

TRANSFORMATION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN RULE IN GHANA 1982-1992

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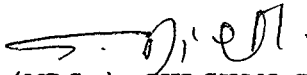
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TRANSFORMATION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN RULE IN GHANA
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partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University.
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is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed
before the examiners for evaluation.


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Sanjeev Kumar Verma

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PREFACE

Ghana was the first African state to gain independence, the first to initiate single party rule, the first to experiment with a mobilizing ideology, the first to suffer the effects of rapid economic deterioration, among the first to succumb to a military intrusion in the political sphere, and the first to undergo a peaceful transition to civilian rule. Ghana presents a fascinating model of the complexities of political processes in contemporary Africa. Ghana's political history in the post colonial period is one of authoritarian rule penetrated by three brief civilian interludes.

The significance of the PNDC regime headed by military ruler Jerry Rawlings lies in the fact that with the exception of Rawlings' PNDC, Ghana's experiences with a variety of democratic and non-democratic governments, have all ended in failure. The key issues that this dissertation probes into are; firstly in what way the PNDC regime differed from its authoritarian predecessors; secondly factors and various pressure groups which influenced the process of democratization in Ghana; thirdly, the role of international financial institutions in directing the course of the governing structure and finally the importance of the 1992 presidential election and the legitimacy of the new regime or in other words how far it fulfills the essentials of a civilian regime.

The study is divided into four chapters with a introduction and conclusion. The introduction gives a general background of the pre-Rawlings period with emphasis on the role of formal and informal groups in the political sphere.

The first chapter examines the political developments during the PNDC regime and the factors which influenced them.

The second chapter focuses on the impact of IMF structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) upon Ghana's economic growth and development. It also explores the impact in terms of the distribution of benefits and the class coalitions in Ghana.

The third chapter finds out the circumstances leading to the 1992 presidential election, its genuity and the reaction of the opposition parties.

In the forth and last chapter the post-election situation is discussed and attempt has made to check how far the 'civilian label' of the regime is in confirmity with its policies.

Finally, in the conclusion a brief assessment of the overall developments has been made and prospects of the continuity of the current regime has been explored.

INTRODUCTION

Ghana like many other new states in the past was erected upon a complete network of pre-existing structures and institutions that has evolved over time to conform to the economic requirements, historical conditions, cultural perceptions, situational needs, social arrangements, and deep seated aspirations of specific groups within its boundaries. These structures constitute the basic units of political action within the Ghanaian polity. They range from traditional political units to sub-regional agglomerations, from local geographical communities to professional associations and from religious organizations to urban social network.¹

Ghana, like most of the African countries, consists of various cultural groups, each with its own history, institutions, symbols, and norms of behaviour.² The most important linguistic group, namely the Akan speaking peoples (sub-divided into the Asante, Fante, Akwapim, Brong, Nzima and other small groupings) inhabit the forest and major coastal areas of the country and make

1. Namoi Chazan "An Anatomy of Ghanaian Politics, Managing Political Resession, 1969-82", Colorado, Westview Press, 1983, p. 6.

2. Namoi Chazan, "Ghana: Problems of Governance and the Emergence of Civil Society", In Larry Diamond, J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.) 'Democracy in Developing Countries: Africa', Colorado Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988, p. 98.

up 44.1 percent of the population. The Mole - Dagbani concentrated in the north constitute 15.9 percent; the Ewe in the east 13.0; the Ga Adangbe 8.3; and other small groups spread throughout the country an additional 18.2 percent.

Ethic divisions in Ghana are accompanied by those of kinship, geography, custom, history and administration. Households, local communities, lineages, and chieftaincies are central frameworks in the daily life of the Ghanaians, 74 percent of whom live in rural areas. A distinction can be made between the southern peoples on the one hand who have come most directly and longest under the influence of modern European life and the christian religion, and the northern peoples on the other hand whose traditional modes of life and religion have undergone relatively little change, owing mainly to their remoteness from the coast.³

Ghana also boasts a wide array of occupational groupings including association of lawyers, doctors, manufacturers, engineers, civil servants and even chiefs, which thrive alongside a multiplicity of workers, farmer and trade organization, students and women's groups have developed since the colonial period, together with vibrant sports clubs, "old boys" and "old girls" networks, literary societies and a diversity of religious communities.

