consequence of death by firing squad, if found guilty. Finally, we are determined never again to allow ourselves to be dragged into the kind of January 1972 mess.

Yes! that will be the soldiers' contribution to permanent stability in Ghana. How about that, General Akuffo? You would have done a great service to present and future generations.

School of Journalism
Legon.

Yaw Kwarteng

RECALLING THE PAST

SIR—Having read with considerable interest, K. A. Pobee's brilliant diagnosis of our problems from 1969 to 1972 and in anticipation of what he may still have in store for us in his next instalment, I would like us to ask a few questions on our immediate past. First, you will recall the exposition of the Christian trinity in terms of Unigov. You will recall the TV performance of some supposed religious leaders who were really lackeys of politician soldiers. You will also recall the BBC African Service performance of a supposed patriot who, I thought, would even lynch Hilton Fyle in the name of patriotism and Unigov.

Second, sloganeering is dangerous because it may cover a multitude of sins as well as stop us doing the serious thinking which is necessary for genuine development. We started with the word 'Revolution' when the only revolution was the heady drunkenness in high places. We came upon 'Operation Feed Yourself' and its success when the only success was the high cost of a finger of plantain (with no foreign exchange component) and people in high places feeding only themselves rather than the people they were redeeming. We came upon Unigov, the panacea of all our ills—'divisiveness, rancour' and what you will. Indeed, wise men came from the South to learn of it! Now we know it was not the panacea. It was a cloak for a big man to wield the big stick upon all judged to be obstreperous.

Third, our history teaches us that even though one man can be an evil genius, yet he achieves his maximum evil with the help of several others, some of whom are faceless and turn latter-day saints when the number one culprit has been chased out. Is it really true that only Kutu is the evil genius? Where are all the religious gentlemen who either preached brilliant sermons extolling filth or by their silence helped evil to triumph? Where are the academics who went grovelling before ignorant soldiers in order to place well in society? Where are the civil servants who today are "only administrators"? Where are all the members of the S.M.C. (whether Mk I or Mk II) who were in this exercise in the destruction of a nation which truly is the star of Africa?

Finally, the lesson of history is that men do not learn from history. So let us be on guard against redeemers who will continue to arise.

Department of Religions
Legon.

Kofi Huntuama

BELT TIGHTENING AND TEA PARTIES

SIR—We are faced with a hard life today such as we have never witnessed before. Parents are finding it just too difficult to provide an adequate meal for just once a day. We are being constantly exhorted to tighten our belts and to die a little in order to save the country from the economic chaos created through no fault of the poor or the low income group.

But what do we see and read about? Tea parties and dinners being organised for diplomats' wives and SMC/NRC wives. If we are being asked to sacrifice a little, it is not for the common people to go on sacrificing all the time. The people at the top have to sacrifice as an example for others to emulate. I therefore suggest that such waste of state funds for parties should cease forthwith. It is sickening to hear or read about such things.

P. O. Box 634,
Tema.

Ethel Adu

DEVALUATION VRS. DEVALUATION—A REJOINDER

SIR—I would like to make two observations on J. Ofori-Atta's article "Devaluation Vrs. Devaluation" which appeared in L.O. X. 2.

Whilst discussing the issue of public accountability, he writes that a government which sacked a previous one for devaluation of the national currency should not turn round and devalue itself. Whilst not holding brief for the SMC Government on the economic wisdom behind the present devaluation, if there is any at all, it is only fair to point out that the SMC's condemnation of the Busia devaluation does not preclude them from using that economic weapon if it is deemed appropriate under different circumstances at a different time. The fact that the 1972 revaluation did not completely off-set the Busia devaluation makes this point obvious.

Secondly in an article which raised such pertinent questions, it is unfortunate that the writer allows himself to be drawn into petty digressions like "A senior civil servant had occasion to describe the Busia devaluation as "vicious". He has every reason now to describe the SMC devaluation as "murderous". Such frivolous comments only cloud the important issues at stake.

In the meantime, we still await answers from the SMC on the rationale behind the devaluation.

C/o P. O. Box 47
Tamale.

Tony Oteng-Gyasi

BE CONSIDERATE, COCOA FARMERS!

SIR—It is shocking to hear farmers in the Brong-Ahafo and Central Regions make yet another call on the government for a further increase in the price of cocoa "to boost their morale....." Considering the present economic situation of the country, I consider the farmers' demand rather unreasonable and most inconsiderate.

It is a fact that the present government has an unequalled record with respect to efforts to boost the morale of farmers in general and the cocoa farmers in particular. This is demonstrated by the past series of increments in the producer price of cocoa, the supply of fertilizers, provision of transport for carting as well as the constant subsidy on farm imple-

ments and crop pesticides. Without this buffer by the government our cocoa farmers would definitely have felt the true pinch of production costs rather terribly.

In the light of these efforts, one would have thought that the farmers would show reciprocation and a bit of self-sacrifice at this trying period when our ailing economy leans rather heavily on their golden pods for its stability. If after the recent 100% increase and previous series of increments in the producer price of cocoa the farmers' morale still requires further boosting, then price increment is surely not the right tool to boost this morale!

I therefore implore them to reflect soberly on the critical nature of the period we are passing through, the sacrificial harsh life the present budget requests each and every one of us to live, and then withdraw their demand in the interest of the national economy.

160-Casford Hall,
University of Cape Coast.

G. G. Guri

THEORETICAL SCHOLARS AND PRACTICAL DICTATORS — A REJOINDER

Sir - Has Mr. Kofi Kumado of the Faculty of Law, Legon, "become so out of date and unknowledgeable about Ghana" that he cannot recollect how Ghanaians suffered miserably under the military interregnum of General Kutu Acheampong?

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It is my opinion that Mr. Kumado's reverence for military dictatorship is unfortunate, coming as it does from one who belongs to a profession whose members purport to believe in, and in fact to uphold, the rule of law and fundamental human rights.

Moreover, it seems to me that the learned lecturer deliberately twisted history by asserting that "low-cost dictators take care of our every-day problems" and that they are "down to earth" as against elected governments. If by that he was patting the military government on the back for importing armoured cars, BMWs and a presidential jet plane at the expense of essential commodities, raw materials for our factories and ordinary drugs for our hospitals, then Mr. Kumado has a strange scale of values. If, on the other hand, he was referring to the heartless way the Acheampong government assaulted Ghanaians then Mr. Kumado should count himself lucky for having escaped the police-cum-military assault on the 13th of January 1978 on the Legon University community. I am sure he would have had second thoughts about the rough and ready methods of the military if he had fallen victim to their brutalities on that fateful day.

