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THE NEED FOR VISIBLE JUSTICE

THE government of Ghana issued on Friday, 15th March a statement ordering the reopening of the country's three universities which had been closed down nearly five weeks before. The Government statement (reproduced in full elsewhere in this issue) was largely consequent upon the findings of the Gyeke-Dako Committee set up to investigate the student demonstrations. The report itself has not been published and this makes the government statement difficult to discuss.

Nevertheless we consider that paragraph five of the statement is of grave and general importance and deserves the fullest attention. We refer to the part of the statement which says:

The Government wishes to assure the public that reports of excessive military force have always been investigated and the appropriate military action taken against those found guilty thereof.

Our view is that it is obviously not enough for government to tell us that some unknown, unheard of secret action is taken against offending military personnel. The government may well be telling the truth, but how does anybody know? It was once announced that some servicemen have been dismissed for molesting civilians, but until the authorities were almost compelled to come out with that announcement, this was not generally known, nor has the tradition of announcing such penalties been maintained. One of the more famous maxims about justice says that not only must it be done but that it must also be seen to be done. It is our view that the recent developments have shown the wisdom of that maxim. For if the NUGS had been able to ascertain what action had been taken in the case of their earlier complaints about military brutality involving a female student of Cape Coast University and a student of the Zuarungu Secondary School it might not have found it necessary to organise the recent demonstrations which the government found so upsetting. In other words, had government been in the habit of letting the country know the proceedings whereby offending military personnel are brought to justice, we all may have been spared this recent major misfortune.

But there are other considerations too. When soldiers infringe the laws of the land while acting in a non-military capacity, such as overseeing the distribution of foreign goods or collecting debts or beating up policemen, we see no reason why the law of the land should not take its normal course and why the offenders should not be brought before justice in the manner prescribed for all citizens of the country. As

we have had occasion to remark before, government is by its practice of invisible justice creating the unfortunate impression that soldiers inhabit a separate state whose laws are different from the laws of Ghana. And certainly this impression could tend to breed an excess of revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the soldiers, while arousing an understandable feeling of resentment in the general citizenry. Perhaps civilians need not know what happens to soldiers who infringe the military code in barracks, but once they get out of barracks to molest civilians or to perform other normally non-military functions then the whole nation is entitled to know how they are dealt with.

We think that if soldiers felt that the whole nation would be witness to their punishment whenever they maltreated civilians they would have put a stop by now to these atrocities. And let us face it, Ghanaians are now deeply unhappy about the present situation in which every private feels he is a superman who can kick his ununiformed compatriots about. The catalogue of offences of this nature is much too long and the agonised outcries against them have been made too often and for too long. Instance justice dealt out by soldiers to civilians must stop now, and one way of stopping it is that government must bring the offenders openly to book.

Further, the whole concept of revolutionary discipline which we are being urged on radio everyday to embrace stands in danger of being violently abhorred instead, if it is allowed to be equated with arbitrary drilling and molestation of civilians by soldiers. If government thinks that the laws of this country with respect to certain crimes are weak, let the laws be strengthened. Recently, the (government of the) N.R.C. has toughened the sanctions against hoarding in N.R.C.D. 245. Some people may feel that the new sanctions are too severe; but nobody can quarrel with the manner in which the new measures have been introduced. For here is an exercise which combines the need for toughness with an observance of the rule of law. And essentially, this is what we urge. We think that the laws of this country can cope or can be made to cope with our problems of corruption and inefficiency if we apply these laws with rigour and without favour. Let us not allow revolutionary discipline to mean that justice shall be dealt out instantly to suspected offenders by any soldier who feels like flexing his muscles.

Finally, and to return to the Gyeke-Dako Committee's Report and the government's statement consequent upon it: the government mentions that it is aware that some students are "still engaging in subversion" — this is a grave

charge in which the public are naturally interested. It may be erroneous but not unreasonable to assume that the government's charge of subversion against students is founded on the report of the fact-finding committee. In any case, the Gyeke-Dako Committee's report is a document in which the students, the University staff and authorities and the Ghanaian public have great interest and concern; and it is only fair that government should publish it immediately.

Agriculture

GUIDELINES FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (II) MEANS OF EXPANDING PRODUCTION

By

A Special Correspondent

Having selected for promotion those commodities which can be profitably absorbed by the domestic and foreign markets, and whose expansion would therefore have a significant impact on the economy, our next task is to examine how the desired expansion is to come about. A commodity-by-commodity approach suggests itself, since each commodity presents a significant set of implementation problems. This will follow later; but, first, a general framework for the strategy of expanding production.

The key to development lies in the adoption of more efficient means of production. Expanded production will come as the result of increasing the productivity of agriculture. This process requires investment, for it involves the use of new kinds of inputs mostly supplied from outside the traditional agricultural sector. The use of new inputs constitutes the difference between a traditional agriculture with low productivity, low income and no surpluses, and an industry with a potential for production at low cost.

As resources for purchased inputs are limited while the traditional inputs of land and labour are relatively plentiful, the methods and inputs which will give the best results for our limited resources (public and private) will need careful consideration. Capital goods are relatively scarce and expensive; and our circumstances would seem to favour those methods which will bring about the desired results with small amounts of capital. The question thus arises: which factors of production, or methods, would be most economic for developing agriculture? What combination of them will produce the best results within

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the limits imposed by prevailing scarcity conditions, namely, shortage of foreign exchange, relatively expensive machines, high construction costs, and relatively cheap land and labour?

The new, or modern, inputs fall into several classes. One important class of modern inputs for crop production includes fertilizers and improved varieties of seed, to raise yields, and materials to protect against pests and diseases. A second class includes animal power, tractors and machines which tend to substitute for human labour. A third category investment is land improvement such as clearing or irrigation which involves long-term expenditures to improve land productivity. A fourth category, concerned with increasing the productivity of livestock, involves improving the breeding stock, maintaining animal health, managing feed resources, and providing water the year round.

Rational Investment

The country must answer the question how far it can afford to push the replacement of low-priced labour, which has limited employment opportunities outside agriculture, with high-priced machinery having high operating costs, or in improving land in certain zones with costly schemes while good, cheap land is in plentiful supply in most regions. Given our present conditions of scarcity of resources as well as the level of technology in our agriculture, it would be more rational to adopt the use of better seed, fertilizers, and protective materials against pests and diseases to supplement the simple tools we know as a means of expanding production; because this would require low investments in current expenditure. In the face of present trends in our terms of trade — oil crisis, costly imported raw materials, etc. — the perennial shortage of capital and foreign exchange has become more acute. Therefore investments in current inputs such as improved seed, fertilizer, and cutlasses to improve agricultural productivity will have to take priority over large investments such as in machines, and heavy equipment which are costly and tie up large amounts of capital.

This must not be taken to imply that the use of machinery in agriculture is altogether condemned. Certain operations, such as clearing, especially of uncultivated land, may require the use of heavy machinery. But the experience of the last decade, during which massive attempts at mechanization have been made with disappointing results, should indicate that mechanized technology of our agriculture requires critical appraisal. An important problem related to the issue of

appropriate technology is that of rural unemployment and urban migration. The bulk of the nation's labour force are employed in agriculture and related activities. The indications are that production in agriculture is hardly keeping pace with population growth. Even on the most optimistic estimates, agricultural employment cannot be expected to absorb more than the natural increase in the farm labour force. The actual absorption may in fact be less, resulting most likely in the continued migration of rural people to the towns, where the rate of increase in employment opportunities is low. Excessive use of capital-intensive methods of production would displace rural labour and worsen the unemployment problem.

Of course, the unemployment problem is a much larger and more complex one. It calls for a more extended analysis; and this will be undertaken in due course. The important point to be underscored here, in relation to the central concern of this article, is that the use of capital and other forms of new inputs in agriculture should be based on the test of rationality.

Finally, the modernization of agriculture is a process which requires a host of related and supporting services, such as marketing, credit, research, extension, and so forth. These will be discussed in later articles in the present series.