3. Europa Encyclopedia of Sub-Saharan Africa, 1993, London, Europa Publication, p. 1018.

4. *ibid.*, p. 1018.

One of the most understanding characteristics of Ghana is that so many of its people have associations to pursue their interests. The intricate network of popular institutions underlines the diffuse location of social political and economic activity in Ghana. The interactions between these groups and central government structures help to define the nature of events in the economy and to shape political dynamics.

This introductory chapter seeks to understand Ghana's problematic experiences with democratic government within the context of the repeated failures of authoritarian rule and to explain the relationship between democracy and governability in the country.

Kwame Nkrumah (1957-66)

Ghana achieved independence from Britishers⁶ on 6 March, 1957 with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as its first Prime Minister. Ghana's emergence as the first postcolonial African states on 7 March 1957, was a watershed in the history of the continent. The constitution designed at this juncture formalized the unitary structures advocated by Kwame Nkrumah. Devised as it was from Westminster

5. Op. cit., p. 122.

6. A Country tucked between Togo and Cote D'Ivoire on the Southern Coast of West Africa, Ghana is composed of the former British Colony Gold Coast and the British ruled Togoland.

model it made provisions for parliamentary government based on multi-party competition and continuing participation in regularly scheduled elections. The independence of the judiciary was assured and essential liberties protected.⁷

1960 was a turning point in Ghanaian political history.⁸ Various factors contributed to the death knell for early democratic government in Ghana, and the emergence and consolidation of authoritarian rule. In fact, from the very beginning Nkrumah tended towards an authoritarian rule by relying on the consolidation of a corps of 'state managers'. This group politicized public resources and through its patent corruption, enriched itself and its clients. The state had effectively detached itself from society. Also the inherited problems of governing a predominately rural population in an unintegrated economy had intensified.

In the same year he introduced a draft republican constitution that augmented the construction of powers in the hands of a president to be elected by universal franchise. As expected the republican constitution received massive approval and Kwame Nkrumah dealt J.B. Danquah, the other presidential contender a resounding

7. Benjamin Amonoo, 'Ghana 1957-66: Politics of Institutional Dualism' London, George Allen and Unwin, 1981, p. 46.

8. Op. cit., p. 123.

defeat. As a result the powers of the national assembly to curtail the presidency was reduced and the state bureaucratic structure was placed in the hands of Nkrumah and his CPP party. Thus the pivot of the new structure was the state apparatus controlled by the CPP and Kwami Nkrumah.⁹

The socialist programme of the First Republic was predicted on ideological mobilization and the quest for political uniformity.¹⁰ The previously free press was muzzled when the state took control over the media, and the activities of non-voluntary and religious groups were purposely curtailed. Economic problems began to surface in 1961 as imports and government expenditure rose, while proceeds from exports (cocoa and mining) began to level off. The socialist policies failed to produce results. The policies of the authoritarian government evoked strong opposition. By 1964, none of the Ghana's vibrant corporate groups, social formations or community structures openly supported the regime. In 1964, through a manipulated referendum, the government officially transformed Ghana into a one party state. In the June 1965 general election all 198 CPP candidates were returned unopposed.

9. Robert H. Jackson and Carl. G. Rosberg, 'Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant', Berkely; University of California Press, 1982, p. 19.

10. Crawford Young, 'Ideology and Development in Africa, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1982, p. 64.

Eight months later in February 1966, the First Republic was overthrown by a military coup and a National Liberation Council headed by Lt. Gen. Joseph Ankrah took over the reins. Three years later, a ban on political activity was lifted and a general elections held in August 1969 following the promulgation of a new constitution.