Finally, I wish to submit that Mr. Kofi Kumado ought to advert his mind to Plato's admonition that "the punishment which the wise suffer who refuse to take part in the government, is to live under the Government of worse men".

The Legon Observer may perhaps be pardoned for "forgetting" something which happened over six and a half years ago. But it is hard to forgive Mr. Kofi Kumado for his short memory just within nine months.

Mensah Sarbah Hall,
Legon.

A Student

GHANAIAN ROAD BUILDERS

SIR—One of the most painful observations that some of us make about our national development efforts is that we do not seem to be able to consolidate even the small gains that we make as a Nation over the years. The simple reason is that we spend money unwisely "in the right direction". One of these being government award of contracts to Ghanaian road builders who, as any conscientious citizen would readily remark, are no credit to the profession of road builders.

Beside official government neglect of its supervisory duties, it is trite knowledge that Ghana's formidable corps of road contractors seldom analyse the type of soil on which the road is being laid. The result is that once the bitumen sprayed on the platform called "road" is washed away, we are left with "the government of the people" readily making money available every budgetary year to rehabilitate the same road which had been completed barely 3 years previously.

It seems to me that we can meaningfully "capture the commanding heights of the economy" if we were to shed our various dogmas and invite foreign road builders of the class of Carl Ploetner on the Cape Coast-Takoradi stretch, to build our roads. For, a good infrastructural base of communication network is imperative for meaningful economic development.

Let us be frank. The rains are not the cause. It rains just as heavily in Abidjan as it does in Accra; just as heavily in the Ivory Coast in general as it does in this country. But the streets in Abidjan and the roads in the Ivory Coast justify whatever may have been spent on them.

The problem with us is our fixation with local expertise however incompetent and wasteful.

Kanda, Accra.

Ebow Derby

JOURNALISTS ON STRIKE?

SIR—Earlier this month, journalists working on the publicly owned mass media withdrew their services to protest against the Government's failure to publish the Essah Committee Report on their service conditions.

According to the Commissioner for Information, the Committee is said to have made some recommendations including the following: Outfit Allowance; Special Duty Allowance; Security Allowance; Tax Free rent allowance of 30% of their salaries; Payment of 10% of their salaries to compensate for the hazardous conditions under which they work.

The purpose of their action, was to force the government to publish and consequently implement the recommendations. All well and good.

Ironically, when the nurses of this country embarked on a similar action some time ago to back their demands for better service conditions, the editors of the state-owned papers branded them as being unpatriotic and qualified their demands as unrealistic. Interestingly enough, the "unreasonable" demands made by the nurses were similar to what the Essah Committee recommended for the journalists.

I am pretty sure that all along they forgot that they would one day fall into a similar situation as their fellows. I would like to know at this point whether or not their action is justified.

Thomas Merton once said, "It is easy enough to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will when you yourself have warm clothes and plenty of food and medical care and a roof over your head and no worry about rent. But if you want them to believe you, try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will yourself".

What is sauce for the goose should indeed be sauce for the gander.

Glass Manufacturing Division, J. Obeng Yeboah
P. O. Box 91,
Aboso.

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE

SIR—There existed in this country during the late 60's and early 70's an independent paper, *The Spokesman*, whose editor was a respected journalist; that editor is now a state Commissioner.

When Dr. K. A. Busia devalued the cedi by 44% in December 1971, this respectable journalist (and now a state Commissioner) in a leader article entitled "Go, Busia Go" went so far as to ask the government which had been elected into power by a popular majority to resign. Coincidentally, on 13/1/72, the Military and Police stepped in again "to save the economy from total collapse and to expose Dr. K. A. Busia's hypocrisy".

After Busia's overthrow, in another article titled "Devaluation gave him a blow", the editor explained to the Ghanaian populace and the whole world why Dr. Busia was overthrown and provided justification for the coup. After six and a half years in office of the NRC/SMC Government, the cedi has again been devalued by 58% ostensibly to save the same economy.

My simple worry is this, does this former editor, now turned state Commissioner, find it very wise and fitting to be where he is now in view of his comments on the 1971 exercise, especially since we do not see the need for a Ministry of Consumer Affairs?

Dansoman Estates, G. Clay Cleland
Accra.

THE BUDGET AND TIMBER EXPORTERS

SIR—In their article on the Budget and the Economy (*Legon Observer* Vol. X No. 3) Messrs J. Ofori-Atta and K. Ewusi made the point that devaluation is going to put money in the pockets of exporters, making particular reference to timber.

The timber industry is a capital intensive one and from that point of view devaluation is a two-edged sword. Any gains accruing to the producer/exporter as a result of devaluation will be wiped clean by the higher cedi costs of his imported inputs—tyres, fuel, oils, glue, chain saws, spare parts, vehicles, etc. This point is worth bearing in mind as there has been a tremendous rundown of equipment and supplies over the past three years due to import constraints.

Ghana Timber Marketing Board, M. F. Owiredu
Takoradi. Chairman

ON ARMAMENTS AND ALL THAT

SIR—It is alright for Col. Felli to deplore the fact that the developed countries spend a lot of money on armaments while their development assistance to poorer countries is so paltry. While agreeing with the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs on this point, I hope he will agree that most developing countries living in peace spend far more on armaments and other so-called security matters in terms of the percentage of their Gross National Product than the developed countries.

By the way, and rather irrelevantly thought not irrelevantly, permit me, Sir, to congratulate Col. Felli on his resilience, survival ability and staying power. He has done well to outlast all his colleagues in Acheampong's successive teams since 1972—including Acheampong himself. The only problem is that I am scared stiff of people who survive through contradictory regimes.

A69 Prabiw Street, Kwesi Enu
Saltpond

PERCENTAGE OF DEVALUATION

SIR—To devalue the Cedi by 59% relative to its dollar parity (i.e. from $\text{C}\text{1.00} = \$0.87$ to $\text{C}\text{1.00} = \$0.36$) MEANS that the cedi price of the dollar has gone up by 139% (i.e. from $\text{C}\text{1.15} = \$1.00$ to $\text{C}\text{2.75} = \$1.00$).

For the cedi price of the dollar to increase by 139% following an exchange rate adjustment by Ghana MEANS that the cedi has been devalued by 59%.