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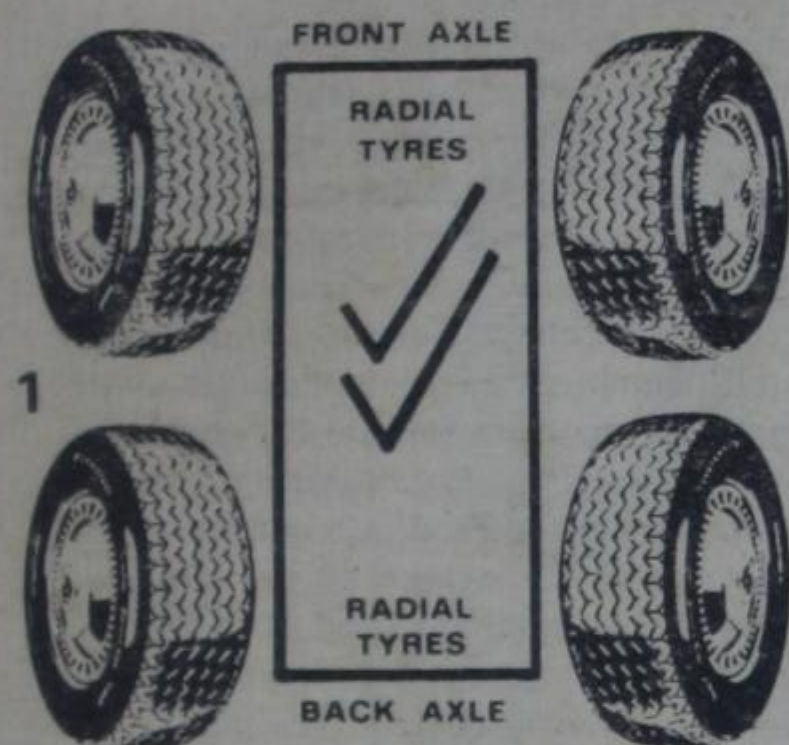
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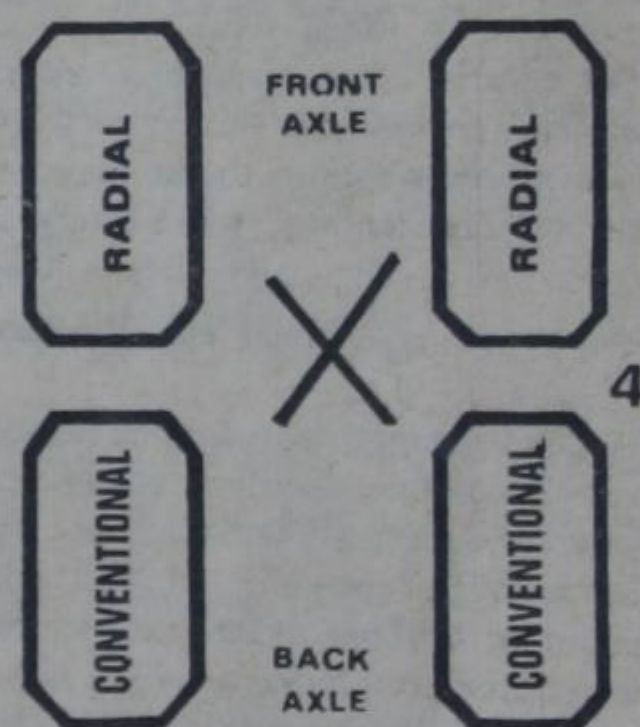
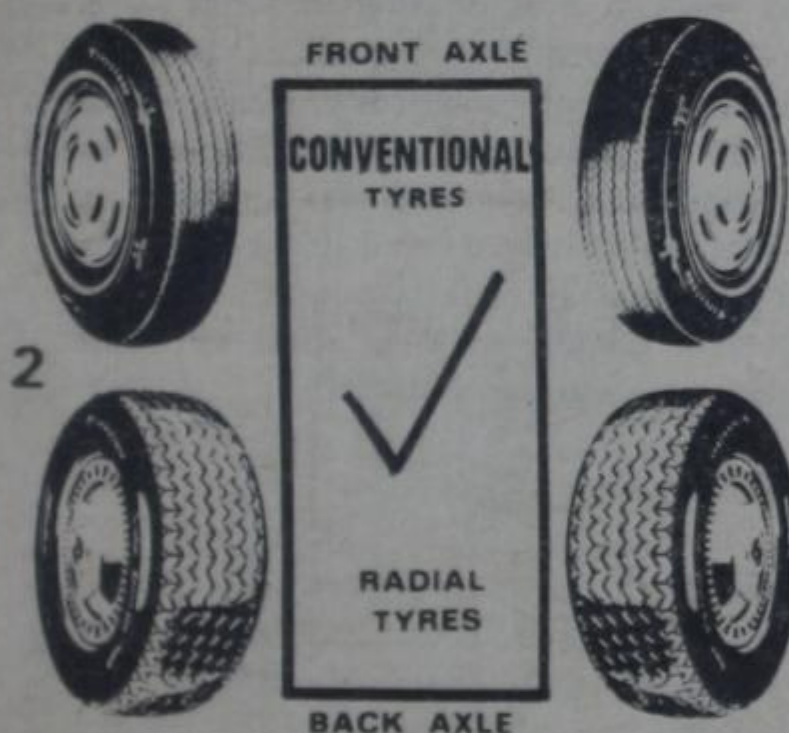
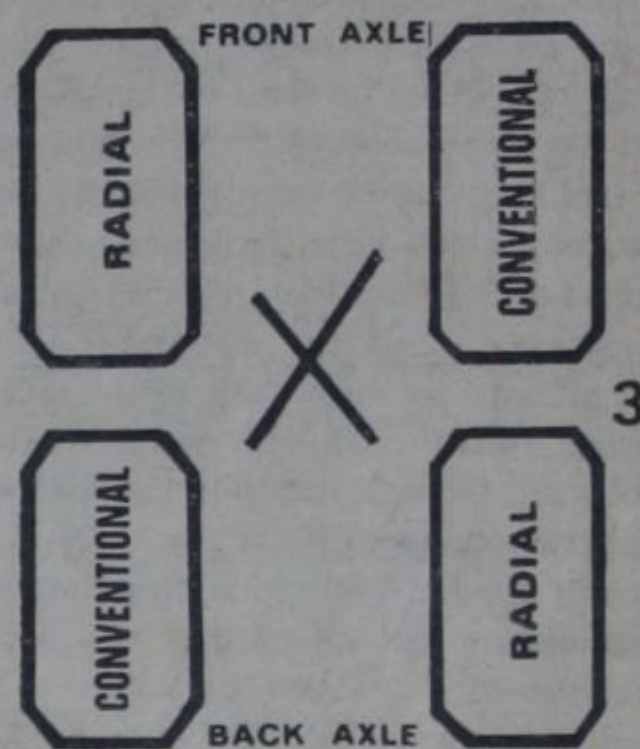
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The Economy

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GHANAIAN ECONOMY— THE RELIANCE ON CONTROLS

By

Emmanuel Treve

Recent events in Ghana, particularly the recent increases in the prices of petroleum products and the accompanying temporary freeze on fares chargeable by transport operators call for some comment. The case of transport fares and its handling can be regarded as an isolated case but in the present writer's view the issues raised are far-reaching and more fundamental than a naive reading and interpretation of events would suggest. And for that matter this writer will attempt to show that, in the face of imminent danger arising from the oil crisis and our other festering economic problems, there is need for the search for a more rational basis of management of the Ghanaian economy. In the present context I would endow the word rational with the commonsense notion of that which is consistent with the attainment of a stated objective. The word is therefore used here as devoid of the bogeyman of high-sounding, high-powered, deeply-complicated theories and techniques, the spectre of which some Ghanaians, particularly newspaper editors, often raise in a vain attempt to discredit University personnel in this country. (On newspaper editors and their contributions to the management or mismanagement of the economy, more later).

Need for Planning

A good starting point for the search for a more rational basis of economic decision-making can be found in our ill-conceived and ill-fated albeit pervasive notion and practice of off-the-cuff, ad hoc pronouncements which amount to nothing more than personal opinions, whims, interests and even fantasies. (The adherence to this method of economic decision-making has as its derivative the well-known phenomenon which rightly impels all political parties, cliques, and ruling groups to present a programme or plan of action (commonly called a manifesto) to their constituents: the constituents are then called upon to examine a variety of group programmes and to vote upon alternative programmes or to seek improvements if there is only one group with plan of action and consequently no room for choice outside of the existing framework.) The discomfiture in which Ghanaian leaders find or place themselves is that, aside from the C.P.P. manifesto which promised us Work and Happiness, successive governments have discovered themselves "called upon" at short notice to manage the economy. And as those who have ever answered the call will tell you, it is not an easy task. This we must admit in fairness to our leaders, and we must consequently sympathise and cooperate with them. But public sympathy on account of the heaviness of the burden of economic management cannot be gained and maintained through perpetual falsehood. For if we did that we would have sacrificed at the altar of economic waste our primary objective of improving the economic well-being of Ghanaians. The question then is, in the absence of a well-thought out and well-researched plan of action what can a country do?

The answer to the above question is not to be found in hurriedly implemented programmes. Of course, nobody in his right mind would suggest that the business of running the economy of this country should be stopped to allow time for some grey-haired professor/managing director or bell-bottomed lecturer/economic adviser to provide answers to some of our problems. But the point still needs to be made that without a factual basis to programmes we may end up not running the economy but running it down. But how can that happen! Well, since we have little or no idea what the expected outcome of our decisions may be, we could end up with all or most decisions wrong — i.e. without the desired results.

And now the final point which should lead us into a discussion of some of the ways of managing our economy which need to be changed. The point is simply that we need to know much more about a programme before we commit scarce manpower and other resources to it. There is just no short-cut; even wars which usually flare up suddenly cannot be fought without disastrous consequences if there is no sound planning. The greatest danger to the economy now is probably the indiscriminate and prolific use of controls coupled with the simplistic compartmentalization of the society into consumers and producers and the appeal to patriotism in defence of the welfare of the consumer.