K.A. Busia (1969-92)

The return to civilian rule was intended to reopen access to the state and its resources and to revive some notion of free competition. The opponents of the CPP since 1951 now came to power as the Progress Party (PP) government led by Dr. K.A. Busia on 1 October 1969.¹¹ Busia's policies, unlike those of the NLC, aimed at gradual reform and rehabilitation. The role of the government was consciously limited to constructing a framework within which individuals could fulfill their aspirations. The development strategy of the Progress Party followed the path laid down by the NLC; the fortification of the private sector coupled with a renewed stress on agriculture and rural development.¹²

11. Essuman Johnson, "The Politics of Ghana's Search for a Democratic Constitutional Order: 1957-1991" in Kwame A. Ninsin and Francis K. Drah (eds.) 'Ghana's Transition to Constitutional Rule'. Accra, Ghana University Press, 1991, p. 55.

12. Op. cit., p. 164.

Within two years of its inauguration, Ghana's participation although ostensibly open, was biased in favour of the middle class and people from the Brong - Ahafo and Ashanti regions. The inequalities of income and wealth so blatantly paraded by PP activists inevitably stirred resentment among workers and small farmers.

The demise of Ghana's second republic exposed basic political difficulties that went far beyond the limitations of a single regime. In the first place, a democratically elected government much like its authoritarian predecessors, had been unable to assure regularized channels of participation and communication. Second, repression, so obvious under authoritarian government recurred under democratic rule. Third, despite the salience of state structures, these seemed too weak and ineffective to carry out regime policies. And, fourth social and economic inequality was intensified. The departure of Busia heralded the entrenchment of instability and regime fluctuation as the single most prominent feature of Ghanaian politics.¹³

I.K. Acheampong (1972-78)

The 13th February 1972 coup led by colonel. Acheampong differed from the military intervention of NLC

13. Adotey Bing, "Popular Participation Versus People's Power: Notes on Politics and Power Struggles in Ghana," *Review of African Political Economy* 31, 1984, pp. 91-92.

in several respects.¹⁴ First, it displaced a popularly elected democratic government not an authoritarian regime. Second, Acheampong and his supporters, unlike their more serious military predecessors, came from the upper middle ranks of the officer corps. And third, the National Redemption Council (NRC) of Acheampong in contrast to the NLC, came with the intention of staying in power and undertaking institutional and social reform. It was different matter that it turned Ghana into the path of disaster. Even though the background and experience of its leaders were limited, its ambitions were far grander than those of the military predecessors.

In October 1975, a Supreme Military Council (SMCI) resting entirely on the foundation of the armed forces was brought into being with Acheampong at its helm, with National Redemption Council taking advisory functions.

The coercive authoritarian regime of Acheampong was an unmitigated disaster for Ghana. During his six and a half years in office he ignored popular currents, trampled civil rights, ravaged the economy and transformed Ghana into a private estate for himself and his followers. The spring of 1970 was marked by strikes by almost every social group in the country. Acheampong succeeded in alienating everyone, including the bureaucracy and his

14. Op. cit., 108.

military peers on whom his maintenance in office depended.¹⁵ Over a million people simply abandoned the country in search of economic livelihood. Smuggling, hoarding and black marketeering became rampant as commodities grew scarce and prices soared. At the same time some of the Ghanaians (mostly in rural communities) simply avoided contact with state institutions. This process was especially pronounced in the wealthier cocoa growing regions, where local patrons were powerful and relatively self-sufficient.¹⁶

In 1976 the SMC proposed a novel system of government it called 'Union Government' (Unigov.). This was a plea for a non-party system of government which could unite the military, police and civilians in politics. It was an attempt to fashion a system of government without opposition, which, it was spuriously argued, was demanded by Ghana's political tradition very much like Nkrumah's one party system. It was obvious that the majority of the Ghanaians - especially the professional bodies and students - were opposed to it. When the proposal was put to popular vote, it was by all accounts rejected.

15. Richard Rathbone, "Ghana", in John Dunne, 'West African States: Failures and Promise', London, Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 35.

16. I. Ray, 'Ghana: Politics: Economics and Society', London, Frances Pinter, 1986., p. 62.

Fred Akuffo (1978-79)

The intervention of General Fred Akuffo on 4 June, 1978 forced Acheampong abdication and freed the country from his stranglehold. Initially Akuffo suggested a further period of military rule but then quickly bowed to civilian pressures and agreed to another transition to full civilian government. The Supreme Military Council (SMC II) was therefore a caretaker regime concerned with overseeing another military return to barracks.