To say therefore that as a result of an exchange rate adjustment the cedi price of the dollar has gone up by 139% is to say precisely that the cedi has been devalued by 59%. In effect a devaluation of the cedi automatically means an increase in the cedi price of the dollar.

Technically the cedi cannot be devalued by 100%. But for all practical purposes e.g. the cedi costs of imports and transactions denominated in foreign currency, and for measuring the economic effects of devaluation, the important consideration is the 139% increase in the cedi price of the dollar.

Dept. of Economics, J. Ofori-Atta
University of Ghana, Legon.

Review Article

POLITICS OF THE SWORD

By A. K. Ocran

Published by Rex Collings, London.

First printed, 1977. Price: £5

Reviewed by P. A. V. Ansah.

Since the military became actively involved in politics in Africa following the cascade of coups d'etat in the middle 1960's, the subject of the politicisation of the military has attracted attention, especially among scholars such as Ruth First, F. W. Guttridge, S. E. Finer, Claude Welch, Robert Pinkney and others. Not many of the coup leaders or participants themselves have recorded their thoughts on this phenomenon, and in the few cases that this has been done, the authors have sought to describe and justify their own part in the coup d'etat rather than reflect broadly on the phenomenon of the military in politics. Such was Lt-Gen. Afrifa's book on the Ghana coup of 1966 and Lt-Gen. Ocran's first book, *A Myth Is Broken*, on the same topic.

Lt-Gen. Ocran, however did not rest his literary efforts with his first book which appeared ten years ago. With the benefit of hindsight and his earlier experience, he has reflected further on the subject and gives us the fruits of his reflections in his second book, *Politics of the Sword*. As the sub-title indicates, the book is "a personal memoir on military involvement in Ghana and of problems of military government". The author takes the position of participant-observer who recalls both the 1966 coup in which he took part and the 1972 coup in Ghana whose activities we are all witnessing, and analyses military involvement in politics in the light of general principles, touching briefly on relevant or similar events in other parts of Africa.

The main thrust of the book is a discussion on whether the military having tasted political power, has become such an important factor to reckon with that it should be allowed direct participation in civilian government. To this question Gen. Ocran gives a categorical negative answer. He is convinced that "military rule is not the answer to Africa's perennial political and economic problems", and for the following reason: "Military governments have seldom provided the answer to any country's political, economic or social problems. If they could, countries plagued by coups in South America would be amongst the most politically stable and economically sound in the world today; which they are not. If it is true that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun it is equally true to say that politics seldom thrives in the hands of the military". If anyone seeks to challenge the validity of this assertion let him look around Ghana and see into what pitiful state this country has been reduced after nearly seven years of military rule.

General Ocran concedes that there are circumstances under which military intervention in politics is inevitable and justifiable, especially in a situation where a corrupt, oppressive civilian government closes all the avenues by which it can be changed through the ballot box. On the basis of this test, the author finds the 1966 Ghana coup fully justified and considers that even on the same ground, the Acheampong coup of 1972 was also justified, though nowhere is it suggested that the Progress Party government had closed any avenue through which it could be legally removed through the ballot box.

The author, however, goes to great lengths to show that where circumstances force the military to intervene

in politics, they should limit their intervention to a short surgical or salvaging operation and hand over to an elected civilian government as soon as circumstances permit. Any prolonged stay adversely affects both the military establishment and civilian population and lays bare the weaknesses of the military, especially when they pretend to solve long-term economic problems and become involved with civil administration at the lower levels. From this point of view, the two military governments of Ghana had distinct approaches and philosophies which the author briefly dilates on. The military "who think that administration can be reduced to a simple process of giving and obeying orders" fail to appreciate the complex nature of ruling a nation and end up killing the patient with an overdose of whatever potent medicine they prescribe or become infected by the diseases they set out to cure.

In a sense, *Politics of the Sword* could have also been called *A Myth Is Broken*; this time the myth of military efficiency and virtual indispensability in running a modern African state. It is in fact this myth which lay at the basis of the abortive attempt to institutionalise military participation in politics through Acheampong's version of Union Government. Contrary to the idle boast of "we have the men", General Ocran who should know what he is talking about says:

We are inclined to exaggerate the real efficiency of the military because we do not see them actually tested in the performance of their ultimate function, that of warfare. Military skills very seldom add up to the complex requirements of modern public administration. The general notion that the military can do everything is often a mistaken one. Indeed it is a fiction that is being accepted by some enlightened Africans; this is unfortunate.

Effects on Military

General Ocran is in no doubt whatsoever that military rule is unsuitable for developing countries and on this point he has been very consistent. While he was still a member of the National Liberation Council he wrote in *A Myth Is Broken*:

I believe that soldiers should leave politics alone. When they try to run a country, in spite of their enthusiasm they run it badly because they are, right from the beginning, expected to assume the role of policy-makers in a job for which they have had no previous training... They should never purport to govern; they cannot, because they generally lack the political education, the mentality and, above all, the flexibility of mind and approach to governmental problems.

The author stresses the point even more forcefully in his second book when after a long analysis he concludes:

The officer who tries to serve two masters by combining politics and military duties becomes at once a bad soldier and a bad politician. Many eminent generals and politicians on both sides of the world's ideological camp have come to the inevitable conclusion that military supremacy over civil authorities ruins both the nation and the military.

The adverse effects of military rule on the military itself appear to have escaped the attention of the "military-politicians" in Africa. General Ocran adverts to these in considerable detail. One only has to consider the large number of efficient, well-trained senior officers of the Ghana Armed Forces who have been prematurely retired or given sinecure diplomatic appointments since 1972 to realise the

debilitating repercussions on the Armed Forces' reservoir of expertise. With these retirements, political patronage enables younger officers to be rapidly promoted to fill ranks for which they have neither the expertise, maturity nor the accumulated experience. In the long run it is the nation's Armed Forces that suffer for flirting with politics.

Nor is this the only handicap that the Armed Forces suffer through their involvement in politics. When the military become politicised and military personnel are sent out in large numbers to occupy civilian positions for which they have no recognisable talents, their poor performance reflects badly on the image of the military. What is even more serious, the military personnel posted out become subject to ethnic, partisan, social and other pressures and are soon dragged into corruptive influences and intrigues. They shed the Spartan image of the soldier and adopt the otiose and effete living style of corrupt politicians.