That there is need for regulating the conduct of business in any country is not denied. Import licensing and foreign exchange allocation involve controls, and are well-known examples in the Ghanaian context. To these we have added, over the last two years, a host of other controls — on prices of foreign-turned-essential commodities and how much an individual can buy; on the prices of meat; on who can import cattle; on the price of cutlass and who can sell them; on what constitutes hoarding and profiteering; on the number of plots an individual can own for residential purposes; on taxi fares (hastily withdrawn and now about to be resurrected on a grander scale to affect all modes of commercial transportation) and others.

Price Controls

The avowed aim of these controls is to protect the Ghanaian consumer against "unscrupulous" traders and businessmen. That goal is laudable but if it cannot be achieved nor, if it can be demonstrated from past experiences that controls would not work, is it worth our while to devote resources to propping up these controls. If it were possible to conduct a survey which would reveal people's true feelings, one can bet that the findings would support the view that only a very small proportion of the society (a favoured few) can get commodities subject to control at the controlled prices and in disproportionately larger quantities. The onus is on those who believe or want to believe that the controls have worked and are working to prove their case. The present writer is not skirting the proof of a hotly-debated problem; it is just that he does not have the resources to undertake that task, and can reasonably argue that it is a governmental responsibility which if carried out can improve our understanding of the operation of the price system in this country.

Before proceeding further it may be worthwhile to state that there is no suggestion in this article for a wholesale dismantling of controls. The point at issue is the extent to which we can rely on controls to guide economic activities — or stated differently, the extent to which we can suppress the freely expressed preferences of sellers and buyers, i.e. the prices mechanism.

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Some might view the problem as posed above as unnecessary but that would be a superficial way of looking at it. The origin of these controls may make the point: Government finds that certain commodities and services are selling at prices which it considers too high for the average Ghanaian (whoever that is). Government then fixes prices lower than what would obtain without its intervention. We might stop at this point to ask two questions: Why are these commodities and services selling at prices higher than Government considers desirable? How does Government arrive at its own prices?

Inadequate Supplies

The answer to the first question is that there is a high probability that there is not enough of these commodities and services to go round and the higher prices are a **true** reflection of their scarcity value to the consumer and the economy. Many economists would say that this is the best thing which an economy could hope for. These economists notwithstanding, the official view is that in the Ghanaian context there are adequate supplies of these commodities and services. That hypothesis, like all hypotheses, requires support and that support is found in the grand conspiracy theory which states that traders collude to withhold these items from the market. There is a fine point of confusion here which needs to be brought out: hoarding on a large or small scale by sellers and consumers is a widespread phenomenon; but the hoarding is a **direct consequence** of the lower prices decreed by government; the message in those prices for traders is that given the free market prices, i.e. prices which the majority of consumers are paying and are willing to pay, it is in the economic interest of the seller to refuse to sell at the lower government prices. It is at this stage of the argument when the advocates of controls seem to be losing that they slip in the patently extraneous and irrelevant element of patriotism as a surrogate for the individual trader's economic interest. (If, indeed, the top brass in Ghana's public services and enterprises took their share of patriotism seriously they would be working for the state a lot harder and at half their current rates of remuneration). The swiftest way to dispose of the contention that the shortages of those commodities and services which are subject to price controls are the evil doings of sellers working in collusion is by asking those who hold or share that view to demonstrate why sellers of other commodities have not copied the trick. A plausible answer is that they are more patriotic!

Now to the second question: How does Government arrive at its own prices? In the realm of politics one can concede that government can fix prices at any level. But when one enters the realm of economics, can government make those prices stick? Many fine theories have been spun about price determination in a free market and in regulated markets and we could learn from them. What the present writer seems have to learnt from them is that: (a) the government's concern for the welfare of the average Ghanaian expressed through price controls is a needed improvement on the cold workings of the textbook price mechanism, (b) that concern cannot be stretched to the point where it negates the very objective of providing an economic environment in which both consumption and production can go on; (c) where government beams out incentives and signals which run counter to the economic interests of producers and/or consumers it can expect that the very people whose interests it seeks to protect would act in a manner defeating the object of the exercise. The frequent charges that consumers are aiding the hoarders

and profiteers is an indication that the authorities realise the problem even though they may interpret it differently; (d) the regulation of prices can only become manageable if an attempt is made to fix prices which approximately reflect the balance of supply and demand or alternatively provide adequate reward and incentive to producers to put those commodities and services on the market and drive home to consumers the resource-cost of producing those commodities and services.

It may appear that the present writer wishes to see the lowly-paid Ghanaian worker thrown to the wolves, i.e. the traders. No! He may even be one such lowly-paid worker. The point is that fixing prices below market prices, or below cost or profit-margin may call forth losses and/or subsidies. And just as Government itself has come to realise the weight and drag of subsidies so also can individual traders, taxi and tro-tro drivers and other businessmen be expected to resist attempts by government to impose losses on them or to force them to grant subsidies to consumers.

Transport Fares

A case in point is the present confusion about transport fares following the increases in the prices of petroleum products. Petrol prices lend themselves to easy regulation and have long been controlled without any problem. There is a lesson to be learnt from this one case of a perfectly working price control system. The reason for the success is not difficult to find: petroleum distribution goes by some form of franchise in which the parent-company head offices in Ghana maintain close supervision over their retail outlets. The lesson, unfortunately a negative one, from the petrol case is that few commodities and services lend themselves to such easy controls and that we should not attempt to impose controls on other goods incongruously. To come back to the confusion: the attempt to extend controls to transport fares following the petrol price increases is ill-advised and ill-fated. We were not given the reasons which led to the withdrawal of the taxi fares introduced by the Ministry of Transport and Communications but one could guess that the confusion that the fares created for taxi drivers/owners and the public had something to do with it. And now that exercise is to be attempted on a more grandiose scale—countrywide and for every mode of private commercial transportation. It simply cannot be done to benefit anybody especially given the haste with which the plan is being worked out. Maybe we need to ask here: What became of the Rents Control Decree? Somehow people in this country have got to admit that for certain kinds of goods and services some element of bargaining between buyer and seller serves both parties well; and for a long time taxi fares in this country have been agreed through this process. In my view, in the absence of a level of development which makes the use of meters possible, individual bargaining is the best substitute we have got. How, for example, does one fix fares for modes of transport with varying degrees of comfort, safety, speed and for roads of disparate degrees of vehicle worthiness and volume of traffic! A mammy truck is not equivalent to a Benz bus! We all know that. But again the road from Cedi-krom to Alatakofe is not a continuation of the Accra-Tema motorway. And it is fraudulent for newspaper editors to pretend to know (which to say, to lie) that transport operators are currently making abnormal profits and can be expected or rather forced to absorb all or most of the increases in the prices of petroleum products. I am sure the public would be

interested to see published the findings of their survey and the supporting data! There is no case for trying to regulate transport fares; it cannot be done.

To draw the discussion on the regulatory management of the Ghanaian economy to a close, a few strands in the case as argued here will be put together:

1. This economy needs some long range view of itself. The proposed five years development plan is urgently needed and the country needs to go to work on it right away. For that plan to make an impact on the economy when implemented it must be something more than a compilation of suggestions, ideas and opinions. Projects chosen for inclusion must stand up to close examination on the basis of their expected contribution to the economy vis-a-vis the resources that go into building them. In this connection one may point to the Regional Development Corporations and make the sad prediction that they will continue to flounder in the search for worthwhile projects.

2. One crucial area where economic decision-making needs to be buttressed is in the area of collection, compilation and use of factual information. In this connection a strong case can be made for strengthening the **Central Bureau of Statistics** to enable it carry its present work-load (some of which it has shelved). The Central Bureau of Statistics should be adequately staffed to play its vital role as a central depository of factual information and a processing plant. There is need for a **small team of experts** in economics, statistics/econometrics, sociology, agriculture, medicine, accountancy and other fields to be assembled and charged with the task of identifying Ghana's data needs, sources, modes of collection, processing, publication and preservation. Some Ghanaians may be surprised to learn that since the introduction of import controls dating back to 1961 there is no adequate and coherent body of factual information upon which a meaningful import programme can be built. Maybe now is the time to start collecting the data with some well-defined end-use in mind.

Controls and Corruption

3. There is reason to believe that attempts to regiment economic activity can thwart the legitimate interests of individual producers, consumers and companies. There are different strands to this argument: (a) It may turn out on closer examination that most of our state enterprises are losing money because, as creations of the state, they have no defences when it comes to resisting wrong signals beamed to them through prices they are allowed to charge for their goods and services and through rates of remuneration. Should that prove to be the case then the country has no reason to ridicule them as waste-pipes. But it is unlikely that all these loss-making enterprises can be acquitted on a plea of regimentation. (b) The proliferation of controls is one sure way of making the society more corrupt. In this regard the law-makers may want to ponder over the following hypothesis: the stiffer the penalties (e.g. without option of a fine if brought before a court for hoarding and/or profiteering) the greater the law enforcement officer's bargaining power and concurrently the weaker the offender's resistance to an out-of-court settlement. (c) Since the prices decreed so flagrantly violate most sellers' and consumers' notion of what the supply exigencies in relation to demand indicate, the temptation to ignore the price controls is so strong and the practice of evasion so widespread (with or without bribery and corruption) that enforcement can be regarded as partial and bordering

on scape-goating. For it is possible that some law enforcement officers may "license" some traders to sell above controlled prices and protect them in return for a cut of the profits. And while one should not go about slinging mud at decent people in uniform it is still mere face-saving to pretend to be unaware of the capacity of the Ghanaian society to generate and thrive on bribery and corruption. Proof may be hard to come by but that is to be expected given that for or in certain acts one does not need a witness, except for exhibits in which case a cameraman could do. (d) It is surprising that while much heat is spent on small traders with a turnover as small as ₵300 or even ₵50 the dealers in automotive spare parts are hardly touched by the price controls. There is no recommendation here that they should be brought into the net.