During his short interval in office, Akuffo attempted to introduce some measures to stabilize the economy. Nevertheless, inflation persisted, shortages of all basic commodities were recorded. Throughout, this interlude, the head of the SMC II was shaky at best. Even as it hastened the constitutional process and made preparations for the elections that would return Ghana to civilian rule, it overlooked the strains within the army's own ranks and ignored pleas to bring Acheampong to trial.¹⁷ The demand for retribution was taken up by the rank and file in the person of Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings whose first attempt to topple Akuffo on 14 May 1979 failed. But with Rawlings in jail, his supporters did finally overthrow Akuffo on 4 June 1979 in a burst of violence unknown even to Ghana's coup weary populace.¹⁸

17. Op. cit., p. 110.

18. Barbara E. Okebe, '4 June: A Revolution Betrayed', Accra, Ikenga Publishers, 1982, p. 20.

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council's (AFRC) headed by Rawlings interlude was as abrupt as it was violent. It interrupted, but did not stop planned action to civilian rule. Its significance lies as much in the fact that it constituted a prelude to a more permanent populist takeover as in its actions on the eve of the formation of Third Republic. It was in this context of turbulence and upheaval that the scheduled elections took place. Much to Jerry Rawling's credit, he oversaw the balloting despite his antipathy to the political establishment.¹⁹

The proposed constitution of the Third republic drafted in 1978 and revised by the constituent Assembly early in 1979 provided for an executive (rather than a ceremonial) president to be elected directly by a majority of the voters. In other respects, the parliamentary structure of the second Republic was retained as were key provisions relating to the separation of powers and checks and balances.

Hilla Limann (1979-81)

On 18 June 1979 took place while the country was in a state of almost total disarray. Many voluntary associations stayed away from the party struggle; others

19. F.K. Drah, "Civil Society and the Transition to Ploralist Democracy" in Kwame A. Ninsin and F.K. Drah (eds.) in Political Parties and Democracy in Ghana's Fourth Republic, Accra Woeli Publishing Services, 1993, p. 101.

evinced only intermittent interest. This fact was reflected in a lower voter turnout. Five parties contested the elections and the PNP won a comfortable majority in the elections for the legislature by winning 71 of the 140 seats.²⁰ The UNC which had gained 13 seats, subsequently formed governing coalition with the PNP, in order to ensure the stability of the government. Under the new constitution, the presidential election was held separately on a run-off basis. In the final rounds on 9 July, Limann (PNP) polled, 1,118,424 votes and Owusu (PFP) 6,85,582. On 24 September Dr. Limann was duly sworn in as President and head of the government.

The movement of power to Hilla Limann and the PNP mirrored the breakdown of many established patron-client relations. Seven years of arbitrary, military rule had wreaked considerable havoc in the personal linkage structure that has flourished during the Second Republic. Dislocations were particularly apparent in the relatively advantaged regions of the forest and the coast. Here, expectations of government were magnified and disillusionment over the performance of state officeholders was also greater. In the north demands were limited and satisfaction higher. The north stayed in closer touch with both SMC I and SMC II.

20. *ibid.*, p. 104.

Overshadowing all other weaknesses of the Limann regime was the issue of its relationship with the armed forces and especially with Rawlings.²¹ In effect, the PNP had been installed by the military and the civilians remained aware of their performance was being constantly monitored and evaluated. Throughout 1981, as the authority of the PNP virtually disintegrated many Ghanaians were openly anticipating the second coming of the army. On 31st December 1981, Rawlings seized power for the second time. The poor performance of the government tended to undermine its constitutional legitimacy.