Rapid Promotions

Another consequence of military coups in Africa which undermines discipline, jeopardises cohesion and breeds resentment in the military is that those who directly participate in the coup reward themselves with rapid promotions which are unrelated to the strength and command structure of the forces or the skills and experience of the beneficiaries of such promotions. This naturally generates resentment among the officers who have been bypassed and weakens the morale of the rank and file who see themselves either completely left out of the sharing of the booty, so-to-speak, or given the bare crumbs in the form of bonuses. Incidentally, the author himself benefitted from this accelerated promotion, going from Colonel to Lieutenant-General in three years. General Afrifa's promotion, was even more meteoric, going from Major to Lieutenant-General within the same short period. Of course, compared with other African countries, there has been relative modesty in Ghana. Sergeants Mobutu and Eyadema rose to the rank of Major-General and General respectively in less than ten years, not to speak of Field-Marshal elsewhere on the continent who assumed that rank in record time.

Politics of the Sword is very rich in its analysis of the role of the military in Ghanaian politics; when discussing the politics of other sub-Saharan African countries, the book is less illuminating. The author tends to explain military take-overs there in terms of the official and public reasons given by the coup leaders. If the author had the time or the intention to study the question more deeply (admittedly he had no such intention) he would have realised that, as in most cases in Africa and elsewhere, the private misgivings of the military in general and the ambitions of disgruntled officers in particular, have provoked more coups than the venality, corruption, arrogance, mismanagement and vindictiveness of civilian politicians often cited among the public reasons. The author himself tacitly makes this admission in the Ghana case.

It became clear after 1966 that the apparent neglect of the Armed Forces by Nkrumah, the special treatment given to the President's Own Guard Regiment, the threat to send troops to fight in Rhodesia, the dismissal of top officers of the Army and the loss of morale following the failure of the government to provide for the needs of the Armed Forces were more important and immediate causes of the coup than considerations of the nation's general well-being; in that particular case, however, the political, economic and social situation of the country was such as to make the discontent of the military coincide with civilian discontent. In January 1972, we were left in

no doubt that the coup was staged to restore to the military the few amenities that they enjoyed even under Nkrumah and which Busia had taken away from them. And Colonel Acheampong, as he then was, confirmed suspicions that he may have led the coup for personal reasons when he revealed that he started planning his action six months after the Progress Party had assumed office, that is, even before the new government had had enough time to make mistakes.

Hidden, unavowed motives have also been discernible in military takeovers in other parts of the continent. Whatever instability there had been in Dahomey (Benin) — and goodness knows there was a lot — General Soglo's intervention in 1965 cannot be explained without reference to the personal friction between him and Mr. Ahomadegbe who had antagonised Soglo further by establishing close links with Soglo's immediate subordinate, Col. Aho. Colonel (now Field Marshal/Emperor) Bokassa's coup in the then Centrafrican Republic in January 1966 was also motivated by the overweening ambition of Bokassa to taste supreme power which he has now translated into imperial grandeur and pomp. Amin's personal fears of being probed and dismissed by President Obote played a considerable part in his decision to stage a coup in 1971.

Similarly, in Togo, the 1963 coup of Eyadema was triggered off by the personal ambitions of Eyadema and some demobilised and unemployable soldiers; the latter coup in 1967 was an attempt by Eyadema to forestall the ascendancy into power of an Ewe dominated government which had promised to arrest and try the murderer of Olympio — and the suspected murderer was easily identifiable! In Chad, the Congo, Zaire, Mali and Niger, personal motives and the concern to safeguard the corporate interests of the Armed Forces have been more responsible for military interventions than the basic desire to save, liberate or re-deem the respective nations from the hands of rapacious, corrupt and incompetent political administrators.

Fragile Political Structures

Of course, there have been cases as in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Upper Volta where the circumstances of the take-over and the subsequent actions of the military governments would seem to put the national interest above personal ambitions. In the case of the Upper Volta, for example, the army intervened in January 1966 only following demonstrations and a general strike which had virtually paralysed the country. Such cases are the exception rather than the rule, and attention is drawn here to the question of private motivation in coups because too many analysts have tended rather too readily to accept the official reasons given by coup leaders at their face value. Perhaps the author refrained from looking at this particular aspect of coups because he did not want to be diverted from his original aim of assembling mainly objectively verifiable data on which to base his subsequent analysis.

In Part I of the book, General Ocran tries to provide material on the social, political and economic conditions in Africa which tend to create weak and unstable governments that in turn provide an excuse for the military to intervene. Though this part is interesting, it is not sufficiently detailed to give a very satisfactory explanation of the very complex nature of African societies moving from the traditional to the modern stage of development. But of course the author makes it clear that such analysis is not his main objective; he provides just enough details to put his major thesis in a wider context. The real meat of the work

comes in Part II where the author gives an insider's view of the military in politics with particular reference to Ghana. This is done with a detachment that can be explained both in terms of scholarly objectivity and disillusionment with the second experiment of military rule in Ghana since January 1972.

On one point, however, the General's objectivity completely abandons him, and this is where he speaks about the short rule of the Progress Party. One can understand the General's profound disappointment with that government. It will be recalled that when after being inducted into office, the members of that government and M.P.s were hesitating to declare their assets as demanded by the Constitution, the General threatened to take the matter to court. The retort of the Secretary-General of the P.P. was to interpret this as a threat to subvert the government and to say something to the effect that it would take more than ten Ocrans to overthrow that government. In addition, the General was maligned by the party press; he "was harassed by the police (with Busia's knowledge)" and his "wife's business was deliberately ruined."

Even before this incident, General Ocran must have been irritated by Busia's request shortly after the coup that power be handed over to him without going through the normal democratic processes of election: an impertinent request which was rightly refused. But even this arrogance is not enough to justify the very unfair picture that Gen. Ocran draws of Busia's short rule. In the three pages devoted to the period of Busia's administration, the author catalogues only the mistakes of the government and concludes:

To put the matter more simply, by the time the military took over Busia's government, the whole government had become a vast railway passenger coach in which

Ghanaians waited listlessly without knowing where the train would take them; nor even when it would start. Busia's government had several weaknesses, some of which have certainly been exaggerated; he made a number of avoidable mistakes, but certainly the accusation of his government lacking both purpose and direction is more than just unfair; it is malicious. Perhaps the economic policy of a laissez-faire or free market system which he tried to pursue was not suited to Ghana's condition, but a clear policy was laid down for all who cared to see. Again, it is certainly not true that "Busia's answer to the acute food shortage was that his Minister of Agriculture should organize a march and "Hoot at Hunger". Incidentally if the author insists on describing the food shortage in 1970-71 as "acute", he will be hard put to finding an accurate word to describe what we have been going through since 1975! Surely not all the foodstuffs harvested in the much publicised "bumper" harvests of mid-1972 were planted after 13th January, 1972.