Newspapers and Development

4. In many countries including developing countries such as Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya a fair amount of research work done in the Universities and research institutes is work farmed out to them by government and government departments. My reading of the Ghanaian scene is that this kind of interaction has been largely shied away from. Notwithstanding the hard feelings which some Ghanaians have towards University lecturers, government needs to move to invite the heads of these institutions to discuss ways and means of involving their staff and students in the continuing search for better, well-founded ideas, policies and programmes. To continue to ignore the opportunity is to write off the potential and palpably potent contributions of these conglomerations of intellect, experience, youth and research facilities. The common jokes (some take them seriously) about university professors spinning out theories which merely serve to confuse laymen cannot blind us to the trivial truth that the world and the things in it are becoming more and more complicated and we will increasingly need people who can interpret the world to us, to enhance our understanding of it and to help us conquer it. If you want to develop an input-output table for the Ghanaian economy (an ambitious project) you need people who can handle the subject. The task of collecting the data if available, and the resulting outcome could provide profound insight into the workings and interrelationship of the economy. If we have got the minds let us put them to work on complicated as well as simple things.

5. Finally, it might be said that the decision-making framework could benefit a little more from: (a) some evidence of the receptivity of government and their advisers to public comment; (b) a good deal of restraint on the state-owned newspaper editors in their scramble to applaud sycophantically almost all government decisions. It is a great pity that most Ghanaians glance or scan through these newspapers for some item of educational, entertainment or information/news value and are more often than not disappointed. It may be said with a tinge of sadness that the greatest use-value of these newspapers is their ready conversion into wrappers. It does Government no good if some editor writes uncritically in support of an announced policy; it is an insult to the Ghanaian and it infuriates him even though he may be initially well disposed towards the announcement. Newspapers are expected to help Government put its case across to the people and feed back responses to government; this is the minimum they can and must do; (c) confidence in the

knowledge (proven) that those Ghanaians who comment upon and disagree with official policies would not be branded as enemies of the Revolution. It would be a tragedy if the witch-hunt ushered in by the P.D.A. were to be revived in whatever form. A free atmosphere for debate is essential for development and only Government can guarantee that.

UNIVERSITAS

A University of Ghana Inter-Faculty Journal

The latest (October, 1973) issue of *Universitas* is out and copies are obtainable from the University Bookshop and other bookshops. The issue contains the following:—

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Viewpoint

WHO PAYS THE ₵120 MILLION OIL BILL? *

By

Winston Nelson

AN Accra daily quite recently posed this multi-million cedi question and I should like to express my views on it. I only wish that as many Ghanaians as possible will discuss this vital economic issue extensively to enable the government to formulate an oil policy for the nation.

Towards the end of 1973 Ghana was drawn, both politically and economically into the game of oil politics introduced into the world arena by the Arabs. The political factor was an attempt to blackmail pro-Israel supporters to join the Arab cause in the settlement of the Middle East deadlock; the economic factor was the demand by oil producers (mostly the Arab countries) for higher prices in respect of crude oil. At this point I wish to state that contrary to what many think Ghana could not have isolated itself one way or the other even if it so wished, since both factors would have caught up with us before long. Anyway no sooner had we joined the game than the distressing results began to stare us in the face — oil shortages, black marketing, long queues, and chaos. These were somewhat short-lived and we survived them. Now the second round is here with us — an oil import bill of approximately ₵120 million for 1974. How does Ghana as a developing nation survive the test this time round? Below I have proposed six possible strategies which could be considered:

1. **Negotiation for Price Concessions from the Arab countries and Nigeria:** This line of action involves diversion of our oil trade from traditional suppliers to these countries. Desirable though this may be, we are already aware that both the Arab countries and Nigeria while assuring us of regular supplies of oil, also ruled out completely any preferential treatment via a two-tier price system for crude oil. I personally agree with them on this issue for two reasons. Firstly developing nations as a whole have been fighting against preferential treatment in the area of International trade. We must not practise what we condemn just because it is in our interest this time. Secondly, the countries mentioned above have as many economic and social problems as Ghana. And even though they may be relatively wealthier through the oil trade, they cannot afford to reduce the levels of the revenue they need for developmental purposes. After all the economic motive behind the oil game is higher and not lesser price (revenue) for oil. Thus this strategy appears to be a non-starter for Ghana. In any case these countries can be lured to help via a less controversial way, namely, aid for development. This point will be elaborate later on.

* This article, submitted before the Government announced the upward revision of the prices of petroleum products, nevertheless remains interesting and relevant.

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2. **Cut-back on the Use of Oil**—Our dependence on oil for the provision of certain services particularly generation of electric power can be reduced in the long run. It is not known to the writer the extent to which Ghana depends on oil to generate electric power. However there is every chance to make full use of the Akosombo Hydro-electricity and thereby eliminate the use of oil in this direction. Some saving can be made, and money which the government may be tempted to use in subsidising petrol prices can be utilised to convert oil-operated electric plants to hydro-electric plants. Such a cut-back on the domestic front can reduce the level of our oil import.
3. **Controls and Restrictions:** As in (2) above the strategy here involves the control of our rate of oil consumption. The difference in this case is that the authorities will ration and/or restrict the consumption of oil (petrol) by the general public. Thus, the government will import less than £120 million worth of crude oil for 1974; set in motion certain measures to distribute the limited imported supplies, and thereby make us do with what we can get at a time. Price controls may be added to these measures. Some predictable consequences will be long queues, hoarding, black marketing and even smuggling. It is note worthy that this course of action was widely practised by some advanced European countries and the U.S. late last year. Success has not been remarkable. Some have abolished it since, and others are considering doing so. The problems we are facing presently with the distribution of essential commodities should make us cautious of this approach.
4. **Government Subsidy:** By implication the Government will be expected to sell all our oil requirements and petrol and petro-chemical products at the prices we have been used to. Additional revenue to make up the difference between the import price and domestic price will be financed through additional taxes. This makes nonsense of the idea of government subsidy. Alternatively the oil products may be sold at higher prices than previously. The authorities will then provide financial subsidies through increased car maintenance allowance, travelling and transport allowances, salary increases etc. Granted even that the private sector follows the government gesture, the revenue raising problem for the government remains unsolved, not to mention the inflationary tendencies likely to show up. Again past experiences do not make this approach very appealing.
5. **Re-allocation of Funds for Imports:** Our government has already trimmed down considerably the importation of various commodities into this country and a number of complaints have been made against this kind of import policy. At this point we have to distinguish between general import restriction and selective import restriction. I feel that the government has been loosely pursuing the former method in which a wide range of commodities is imported into this country, each item in limited quantities. The policy

they ought to pursue, and very tightly, is selective import restriction whereby sex magazines, tobacco and drinks etc. are completely eliminated from the import bill and replaced by oil. A careful approach on this selective basis will provide extra funds to pay for our oil bill.

6. **Competitive or Demand/Supply Price Level:** The authorities should import our total oil requirement and make us pay what it actually cost to obtain our supplies. This will mean higher oil prices, increased transport and freight fares, high prices for food and locally manufactured goods, and, in short, higher cost of living. A government which is already desperately trying to manage an inflationary economy may find it hard to adopt this strategy. But the truth of the matter is that prices all over the world have chosen the sky instead of the earth as their final destination. We should be made to learn this truth, accept it in good faith and live and die with it. Higher oil prices should induce all of us to economise for our own benefit and welfare.

A closer examination of the six strategies discussed above reveals that points (2), (5) and (6) are the most useful and favourable in the formulation of an oil policy for the nation. A combination of these strategies will eliminate a lot of hardship to the general public, though not a high cost of living. The high cost of living will come to stay with us, and direct users of oil particularly, private motorists, will have the option of using more or less oil without subsidy from the other sections of the population.

Finally in relation to total world resources (surplus fund or aid capital) the oil game is likely to shift accumulated aid funds from the traditional donor countries, U.S.A., Germany, Britain, France etc. to the Arab countries and Nigeria by way of increased oil revenue. If we can turn our attention for once on these countries and convince them to invest and provide us with aid under favourable terms we shall be doing better in our future development efforts. Already the Arab countries have taken the initiative to set up a Development Bank for Aid to African countries and have thus thrown the ball into our court. We have to seize this opportunity to play the oil game. Perhaps if we are successful in this venture our pro-Arab stand during the recent Middle East crisis will not be judged a faux-pas.