According to Hansen in Ghana, as in many developing countries, the legitimacy of the political order is not a settled issue. Important as constitutional legitimacy is, it is not enough to sustain a government, it needs a material base to breathe life and meaning into it and it was in this that many people saw that the regime had failed. For the mass of the people, their desire was to have a regime which could meet their minimum material needs and ensure the safety of their families and put some meaning in their lives. Any government constitutional or otherwise which appeared to give sufficient reason that it could undertake these functions effectively would secure

21. Namoi Chazan "The Anamolies of Continuity: Perspectives on Ghanaian Elections since Independence" in Fred. M. Hayward (ed.) 'Elections in Independent Africa', Colorado, Westview Press, 1987, p. 72.

support and legitimacy. Hence when Rawlings came to announce that what had happened was not just, the changing of the palace guard but a 'revolution', namely something which could transform the social and economic order and consequently their lives, people were prepared to listen, and, more importantly, to give it their support.²²

Nevertheless the return of Jerry Rawlings was greeted with a mixture of enthusiasm, skepticism and fear. Although Rawlings was highly regarded and his youthful ingenuity and honesty widely acclaimed, few were pleased about the prospect of certain military rule.

The demise of each of Ghana's governments coincided with its inability to come to terms with a different component of democracy. Kwame Nkrumah crushed competition and then obstructed participation. The Second Republic under K.A. Busia could not meet basic requisites of social equality. The erratic military regime of Ignatius Acheampong was finally removed because of its lack of accountability. Hilla Limann, in quest for representation, could not ensure the rule of law. And Jerry Rawlings's Provisional National Defence Council has assailed some of the most basic prerequisites of freedom—where as other African statist patrimonial systems have survived and even blossomed, authoritarian regimes in Ghana have floundered. The incapacity of political

22. Emmanuel Hansen "Ghana under Rawlings: Early Years", Lagos, Malthouse Press Limited, 1991, p. 6.

leadership was an important factor in the demise of authoritarian governments, but structural variables have also been significant.²³

Ghana's experiences with a variety of democratic and non-democratic governments, with the exception of Rawling's PNDC, have all ended in failure. Each of the country's democratic experiments collapsed after extremely short periods. The Westminster experiment failed because it lacked a powerful constituency within the country, the government of the Second Republic was not given a chance to succeed, and Limann's third democratic experiment was not, despite a widespread distaste for military rule, really expected to subsist, let alone prosper. Although each of these governments was different in circumstances in which it came to power and in its party structure, social composition, constitutional safeguards, institutional arrangements, and specific ideology and practice, they all evinced a marked inability both to manage the economy and to sustain levels of mobilization and participation over time. The ensuing problems of legitimacy were compounded in every case by the consequences of elite disunity and the absence of political acumen.²⁴

23. Op. cit., p. 121.

24. Henry Bienn, "Politics and Power Struggles in Ghana", *Political Science Quarterly*, 97.3. (1982), p. 463.

During the bulk of the independence period, regimes consolidated their power around state institutions, centralizing their grip and their almost absolute control over the formal economy. As time went on, successive regimes have been unable to maintain order by either democratic or authoritarian means. The civil services has been overestablished but under bureaucratized. Hegemonic impulses in Ghana have fostered a zero-sum pattern of political conflict at the national level.²⁵

25. *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

CHAPTER I

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE RAWLINGS REGIME

Ghanaian politics underwent three distinct phases during the course of the 1980's. The first populist phase (1982-83) coincided with severe social and economic upheavels, that, when coupled with drought and the massive influx of Ghanaians expelled from Nigeria, led Ghana to the brink of total collapse.¹ The second adjustment phase (1983-87) was dominated by the adoption of rigorous economic stabilization and rehabilitation programme, which augmented state capabilities and enhanced the political space available to social institutions. The third consolidation phase beginning from 1987 has been marked by regime efforts to mold political institutions by an increasing number of debates over preferred norms and mechanisms of political interaction.²

When the PNDC resumed power on December 31, 1981, Ghana was in the midst of a multi-faceted crisis of political instability, social fragmentation and economic

1. Richard Hodder Williams, *An Introduction to the Politics of Tropical Africa* (London; George Allen and Unwin, 1984) p. 233, claims that by 1982 the Ghanaian state has essentially disintegrated.