General Ocran also accuses Busia of plunging the country into economic chaos. If indeed the situation in Ghana at the end of 1971 was chaotic, catastrophe and bedlam may be too mild to describe the conditions in Ghana during the past three years. Even if the General had enough reasons not to be enamoured of Busia and of his administration, ordinary fairness required that he gave credit where credit was due. This reviewer believes that the cutting down of privileges (such as the abolition of car maintenance allowance and the increase in the contribution towards rent by public servants) was a positive step in the direction of social justice in this country. And surely the fact that at Busia's overthrow, there were no political prisoners should have struck the attention of the author who elsewhere has denounced arbitrary detentions. The

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short shrift General Ocran gives to Busia does less than justice to the late Prime Minister and also to the author's own sense of fairplay and scholarly objectivity displayed elsewhere in the book with such commendable frankness. Despite the author's earlier justification of the 1972 coup and his extremely unfair judgement of the P.P. government, he states elsewhere in the book that "the military themselves did not allow (Busia's government) to work long enough for anyone to pass any meaningful judgement on it." The logic of the author's position escapes the present reviewer.

After a very objective analysis of the military in politics, marred in the one place just pointed out, General Ocran concludes categorically that military rule of a permanent or semi-permanent nature will retard rather than advance Africa's progress. He has no illusions that the military will continue to intervene in politics in several parts of Africa. This is mainly because inexperienced and greedy civilian politicians will provide convenient excuses for such adventurism. But the more important reason, the author correctly observes, is that in Africa there is "the absence of strong well-grounded political and other institutions and of public opinion" to act as effective counterweight to the military. In other words, it is only when we buttress our fragile political institutions with effective workers', students', and professionals' bodies which can organise civil disobedience to frustrate a military take-over that we shall see the end of coups and learn to solve our problems without resort to arms. But a certain coordination among these civilian bodies is essential. In the light of what happened in this country last year and this year, General Ocran's advice on the matter is worth quoting in extenso:

It may not be generally realized that a military government can be overthrown by a civilian population itself, that is by workers, students, or civil servants acting together through demonstrations, strikes and general disobedience. How this change is planned and executed depends on a combination of several factors, the foremost of which is leadership. There should be someone with the required drive, force of personality and daring to urge the opposing groups on to action. Secondly, organisation is needed: acting separately the opposing groups are not likely to succeed. Organisational requirements would include means of propaganda and underground mobilizing units.

A telling commentary on "what went wrong" with the half-successful professionals' and students' revolution. Perhaps the workers of this country will take note of this so that the next time round, they will not leave the students and professionals to go it alone in trying to pull down an inept, oppressive, corrupt and depraved third-rate dictatorship, the consequences of whose colossal maladministration we are feeling right now.

Since the reconstituted SMC dropped the idea of military and police participation in the novel experiment of partyless Union/National Government, the matter of military participation in politics has lost some of the acuity and passion with which it had been discussed prior to the end of July. Nevertheless, the military, like the poor, will always be with us and since no one can predict what some ambitious ones among them may be up to in the years ahead, the question of their future role in national affairs still deserves close study, and *Politics of the Sword* is a very major contribution to the study from a very competent source with first-hand experience and the requisite intellectual discipline.

One might even go as far as to suggest that the book be made compulsory reading for both aspiring civilian politicians and military officers; the former to learn from it their weaknesses which may provide plausible excuses for military intervention, and the latter to get a lucid analysis of the harm that can be done by their profession through the impatience and overweening ambition of some of them. It will be both rewarding and salutary. Would to God that we could get more of such literate soldiers as have the perception of General Ocran to make an equally worthy contribution to the discussion on the role of the military in contemporary African politics.

Opinion

INCREASES IN PURCHASING POWER— THE ARMED FORCES AND CIVIL SERVICE

By
Ato K. Ahwoi

In times of economic difficulties human beings evolve ingenious methods to make ends meet. Ghana is no exception to this malaise. Of late corruption, bribery and "Kalabule" have become normal means of survival. The unfortunate aspect of these devious means of balancing the equation of existence is that the ordinary man suffers unnecessarily whilst the upper income group, who are charged with the interpretation and implementation of the laws of the land, have devised means of acquiring a bigger and bigger share of the national cake.

Through the sweat of the cocoa farmer and the miner, the country earns foreign exchange; this is made available to the middle and upper classes to import cars. The Government, through the banking system loans out funds at heavily subsidized rates to these classes to purchase cars and thereafter monthly, the Government subsidizes the incomes of this class by doling out to car owners vehicle maintenance allowances. These practices have come to be accepted as norms in our society.

However, the farmer or miner whose sweat produces the foreign currency, cannot get access to it if he needs it. He cannot get cutlasses or protective glasses to use to increase production. The provider of foreign currency cannot get access to his contribution but the reckless dissipator has easy access.

That the present system is biased against the lower income groups cannot be gainsaid, but of late certain institutions have been using procedural methods to increase their incomes to the detriment of society in general and the lower income group in particular. Since we all buy from the same market this is a very serious case of injustice.

The Ghana Armed Forces is the worst culprit in this exercise. In spite of the strength of our Armed Forces, the nation has a four-star General. The Army can boast of two 3-star Generals, a number of 2-star Generals, Brigadiers and Colonels. Some of these officers in a matter of only four years leap-frogged into the higher echelons of the Armed Forces.

Many Ghanaians have questioned the justification behind these rapid military promotions and the writer would have kept quiet over this but for the fact that the inability of society to check the wanton promotions in the military has led other institutions to also follow suit.

A few years ago the position of Senior Principal Secretary was introduced into the Civil Service. The rationale behind this move was that certain ministries had grown so big that a number of Principal Secretaries were required to man such ministries and it was necessary therefore to get one big brother to oversee the activities of these lesser Principal Secretaries. Some of us accepted this argument without agreeing to it, but we suspected the position would be abused. Our fears and uncertainties have in no time at all been justified, for now the newly created position is being used as a promotional avenue.

Presently the Ghana Civil Service boasts of over 20 officials of the rank of Senior Principal Secretary. The service also has over 50 Principal Secretaries and an equivalent number of Principal Assistant Secretaries.

What creates alarm in my mind is that when the Senior Principal Secretary position also gets choked up are we going to create a new position, and if so where do we stop? This is a classic example of Parkinson's Law!