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Letters

Hand Baggage Surcharge — A Rejoinder

SIR — Our attention has been drawn to a reader's open letter to our Managing Director published in your journal of March 8, 1974, in which the writer complained of having been surcharged for his hand baggage at London Heathrow Airport on December 23, 1973.

We wish to explain that under our regulations, the following articles, classified as hand baggage, are carried free, over and above the free baggage allowance allowed each passenger. They are a lady's handbag or pocket book, overcoat, a small camera and a pair of binoculars, a reasonable amount of reading matter for the flight, infants' food and carrying basket and invalid's collapsible wheel-chair.

Other articles including overnight bags, typewriters are weighed together with the passenger's baggage and are subject to excess baggage charges if total weight is in excess of free baggage allowance.

These conditions are clearly printed on our tickets and it is surprising that your reader, who chose to remain anonymous, ignored reading them.

Flight safety regulations demand that we must, at all times, know the total weight being carried by our aircraft to enable us know the amount of fuel to carry in order to balance the aircraft. This is ultimately for the safety of passengers.

On his point that no receipts were issued, we wish to stress that having parted with so much money, it was up to him to demand a receipt as of right.

Finally on his last point about transit passengers, we wish to state that if Panam ignored the weight of his hand baggage, it does not follow that Ghana Airways should have done the same.

We are sure your anonymous reader will appreciate the fact that since the flight GH702 he wrote about was full, Ghana Airways could not afford to take any half measures.

Ghana Airways
P.O. Box 1636
Accra

Mike M. Anamzoya
Public Relations Officer

Who Deserves Scholarship?

SIR — My attention has been drawn to a letter by one Joe Turkson Jnr. in Vol. IX/5 issue of the *Legon Observer* in which he appealed to the Headmaster of St. John's Grammar School to restore Scholarships awarded to some students but which have been withdrawn because they are day students.

Mr. Turkson rightly points out that there are several reasons for awarding scholarships in Government Assisted Secondary Schools, of which academic performance is one. The other reasons he does not mention and one is tempted to assume that he is not aware of them. In Government Assisted Secondary Schools in this country two principal types of fees are chargeable, namely tuition fee and boarding fee. Since the government introduced the tuition fee-free education, the only major fee charged students in schools is the boarding fee although others, such as fees for Government free textbooks, stationery fees etc. have to be paid for.

Because of this situation, the bodies responsible for awarding scholarships, award them to deserving or needy students specially to help them pay their boarding fees. Thus Government scholarships and bursaries awarded by the Scholarships Secretariat are specifically meant to assist recipients to pay their boarding fees. Special Government Scholarships offered to all students from Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana are meant to pay for boarding fees, and the amount awarded is based on the boarding fees charged by individual Government Assisted Secondary Schools. Similarly Cocoa Marketing Board Scholarships are offered to students specifically to help them pay their boarding fees, and until recently when the amount paid per student was standardized for all schools, it was also based on the boarding fees charged by individual schools.

The Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board and the Scholarships Secretariat each year send their representatives round schools to find out whether students who have received their awards are actually in the schools concerned and were boarders for the period for which claims have been made on their behalf. If they find out that a scholarship holder was a day student during any term for which his scholarship was claimed by the school, the amount involved is claimed back from the school and this is usually done by deducting the amount from subsequent payment to be made to the school.

If a day student therefore applies for and is awarded any of the above scholarships, he is advised to become a boarder in order to enjoy the scholarship that he has won, as it would be cancelled by the awarding authority if he remains a day student.

Mr. Turkson is therefore advised, if he is anxious that day students in Government Assisted Secondary Schools should be awarded scholarships, to address his appeal to scholarship awarding bodies such as the Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board and the Scholarships Secretariat.

St. John's Grammar School
Private Post Bag
Achimota

John Atta-Quayson
Headmaster

Our Rural Population and the Price of Kerosene

SIR — The rural dweller in this country is daily exhorted through every known medium of communication to produce more goods and raw materials to feed the nation and its factories; but at the same time, almost next to nothing is seen done by the Government to ensure that the rural dweller is supplied with good drinking water, or given medical facilities, or provided with motorable roads. It is even with some difficulty that the rural farmer gets such a basic indispensable tool as a cutlass to buy — never mind at what price.

Notwithstanding these glaring contradictions and lapses, the present writer finds it absolutely irresistible to venture a very simple suggestion in the hope that the powers that be will adventitiously come round to the view that in this dear country of ours, where about 70% of the population is rural, kerosene is, at least, as important as milk.

My humble suggestion, therefore, is that if there was wisdom enough in allocating as colossal a sum as ₵30 million in a crisis-free year to subsidise milk and the like, then, surely in the face of the current world-wide

oil crisis our peculiar Ghanaian circumstances make it more than usually necessary for the government to subsidise the price of kerosene, even if we are not in a position to do the same for other petroleum products.

I make this suggestion not without cause. Indeed it stems from my personal experience. Very vividly, I remember with mixed feelings when on three different occasions in a cottage in the Brong-Ahafo Region snakes visited my room in the night. On each occasion, I was fortunate enough to have a lantern burning dimly; so I managed on all occasions to deal with those uninvited night-guests. In the absence of the lantern on each of these evil nights, I shudder to think of what would have been my fate. Yes, that was about eight years ago. But I can assure you that the cottage is there right now in the heart of the forest in practically the same condition as I left it.

In consideration of the fact that there are millions of people in this country who are, as I write, forced or rather condemned by sheer circumstances to dwell in such horrible places, I humbly plead for these unfortunate individuals that the government should hasten to take steps to make the prices of kerosene bearable.

There may very well be better and more compelling reasons for bringing down the price of kerosene. But to my mind, to live a typical rural life without cheap kerosene is a hazardous enterprise.

Commonwealth Hall
Legon

Obeng-Manu

For Whose Benefit?

SIR — In an official press release of 11th March the Government stated that it is "particularly anxious that the unavoidable increase of prices of petroleum products should not be used to exploit the rural population who are the main users of kerosene", as a special note to its announcement that the price of that commodity had gone up from 35 to 75 pesewas per gallon: **an increase of 114%!**

Yet, if we look at the prices for petrol, a commodity which is used by the well-to-do in the urban areas rather than by the poor rural folk, we find that they have gone up from about 65 (for regular) or 75 pesewas (for super) per gallon to ₵1.10 and ₵1.20 respectively: **an increase of "only" 60%.**

It was also stated that Government continues to subsidise the price of petroleum products. But where does this subsidy go? From the figures mentioned above one cannot but conclude that it is the price of petrol rather than that of kerosene which is being subsidised. According to reliable sources, kerosene consumption in Ghana about equals that of petrol (about 8 million gallons of each commodity per month), so that in absolute terms too, the greater part of the subsidy seems to go to the petrol consuming section of the community rather than to the poor rural kerosene consuming section. In the same light, I find it also difficult to understand why the price of gas-oil, a fuel generally used for lorries, tractors, public transport, generating plants and other public utilities, should have been in-

creased by about 100%; this can only lead in increases in fares and costs of transport, of which again the less well-to-do are to feel the pinch first and foremost.

Isn't it time that those who "travel soft" are asked to make "a little sacrifice for the Revolution" rather than those who have hardly anything left to sacrifice?

History Department
Legon

Albert Van Dantzig

"Party Brigandage And The Spoils System" — Rejoinder (3)

SIR — I congratulate Mr. G. Adali-Mortty on his brilliant article in the *Legon Observer*, Vol. IX/4. His classic, lucid description of the frenzy and passion of Ghanaian party politicians is most admirable. No, the majority of Ghanaians today, like himself, do not wish for a "change of government to the spoils system again." All the evils we saw and experienced in the last two civilian regimes, so ably catalogued by Mr. Adali-Mortty, shall resurrect with the handing over of power to party politicians. This is as certain as the sun will rise tomorrow.

Where representative government could be readily denuded of its avowed blessings by politicians in power for their own aggrandisement, really wise people, whose memory has not deserted them, should on no account give heed to the rants of impatient power-hungry politicians. The people of Ghana and the nation must have and enjoy sufficient breathing space.

It is too early now to think of an alternative government to the present military regime. It took the military government in Nigeria eight long years to hint at handing over power to civilians at a future date. We must let our government, which is only two years old and has performed much better than the last civilian regime, continue in peace.

The current underground propaganda by politicians hinged on the present high cost of living, and isolated assaults of civilian law breakers by some soldiers cannot convince any open mind. Throughout the world, commodity prices have sky-rocketed and greedy traders and wholesale keepers in Ghana are worsening the situation here. Isolated assaults or other presumptuous acts by a few over-zealous soldiers are not official acts of the government. Those who wish the government well must bring such heinous acts to their notice for necessary action.

P.O. Box 443
Kumasi

Enoch Edusei, Snr.