The point must be raised as to how different the work of a Senior Principal Secretary is from the work of a Principal Secretary. This point is being raised because when the recent Civil Service reshuffle was conducted some Senior Principal Secretaries were transferred and in their places were put Principal Secretaries. If Principal Secretaries can now do the jobs of Senior Principal Secretaries at these ministries then why have Senior Principal Secretaries at all?

The answer to the point just raised might be that the workload itself is not different but that certain individuals have stayed in the service long enough to be further compensated for long service; and where such further promotional avenues do not exist, new positions must be created with new salary structures attached. The writer has, however, always been of the opinion that salaries must be related to productivity and job content but it seems the new economic system being evolved relates salaries to length of service.

Senior Managing Director

This new economic system glosses over the fact that the country's exchequer must bear the bill and the poor man's taxes have to be increased to enable us pay the salaries of these super Civil Servants.

This writer recalls that in the "Report of the Salary Review Committee, July 1974", it is stated on page 71 that "in terms of job evaluation the posts of Principal Secretary at the Ministry, and the Managing Director of a Public Board/ Corporation are at par and therefore there is no reason whatsoever for the two posts to be remunerated differently".

With the recent appointments of Senior Principal Secretaries what is the analogous position in the Public Service? Or has it just been realised that the job evaluation of the administrative heads of the various Ministries is now totally different from that of the heads of Public Board/ Corporations?

The newspapers have of late been referring to a number of lecturers at our Universities as Senior Lecturers or Professors. If the count I have taken from these reports is correct then there has been a sudden increase in senior lecturers and professors at our Universities. Perhaps the university authorities can throw more light on my observation.

The Armed Forces and Civil Service usage of promotional avenues to reduce the impact of the present economic difficulties on themselves has not gone unnoticed by other institutions and wholesale promotions have been carried out by a number of institutions.

These are hard times and in such periods all avenues are used to increase purchasing power. Sight, however, should not be lost of the fact that yesterday, it was the Armed Forces, today it is the Civil Service, tomorrow it might be the Universities and the Public Services, and who knows where all this would end?

The economy should not be operated in such a way that the nation might be saddled with redundant positions such as Senior Managing Director and Senior Chairman.

The Budget III

III. AGRICULTURE

98. The agricultural sector remains the top priority of the Government. A total amount of C76.2 million has been approved for this sector. Government has established a number of major agricultural projects directed, especially, towards assisting the small-scale farmer to improve upon his productivity. These include the Upper Regional Agricultural Development Programme, the MIDAS Project, and the KWAE Oil Palm Development Project. These projects which are estimated at a total cost of C121 million are particularly designed to ensure full small scale farmer participation, by providing him with a package of farm inputs to increase his output. Government also realises that such programmes will make it easier for farmers to dispose of their farm produce. Farmers who are not catered for under similar programmes will continue to receive assistance from the Extension Services of the Ministry of Agriculture and its agencies.

Crops Production

99. Of the total allocation of C76.2 million, approximately C15.8 million is earmarked for crops development. The objective is to return Ghana to self-sufficiency in food production. Since the small-scale farmer is the mainstay of agricultural production in Ghana, the Department of Agriculture is directed to organize small-scale farmers into associations which can be reached with packages of farm inputs. Emphasis is to be placed on foodstuffs production.

100. The production of cereal grains, particularly maize and rice, will continue to receive the serious attention of Government. To this end, the Grains and Legumes Development Board, in collaboration with the appropriate Government agencies will organize a crash programme for maize development in the important maize-growing districts of the country.

101. The programme for the multiplication of improved seeds is to be expanded by the establishment of three more foundation seed maize farms in the country and a seed rice farm at Tono in the Upper Region. During the past year, certified seed growers who were expected to sell their seed maize and rice to the Ministry of Agriculture were lured into selling their output for direct human consumption because of the more attractive prices they could obtain on the open market. Government has decided to incorporate the Seed Multiplication Unit as a commercial organisation which should be in the position to review, from time to time, the producer price of seed maize and rice. An amount of C433,000 is allocated under the Department of Agriculture for the seed multiplication programme. The formation of "Nnoba" groups and crops associations to boost food crops production will continue to receive the support of the Government.

102. Other food crops such as yams, cassava and plantain

will continue to receive the requisite inputs. The Department of Agriculture will expand its nursery programme to provide planting materials to an increasing number of farmers.

103. Storage facilities currently available in the country are not enough for the requirements of agriculture. To satisfy this need, and to ensure that farmers promptly obtain what they want, Government has decided to give priority to the establishment of storage facilities.

104. Parastatal organisations which are involved in the promotion of specific crops will be required to expand their fields of operations and rapidly improve on their efficiency as the only means by which they can justify their continued existence. An amount of about C14.2 million is earmarked for the operations of these organisations.

Fisheries

105. The fishing industry has, over the past few years, encountered serious problems which have adversely affected fish output. The factors which have been militating against increased fish production include:—

- (a) Inadequate procurement of fishing gear and equipment as well as spare parts partly as a result of poor credit facilities and inadequacy of import licence allocations;
- (b) Lack of well-equipped repair and maintenance facilities;
- (c) Inadequate research effort coupled with an ineffective extension service;
- (d) Unfavourable weather conditions;
- (e) Extension of territorial waters and the cancellation of fishing rights of the State Fishing Corporation by some neighbouring African countries

Consequently, planned targets have not been achieved and Government has had to approve the importation of a substantial tonnage of fish in recent years to supplement domestic fish output.

106. The State Fishing Corporation is actively engaged in negotiations with a number of countries for fishing rights.

107. An amount of C2 million has been allocated to the Fisheries Department to continue with its research and extension programmes. The fish culture programme initiated a few years ago with a view to increasing the availability of fish especially in the Northern and Upper Regions through the establishment of fish hatcheries, fish farms and stocking of existing dams with fish, has lagged behind schedule. The whole programme would be re-appraised to determine its effectiveness. The provision of C340,000 has been made to meet the cost of constructional works on the fish culture projects at Yapei, Tizza, Golinga and Nasia.

108. The programme for expanding and improving fishing harbours and landing facilities along the coast and the Volta Lake will continue to be implemented. In this regard, the Architectural and Engineering Services Corporation has reached an agreement with the foreign firm for the formation of a joint venture for the construction of the Elmina Harbour at an estimated cost of about C20 million. Construction of preliminary infrastructural facilities has already started. The Volta River Authority has started negotiations with CIDA on the possibility of obtaining both technical and financial assistance for the commencement of the Yeji fishing complex, along the lines of the Kpandu-Torkor Fishing Project.