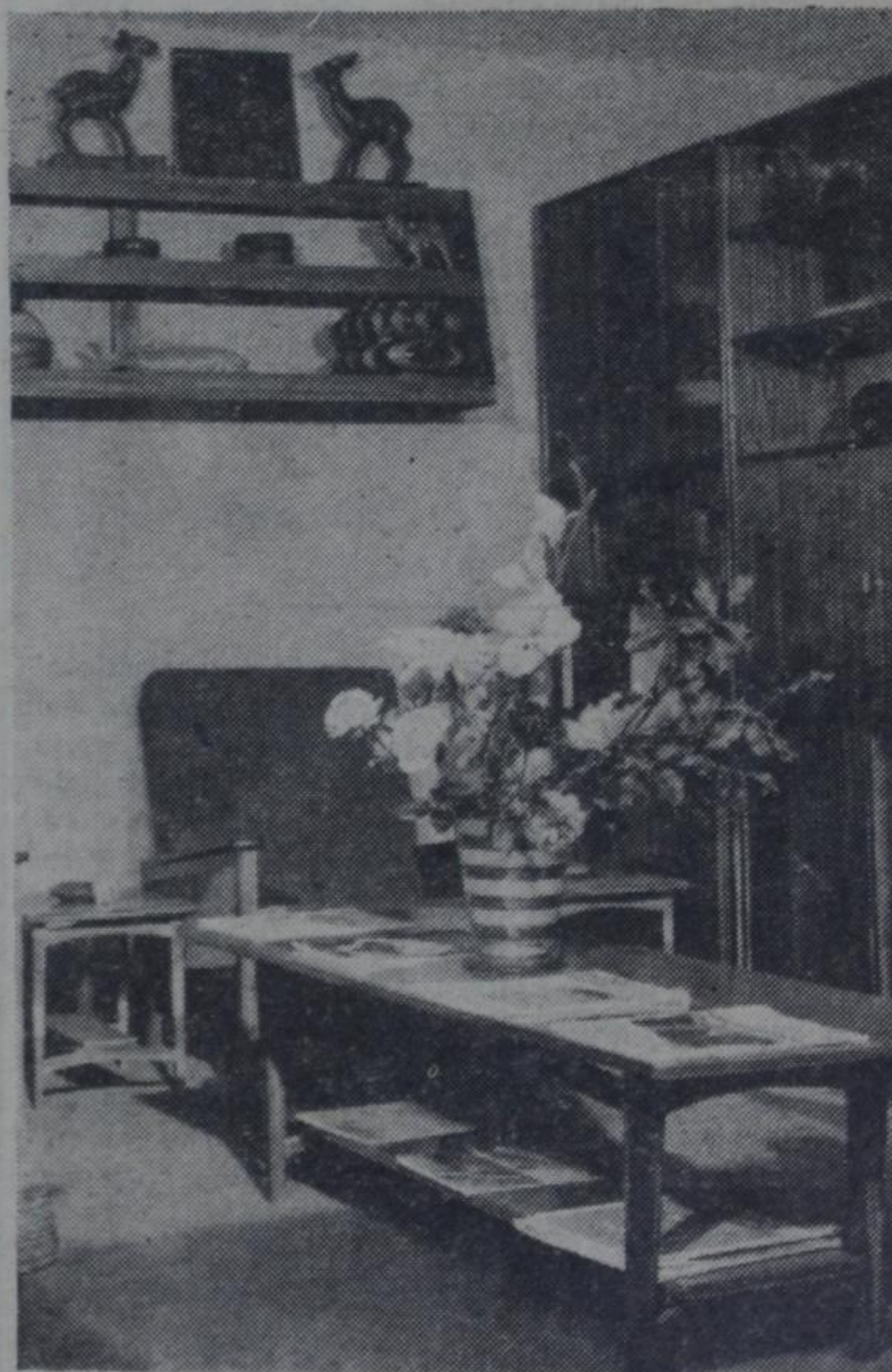
SIR — Permit me to comment briefly on the current debate engendered by Mr. Adali-Mortty's article entitled "Change of Government to the Spoils System Again?". To a greater degree Dr. P. A. V. Ansah has replied Mr. Adali-Mortty in a fitting manner and Kwabena Manu has, by his analysis of the regional distribution of social facilities, proved that Mr. Adali-Mortty's wild, prejudiced, unsubstantiated statements alleging discrimination against "whole districts, or regions... for the 'impertinence' of not voting in favour of the party in

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power during general elections" were without foundation whatever. For Mr. Adali-Mortty to introduce a debate on the type of government we should have before a return to civilian rule is a sound and interesting exercise, but for him, in his seeming preference for military regimes, to condemn in toto the two civilian regimes we have had since independence, although nobody knows how he personally ever suffered under them or what criticism of them he made during their life time amounts to giving the kind of "post-mortems" which, we are told by Col. Bernasko, "have their own usefulness" but which in building a nation are only of limited value.

My knowledge of Mr. Adali-Mortty is that he is a man who likes to generate public debate on topical matters of national importance; however in doing so he is fond of making sweeping statements, generalizations, exaggerations, accusations and, above all, distorting facts. I see him as a controversial person in so far as he can easily confuse people who may not seriously reflect on what he says or writes.

I am of the opinion that the less doubt a writer raises in the minds of his readers, the deeper his thought and the less his bias. Mr. Adali-Mortty always tends to leave his readers with more questions than answers.

**Public Services Workers Union
Hall of Trade Unions
P.O. Box 701
Accra**

P. B. Arthiabah

SIR — When a writer, writing on an important national issue that needs critical analysis, betrays prejudice and bows to parochialism and self-indulgence, he destroys the very basis of his contentions. It is in this light that I support Dr. Ansah's piece repudiating the premises from which Mr. Adali-Mortty in his "On Party Brigandage or the Spoils System" (Vol. IX/4) drew his conclusions.

Much as I hold no brief for the civilian governments in question, I wish to reiterate what Dr. Ansah said, namely that human nature is the same everywhere; and as long as we are human, especially if we happen also to be Ghanaians, then we cannot be without blemish no matter the colour of our clothing. It should be enough therefore for Mr. Adali-Mortty to suggest a means of bringing sanity and probity into civilian administrations without adulating a virtue that is non-existent.

**A 410 Akuafio Hall
University of Ghana
Legon**

Charles B. Nimako

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

EMMANUEL TREVE: An Economist, Accra.

WINSTON NELSON: A writer on Economic Affairs, Kumasi.

Miscellaneous

AND IT CAME TO PASS ...

Epistle No. 6

By

Santrofi

AND it came to pass in those days that there was mighty confusion in the land: revolutionary brother had turned against revolutionary brother and things seemed to be out of joint. On my last visit to the empire whereof I have been writing, I noticed that there was silence in the trinity of academies. I chanced upon a professorial acquaintance of mine to enquire of this unusual situation, to which question my pedantic friend, citing an ancient bard, made answer thus:

O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity...

After this rather extended epigrammatic introduction, my acquaintance did recount unto me as follows the events leading to the closure of the academies. It befell that an apprentice scholar from the metropolitan academy, having witnessed a scene of brutal assault on unarmed citizens by some soldiers in an unequal combat, had the temerity to openly express his remonstrances. Whereupon, the militiamen set on him to administer instant correction, from which he emerged with many a scar and other forms of maltreatment besides. This disciple did subsequently recount his misadventure to his comrades who felt that the attention of the citizens and the emperor should be drawn to such incidents in the most spectacular manner possible. It was therefore planned that a petition would be presented at the Imperial Fortress wherein the emperor did dwell; it was at the same time decided that the comrades in the provincial academies should show their solidarity by presenting like petitions to the district governors, whereupon emissaries were accordingly despatched thither for the necessary contacts.

While these things were going on, word got to the emperor and his centurions that their revolutionary allies were contemplating certain acts which, verily, were likely to undermine the bond of solidarity that had existed between the said revolutionary partners.

The emperor, for his part, despatched an emissary to assuage the hurt feelings of his allies with promises that the matter whereof the apprentice scholars were complaining would be looked into. But the said scholars, believing that "diseases desperate grown by desperate appliances are removed", felt that the time had come to call a halt to the handing out of rough and ready instant justice by uniformed agents of the empire.

For it had come to pass, as my interlocutor informed me, that some militiamen in the empire had arrogated to themselves the right of dispensing justice and many other things besides. This had gone on for many a month, but several citizens had thought it was all funny

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because it always happened to someone else. On one occasion, however, a notorious crank in the land had had the audacity to complain about this, and for this offence, his sleep had been rudely interrupted in the early hours of one Monday morning. Thereafter fewer incidents were reported until some militiamen suddenly drunken with power and arrogance resumed the practice. Thus it was that the said apprentice scholar betaking himself from one city to another, fell among these militiamen, even as in the days of old the good Samaritan's friend fell among robbers while going from Jerusalem to Jericho.

And so it came to pass that the imperial authorities having been apprised through their scouts of the preparations going on in the camp of their allies, and having failed to halt the projected march, decided to take counter-measures. The disciples in the metropolitan academy who had planned to get to the Imperial Fortress by forced marches were halted when they were barely on the outskirts of the academy by a formidable arsenal of sophisticated combat equipment. In the provincial academies the disciples were luckier, or rather the authorities were unluckier, and the townsmen actually saw the march; it was even rumoured that some of them joined the disciples and got a few pent-up feelings off their chest.

When these things were reported to the emperor, he was beside himself with wrath. How could his own beloved children and allies treat a poor old man so! He had known his people as docile and even indolent; so he could not comprehend what devil could have entered their hearts! The evil had to be wrenched out by the roots, and swiftly too. There was confusion in the imperial quarters; the emperor had been affronted and his so far undisputed authority challenged. An edict therefore went unto the land: with immediate effect, all the higher academies in the land were to be evacuated, and it was even rumoured that starvation was going to be used as an immediate weapon of instant justice; but the edict went too late and most of the disciples had had their fill, their appetites having been whetted by the shoutings of the morning.

And so it came to pass as I was saying, that the emperor ordered a closure of the academies. And thereupon a debate arose in the empire regarding the wisdom in the measure. Some citizens felt that it was a panicky measure which would in no wise serve to enhance the reputation of the proconsuls in terms of levelheadedness and maturity. Others opined that the emperor had done well, just as all his acts and non-acts had been commended in acclamations hyperbolic; for this particular act showed clearly that the revolution was picking up the momentum it was said to have lost. Furthermore it furnished additional proof that the revolution was truly becoming a revolution since it had started devouring some of its own beloved children. And the *Empire Chronicle* for its part felicitated the imperial authorities for having shown enough insight and vigilance in nipping in the bud a subversive move conceived in the minds if not the wombs of certain unnamed principals in certain notorious Caucasian capitals.

And it came to pass that there was yet a third group who adopted a Panglossian attitude towards what others thought was overreaction on the part of the proconsuls. They thought that the whole affair was a fortunate one, a veritable blessing which could have a salutary effect

on both partners in the revolutionary camp: the apprentice scholars, designated for the occasion as "intellectual dwarfs" by the afore-mentioned *Empire Chronicle*, had learnt how naked force could be utilised, and the proconsuls had also come to know that their fraternal associates would not give them blind and unqualified support in all their actions. The conclusion therefore was that the incident and its aftermath would have a sobering effect on both sides and teach the partners each other's methods and procedures.

And so it came to pass in those selfsame days that even before the dust had settled on the matters whereon I have been discoursing, a body was set up to enquire into the genesis of the unfortunate incidents culminating in the precipitate evacuation of the academies and the consequent growth of discord in the revolutionary camp. It was agreed by all that the apprentice scholars who appeared before the said board of enquiry performed mighty well, taking full responsibility for their action and demonstrating publicly that they were unalterably opposed to the establishment of jungle law or even a semblance thereof in the land. The exchanges before the said board started off another debate in the empire as to whether citizens had the right to embarrass the imperial authorities. Opinions were not too sharply divided on this matter, and it was agreed upon by the majority that anybody in power deserved to be so treated, especially when individual citizens had been constantly embarrassed and humiliated in the presence of their colleagues, spouses, concubines, progeniture and enemies, all outside the framework of the established legal system. For, it was argued, those who do not want to be embarrassed have no business getting involved in public life; as long as they remained in their homes nobody could embarrass them with impunity, but as soon as they acceded to imperial powers — irrespective of the methods of accession — occasional embarrassment was to be accepted as a normal occupational hazard. This, it so happened, had not been learnt in the empire, and all those who had wielded imperial authority always expected to be treated as gods masquerading in the likeness of ordinary mortals. It was therefore salutary that this lesson had been forcibly driven home to the proconsuls, even if they had learnt it the hard way.

And so it came to pass that after the wrath of the imperial authorities had abated, they magnanimously and graciously consented that the wayward and prodigal children, the majority of whom had only sheepishly followed a lunatic fringe — so the proclamation asserted — should be readmitted to prosecute their various branches of wisdom. Before I departed from the empire to sojourn in another land, there was no news as to what the board of enquiry had found or recommended. Evil tongues were rumouring that the board had recommended the dissolution of the Imperial Juvenile Scholars Association and had even gone so far as to call for a review of bursaries and stipends being enjoyed by the apprentice scholars — which of course was not part of the board's area of enquiry, anyway. The emperor's silence on these rumours in the proclamation he issued would seem to indicate that either such recommendations were not made, or that the imperial authorities rejected them as unwise or impolitic, or that the moment was not opportune to proceed to such reviewing — assuming, of course, that such absurd recommendations were made in the first place.

In all these matters, however, it did transpire that the matter whereof the apprentice scholars had complained in a particularly dramatic way to the chargin of the proconsuls had been conveniently forgotten. There was, I learnt, no firm commitment, backed by edicts, to put an end to instances of "instant justice rough and ready", apart from a feeble declaration that where such occurrences had been brought to the attention of the authorities, appropriate corrective action had been taken, presumably in camera, as had become the custom in the empire with respect to certain categories of privileged citizens under the new dispensation.

All this notwithstanding, it was the hope and prayer of many in the realm that in the general atmosphere of cordiality in the world wherein the capitalists and socialists are cooperating and wherein the Zionist Jews and Moslem Arabs are beginning to learn to live together in true Christian charity, the differences in the erstwhile harmonious revolutionary camp will be resolved so that the fast sworn friends and partners of yesterday can get reconciled and live together happily ever after.

And so it came to pass that the apprentice scholars lost their battle for individual freedom, though it was recognised by all that they had fought gallantly and paid dearly. The emperor, for his part, believed that he had won a victory, even though many were those who thought that it was only a costly Pyrrhic victory, after the experience of a renowned warrior of the ancient world. The neutral observers in the empire concurred that the whole issue of the combat reflected more credit upon the supposed vanquished than on the presumed victors. Nevertheless, the emperor, as was his custom, looked upon these 'developments and still thought, as was again his custom, that his work was good.

For The Record

STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT ON RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS BY STUDENTS OF THE COUNTRY'S UNIVERSITIES

On the 15th February, 1974, a Committee of Enquiry was appointed to investigate the circumstances leading to the recent demonstrations by students of the country's Universities. The Government has received and studied the Committee's report and wishes to comment as follows:—

1. The Government is unable to accept the Committee's finding that the force used against Mr. Doh was excessive in view of its earlier finding that "there is conflict in the evidence as to what actually transpired when Mr. Doh was first brought before Major Grant."

2. Whilst Government recognises that some people may be disposed to stage demonstrations in support of their cause, it is the view of the Government that as practised elsewhere, demonstrations are taken to as a last resort when all available remedies have been exhausted. The Government is satisfied that in the recent demonstrations no available channels of communication were exploited before the demonstrations were embarked upon. Students openly defied laid down rules of procedure in their ill-advised urge to have a public confrontation with the Government. They insulted Government and

University authorities and refused to present their grievances when these were demanded of them. Government wishes to reiterate its earlier pronouncement that it is not prepared to tolerate acts of lawlessness and vandalism which are not in tune with the revolutionary spirit of building new Ghana. Government wishes to remind the students that as students, they may be entitled to enjoy rights and privileges and fulfil all the obligations which are customary within educational institutions; but as citizens they are subject to the normal sanctions of the laws of the land and it is necessary for them to act always in accordance with our laws.

3. The Government is aware that the Universities have laid down channels of communication. In this regard, the Government directs that henceforth the channels of communication between Government and students' organisations should be through the properly constituted authorities. The channel of communication between the National Union of Ghana Students and the Government shall be the National Youth Council. The Government further directs that the main channel of communication between the University authorities and the Government shall be the National Council for Higher Education.

4. The Government, however, assures the authorities of the Universities that they have the support of the Government in the execution of their legitimate duties. Government accordingly directs that they exercise full control over their students by enforcing such rules and regulations as are necessary towards smooth administration in the Universities.

5. The Government wishes to assure the public that reports of excessive use of force have always been investigated and appropriate military action taken against those found guilty thereof.

6. The Government is aware that some of the students are still engaged in subversive activities, nevertheless it has been decided to re-open the Universities because the Government is now satisfied that most of the students were only forced to participate in the demonstrations. The Government has decided that Universities should be re-opened on the 16th March, 1974. Government, however, directs that only students who sign an undertaking to be of good behaviour should be re-admitted. The authorities of the Universities are directed to take necessary steps to ensure implementation of this decision.

Following the Government statement, the National Union of Ghana Students issued the following release on March, 19, 1974.

Press Release

THE attention of the NUGS has been drawn to Government accusation that some students are still engaging in subversive activities. The NUGS wishes to make it clear that it is unaware of such activities and therefore takes the opportunity to refute such an unfortunate allegation by pointing out strongly to the Government and the general public that the National Union of Ghana Students does not, in principle, believe in subversion or encourage subversion.

We have always shown our preparedness to support enlightened policies and programmes of Governments of Ghana whether military or civilian but that does not

mean the NUGS is committed to Governments per se. Our avowed commitment has always been to the supreme interest of the people of Ghana.

The Union is firmly convinced that it is only the concerted efforts of all Ghanaians, irrespective of political leanings, in support of the task of national reconstruction that holds the best promise for the country's future.