109. The Department of Fisheries will continue to co-operate with foreign organisations in the implemen-

tation of programmes aimed at furthering the development of the fisheries sector. Further testing of the "Car-fish 36"—a British made fishing boat capable of landing on the beach will continue. Consequently, Government, has approached the Japanese Government with a request for the provision of a research vessel estimated to cost 2.5 million on a grant basis. It is envisaged that negotiations pertaining to the acquisition of the vessel would be finalized by the end of this fiscal year. The acquisition of this vessel will, to a large extent, strengthen the research activities of the Fisheries Research Unit.

Livestock

110. The sum of C16.4 million has been set aside this year for livestock development programmes under the Ministry of Agriculture. This, by no means, represents the total investment in this sector. The bulk of investment in livestock development is financed by the private farmer and such public organisations as the Agricultural Development Bank, the Bank of Ghana, the State Farms Corporation, the Food Production Corporation, the Regional Development Corporations and the Ghana Livestock Company.

111. The Department of Animal Husbandry initiated a number of major livestock projects two years ago with a view to increasing livestock production. These include the Ghana/UNDP Sheep and Goats Project, the Kwahu Dairy Project, a Central Feed Mill and the Grand Parent Pig Project. It is planned to accelerate the pace of infrastructural development on these projects this year. In this regard, a total sum of C2.4 million has been provided to cater for these projects.

112. Breeding centres and ranches will be greatly improved upon and expanded. A number of breeding stock will be imported to augment the national stock. The existing stations will be strengthened to offer support livestock farmers especially those in the Northern Volta, Brong-Ahafo, Central and Greater Accra Regions. The communal paddocks which are being established in the main livestock centres will constitute the foci for the dissemination of information and teaching of new practices and skills to farmers. Attention will be focused on the development of better grazing ground and watering facilities and facilities to the animals during the dry season.

113. Development in dairy production will be geared to the supply for the market of regenerated milk. In this connection, the Amrahia Dairy Farm is to be organised into a viable commercial enterprise. This will involve increasing its stock to 700 Friesian Holstein Milking Cows, and making available machinery and acreage sufficient to provide green chopped fodder, silage and grazing areas for the cows and young stock. It is envisaged that the Ministry's dairy farm will assist prospective dairy farmers to set up statelike dairy farms around the project area.

114. The Veterinary Services Department will intensify its activities in Animal Health, Specific Disease Control, Artificial Insemination, Sheep and Goats Disease Control and Vaccine Production.

115. Regarding animal health, constructional works in respect of veterinary health centres and clinics will continue in the areas where there is concentration of livestock in order to enable the Department offer prompt and efficient service to livestock farmers.

116. Specific disease control projects which were initiated in 1976/77 included tsetse and trypanosomiasis control. In the Gonja area where the pilot scheme was started, the various species of tsetse found in the locality have been

identified and mapping out of infected areas has also been completed. Similar work is actively in progress in the North West section (Wa). In order to achieve the objective of reclaiming large areas for livestock farming within a short time, the Government is to embark upon a new phase of the project to be jointly financed by the West German Government and the Ghana Government this financial year. The control of ticks and other ecto-parasites will also be given due attention.

117. Sheep and goats rearing is becoming increasingly important in the country. In view of this development, the Department has embarked upon programmes of investigation into the diseases of ruminants with the view to reducing their mortality and increasing their rate of multiplication. Expansion works at the Sheep and Goats Disease Investigation Farms at Boko, Techiman, Tarkwa and Akim Oda will be vigorously pursued.

118. Co-ordination between the Veterinary Services Department and the Department of Animal Husbandry will be strengthened to avoid waste and duplication of efforts and to ensure mutual support.

Irrigation

119. Government recognizes the importance of irrigation in its agricultural development programme and has instituted an irrigation development programme, with a view to ensuring increased and sustained crop, fish and livestock production all the year round. Concrete measures have been taken to accelerate the tempo of work on a number of medium-scale projects. These include Dawhenya, Okyereko, Mankessim, Afife, Weija and Tono projects.

120. In view of the importance attached to irrigation, the Government set up during the last financial year, an Irrigation Development Authority charged with the responsibility not only of formulating plans for the efficient development of irrigation in the country. It is also responsible for the expeditious execution of programmes for the effective use of irrigated lands in co-operation with other agencies involved in providing extension services to farmers. An allocation of £20.5 million has been provided to meet the operational expenses of the Authority's projects.

121. The major irrigation schemes at Tono, Weija, Bontanga and Veve have been allocated £3.5 million, £850,000, £610,000 and £3.5 million respectively. It is estimated that constructional works in respect of the Tono Irrigation Project will be completed by the end of the first half of this financial year.

122. Further sums of £438,000, £585,000, £219,000 have been set aside for continuing work on Afife, Dawhenya and Okyereko.

123. The main difficulties impeding the expeditious execution of construction works include the lack of machinery, land-clearing equipment, vehicles and materials. In order to solve these problems, a total amount of £5 million has been made for the purchase of land-clearing and construction equipment.

124. Topographical and soil surveys as well as feasibility studies will be continued in respect of a number of irrigation projects including the Tamne, Ayensu, Kpong, Accra plains and Angaw Basin irrigation projects.

IV. MINING

125. The mining and minerals industry continues to play a significant role in the national economy. However, there is the need to break new grounds in this sector since some of the existing mines are facing problems of either

depletion or of relatively less profitable lower grade ores. The Government will therefore intensify its efforts toward (i) the establishment of an alumina plant for the processing of the Kibi bauxite deposits; (ii) the conversion of manganese carbonates into manganese oxides and (iii) the mining of the Birim diamonds.

Iron and Steel

126. The feasibility study on the Opon Mansi Integrated Iron and Steel project has reached an advanced stage and it is expected that the final report will be submitted to the Government early next year. One major problem facing the implementation of the projects is the availability of power. The project will require about 110 megawatts of power but due to expected increase in the overall consumption even with the completion of Kpong, the power requirements of the projects cannot be met. Accordingly the Government will expedite action on the implementation of the project and ensure that sufficient power is available for the iron and steel project. An amount of £1.9 million has been provided for the continuation of the feasibility study.

Gold

127. The sharp increase in the price of gold necessitated action on the re-opening of some of the closed gold mines. During the last fiscal year, the Geological Survey Department and the State Gold Mining Corporation continued their studies into the possibility of re-opening the Akrokerrri, Mampamhwe and Obenemasi goldmines. Results so far are encouraging but further exploratory work is required. An amount of £0.8 million has therefore been approved for the continuation of these studies. An additional amount of £1.2 million has also been allocated to the State Gold Mining Corporation to commence studies on the possibility of re-opening the Buesichem-Bogoso Goldmine, the Pepe-Akontanse Goldmine and the Prestea No. 6 Vertical Shaft.

128. Besides underground goldmining, alluvial prospects along the banks of the Bonsa, Pra, Ankobra, Tano, Offin, and Fura rivers appear encouraging. During this fiscal year, the Geological Survey Department will investigate alluvial gold occurrences in the tributaries of the Bonsa River. The sum of £160,000 has been approved for this project.

Limestone

129. It has now been proved beyond all reasonable doubt that the limestone deposits at Nauli cannot be exploited for the production of cement in the country. Those deposits in the area which can be mined by the open-cast method will not be exploited for the production of lime particularly for the building industry in the country. The Geological Survey Department and the Building and Road Research Institute have, therefore, started work on the evaluation of the other limestone deposits at Bupe and Bongo-Da in the Northern Region and Oterkpulu in the Eastern Region.

130. The Government has approved the sum of £360,000 during this fiscal year to enable the Geological Survey Department to evaluate these deposits.

Diamonds

131. The Geological Survey Department will continue its prospecting and evaluation work on diamonds in the Upper Birim and Bonsa Rivers. Further investigation on diamond occurrences around Akonfudi and Dansami in the Assin Traditional Area will also be carried out. A total amount of £420,000 has been allocated for the above studies.

Clay

132. During the last fiscal year, the Geological Survey Department prospected and evaluated some clay deposits in the country for the manufacture of bricks and tiles. Most of the results were encouraging; and the demand for brick and tile products is high. An amount of C0.5 million has been approved this fiscal year for further evaluation work.


V. FORESTRY

133. The significance of the forestry sector in the national economy is widely recognised. In addition to its direct economic benefits, Ghana's forests also provide indirect benefits in protecting water catchment areas, preventing soil erosion, sedimentation of reservoirs and down-streaming flooding effects.

134. To ensure permanence in the availability of timber resources, the Government demarcated some forest areas as reserves. At present, both the reserved and unreserved forests are being exploited. The unreserved forests are not only being depleted but are also being converted so rapidly to agriculture that in the very near future they will lose their present importance as a source of timber.

135. In the light of the above situation, in 1970 the Forestry Department embarked on an afforestation programme to supplement the remaining resource. The gestation period of forest plantation is such that in order for the programme to be effective an annual planting rate of 10,900 hectares would be required to replenish the depleted stock. However, owing to financial constraints, the Department has been planting 128 hectares per annum. For this fiscal year, an amount of C5.6 million has been allocated for afforestation programmes.

(To be continued)



Matters Arising

ELECTIONS IN A POLITICAL VACUUM— A REJOINER

By
J. K. Agovi

SIR—The *Legon Observer* editorial of 13th—26th October 1978 Vol. X, No. 4 makes very interesting reading and raises pertinent issues on the impending country-wide District Council elections due to be held on the 17th November 1978.

It was contended in the editorial that these elections will, regrettably, be held in a "political vacuum"; and that since 'democratic processes' have been 'inoperative at the grassroots' for a long time, the democratic spirit has indeed been a difficult enterprise among the mass of the population. I had hoped that for precisely these very important reasons, District Council elections would be regarded as at least comparable stature or importance as general elections on the national level.

Unfortunately, *The Legon Observer* thought otherwise: 'National Government type elections' at the local level, continued the editorial 'do not carry the same import as they do in the case of general elections; and that 'chaos' 'failure' or misfortunes' at the local level throughout the

country, 'are in no sense comparable to catastrophe at the national level!

This is a most unfortunate view. For, it seems to suggest that it is desirable to pursue the idea of a 'democratic culture' only on the national level in which popular representation, a critical democratic disposition, accountability and all the cherished freedoms may be encouraged. When however, it comes to the 'grassroots', and 'among the mass of the population' we can very conveniently afford to abandon the democratic principle or at best, compromise it.

If, for reasons of lack of courage and foresight, we should be coerced to adopt a no-party government and a no-party state, I have every reason to believe that our best safeguard will be to develop this 'democratic culture' at the grassroots level. And even if we were permitted a coalition National Government in a multi-party state, the democratic spirit at the grassroots level will be a further institution of strength against sudden coups at dawn, arbitrariness, concentration of administrative powers in Accra and lack of development perspectives. There is therefore no need to put the cart before the horse.

In this situation, the *Daily Graphic* of 13th October, 1978 and the *Ghanaian Times* of 16th October, 1978 report that the National Association of Local Councils the Northern Youth Association, Peace and Solidarity Council, bodies some of which actively campaigned for no-party State and no-party representation, have protested against the idea of the C500.00 deposit for the District Council elections.

They have done so without suggesting an alternative method for controlling the number of possible candidates who, independently, may wish to stand. With the publication of the detailed regulations governing District Council elections, further belated protests will be heard. For, a lot of people are likely to be disqualified on the basis of the new regulations. For example, there is now a requirement of 'continuous' residence in one locality for six months prior to nomination. With the incessant drift of the educated rural folk to the cities and urban centres since Independence, our District Councils, especially those in the hinterland, are likely, in the light of the present measure, to be denuded of men of intellectual merit and standing.

In addition, non-wage earners especially the self-employed farmer, tailor, artisan, entrepreneur, market woman, store-keeper, fisherman both in the rural and urban area, who very likely have no idea of a Tax Clearance Certificate, will also be excluded. As a result, these 'voluntary' Associations may continue to protest, but they would have to suggest a way out in a situation where political parties are forbidden, and everyone is allowed to 'stand on his own merit'! (Or have we by these measures abandoned the idea of individual merit?)

It is quite clear that these measures are measures of convenience. They are undemocratic, but there appears to be no alternative, especially in view of the little time at the disposal of the Electoral Commission (owing largely to the arrogance and lack of foresight of the previous S.M.C. government), and the political prohibitions now in force and intended to be in force for a long time to come.

But surely, Mr. Editor, can we afford to sacrifice principle for "convenience"? Do we as a people have to submit to this attempt to subvert the 'inculcation of democratic culture' at the grassroots? In the event of this succeeding, what prevents the government from adopting similar measures for the conduct of national elections?



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