The NUGS is a patriotic, level-headed organisation that is suspicious of any form of control. In its over fifteen years of existence, it has given ample evidence that it will not mortgage its conscience to politicians of any hue, whether military or civilian, much less to foreign hirelings and agents. Neither can the NUGS allow even Governments of Ghana however well-intentioned to attempt to use or manipulate it in furtherance of objectives which the NUGS consider are against the national interest.

The Union will express at all times, its candid views, frankly and courageously, on all national and international issues in a way consistent with its policies. To this end, objective and forthright criticisms levelled against Government excesses and national failings should be taken on their face-value and considered as such; no unintended innuendoes and far-fetched interpretations should be put to them.

In this connection, the NUGS frowns upon the current practice whereby when one supports good programmes one is considered a patriot, but when one offers genuine but unpalatable criticism then one is dubbed a subversionist. If the government thinks it has any concrete evidence of subversion involving stu-

dents, it should make it public and stop the present political witch-hunting which is not doing anybody any good.

Until the full report of the Gyeke Darko Committee is published, the National Union of Ghana Students cannot say much about its work. However the Union is surprised that the Government has refused to accept the Committee's finding that excessive force was used on George Kwesi Doeh. This is because the Committee itself was Government appointed. If their findings need to be rejected it should be by students who were, in this instance, not represented on the Committee, even though they stood to be affected most by its findings.

The impression seem to have been created by Government that **EXCESSIVENESS** or otherwise of **FORCE** used on an individual is **RELATIVE** to the circumstances prevailing on each occasion. Be that as it may, it is the health and future of a citizen—and a patriot at that!—which is involved. The NUGS therefore appeals to Government to take steps to offer adequate medical attention and possible compensation to the victim, since no one can be sure of the harmful consequences this nightmarish experience could have on his future. It is rather sad the **FACT-FINDING** committee allegedly could not find out the **FACTS** as to what actually transpired between Doeh and Major Grant. Nevertheless the Government could show a **BIGGER HEART** and magnanimity by showing genuine concern over the possible future repercussions of the beating on Doeh's health.

On the Government allegation that students were forced into the recent demonstrations, the NUGS would like to point out that the average Ghanaian University student of today, is a responsible, mature and rational individual, who is already too highly suspicious and critical of force generally, irrespective of the angle it might come from, to allow himself to be coerced into demonstrating against his will. The spontaneity of our actions is a reflection of the growing awareness of the Ghanaian students and also of the high degree of solidarity and understanding that exists now among students in the country.

To avert future re-occurrence of student protests and demonstrations, the Government as a matter of urgency should take the necessary steps to convince itself that channels of communication, which in our view never existed, now actually exist, and that they are through and smooth-flowing; it will be very unfortunate for one to merely assume their existence. This is a knotty point that needs to be watched carefully, for, if the hitherto so-called channels of communication did not prove capable or fluid enough to have prevented the recent demonstrations, then it is difficult to see how the newly established or protracted channels could be considered suitable for the present circumstances.

In other words, it is desirable at all times that the communication channels be proved to exist and not taken for granted. This simple but vital ingredient of harmony has oftentimes been unfortunately over-looked with dire consequences. Good contact or communication is vital to lasting understanding. Besides, it is our well-considered view that if the National Youth Council is to be the channel of communication between us and the Government, then, we ought to be adequately represented on the Board of Trustees. As it is presently constituted, we do not see how the Gov-

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ernment could expect the National Youth Council, a Government created and controlled organisation to play the independent role which a channel of communication must necessarily play between two communicators.

The Union has not had the occasion to change its mind over its appeal to the Government to set up a joint Consultative Committee as a forum for the periodic exchange of views on controversial national issues that are likely to generate misunderstandings, ill-feeling and suspicions. If anything, the recent nation-wide demonstrations have rather strengthened its conviction with regard to the desirability of creating such a necessary forum.

University students, the world over, by the nature of their academic training (which is essentially the quest for truth), have a tendency to be naturally benevolently inquisitive; which quality expresses itself in critical appraisal of events generally. The Ghanaian student movement has shown itself to be responsible and highly patriotic, and the NUGS would like this healthy image to be sustained, hence the appeal for a forum for periodic examination of developments.

The National Union of Ghana Students does not think the recent developments could have any traumatic effect on its desire to assist laudable national development programmes. It is largely its avowed desire to continue serving the public generally that made it react firmly and quickly over the alarming-rate of excessive brutality on civilians; which unfortunate trend it considered incompatible with any genuine efforts aimed at prosecuting a meaningful revolution.

Finally, we wish to assure the Government and the general public that we are ever as eager to assist good programmes as we are to condemn negative and harmful practices that pose a threat to Freedom and Justice in Ghana.

(T. N. WARD BREW)
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.

(J. E. OPPONG)
NATIONAL SECRETARY.

Tuesday, March 12

Firms to Pay Royalties

TWO mining firms, the Ashanti Goldfields (Ghana) Corp. and the Consolidated Diamond Limited, shall each pay a royalty of six per cent of the market value of minerals they produce each year to the Government, according to an Executive Instrument published in Accra today. The Instrument said that payment shall be made to the Controller and Accountant-General not later than March 31 in the year following the year to which the royalty relates. The Instrument is deemed to have come into force on October 1, 1972.

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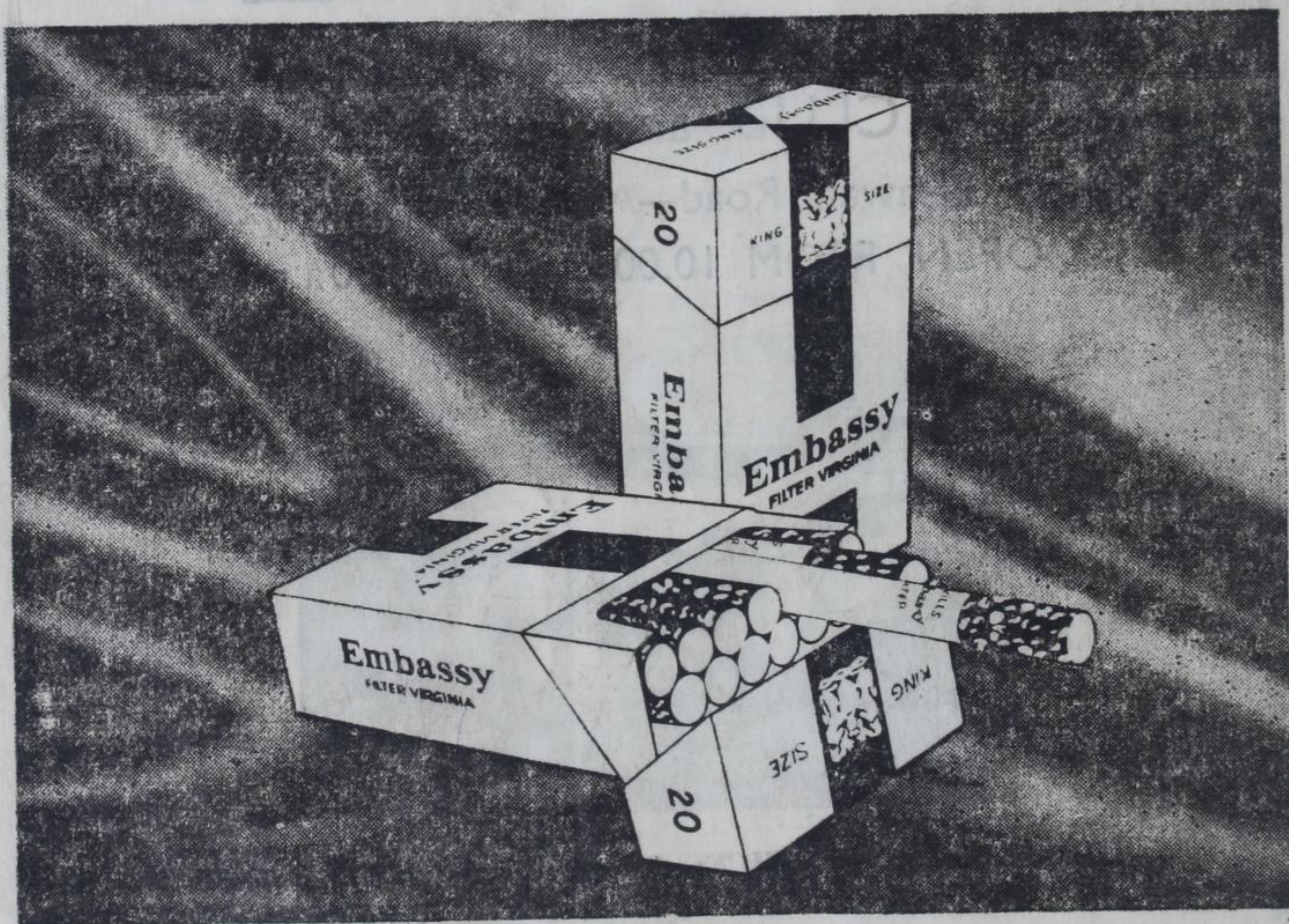
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