2. *ibid.*

decline. The retrogressive cycle launched at the beginning of independence resulted in the consistent loss of autonomy by the state, which had been penetrated by increasingly particularistic and personal interests. At the same time state agencies had been misused by a series of weak and capricious leaders, by an overbloated bureaucracy and patrons.³

The underlying premise of Jerry Rawlings and the first members of the PNDC was that the civilian and military establishment that had ruled the country for close to quarter of a decade had pursued its own interests at the expense of the bulk of the population; thus the elimination of this group and its replacement by the alternative rulers representing popular concerns could pave the way to social justice and economic growth. The thrust of the second Rawlings coup was highly personalistic; who ruled was seen as the answer to country's ills. The first phase of the PNDC was the last full fledged attempt to employ the postcolonial political logic, this time in the name of the masses (mostly urban previously excluded from the state nexus).⁴

3. Rienner, Dougals, "Ghana's Economic Decline", *Africa Insight*, 8:3, (1988), pp. 119-123, suggests that Government and Leaders were directly responsible for Economic collapse at this juncture.

4. "Anatomy of African Class Consciousness" *Agrarian Populism in Ghana from 1915 to the 1940s and Beyond*, in I.L. Morkovitz. (ed), *Studies in Power and Class in Africa* (London; Oxford University Press, 1987) pp. 50-66.

The ruling coalition was made up of some radical intellectuals, student leaders, and a few soldiers who had maintained contact with Jerry Rawlings after Hilla Limann forced his retirement from the armed forces in November 1979. Its membership reflected the organizational links that Rawlings had established with the June Fourth Movement (JFM), the New Democratic Movement (NDM), the Socialist Students Movement, and the militant trade unionists between 1974 and 1981. At the same time, however, it drew its backings almost exclusively from urban quarters; workers, students and young neo-marxist intelligentsia.

Jerry Rawlings charted the broad agenda of the "31st December Revolution" when he defined the goals of the PNDC as the rearrangement of the foundations of Ghanaian politics through the transformation of social, economic and political relationship. The specific themes elaborated at this juncture highlighted the need to eradicate elite privilege, transfer power to the people by bringing the masses into the decisionmaking process, establish a new democratic order based on social equality and justice, and maintain vigilance against manifestations of imperialism and neo-colonialism".

The problem of legitimacy is a more serious one for military governments because they lack the necessary constitutional and legal sanctions that form the usual basis for modern government. On the assumption of power,

the PNDC government attempted to anchor its rule in the support of the lower classes, whose urbanized urban based sanctions had been engaged in a series of political confrontations since the mid 1960s. The call for formation of defense committees was the first bold step in this direction.

By the end of 1982, a number of new and important state institutions had been established. These included the National Defence Committee (NDC) established to advise the PNDC in the exercise of its functions; the Citizens' Vetting Committee and the National Investigations Committee formed to investigate the assets of people suspected of living beyond their legal means, and Public Tribunals which were to avoid the delays and technicalities of the existing judicial system by dealing expeditiously with various criminal cases brought before them.

This notwithstanding, the new institutions did not create a niche in the edifice of state power for the deprived classes. For example, the highest organ of the defence committees was the National Defence Committee which was to advise the PNDC and also implement its political programme. Yet, this body was not part of the decision making body. Nor did it have direct input into the decision taken by the PNDC government. It merely had a member of the PNDC as its chairman.



Even though the institutional recognition did not give the lower classes any foothold in the centre of power, the intensity of the political struggles they waged through the defence committees against the ruling class for ultimate control of state power became a key source of concern for the government during 1982-83 period. Rawlings commitment for social justice, democratization in decision making and economic growth opened the floodgates of suppressed feelings of under priveleged groups during this period, touching even the disgruntled and neglected lots in the military.

Many factions emerged in the army leading to an abortive coup in March/1982 against the PNDC by a section of military personnel. By mid 1982 the armed forces were increasingly divided along the ethnic lines, with the Ewes supporting Rawlings, and the majority of the northerners backing Sgt. Abata Pore (a member of the PNDC). In October rumours that Rawlings had been killed in armed ethnic clashes between soliders at Burma Camp in Accra resulted in an increase in ethnic confrontation and policy disagreements and on 22 November the chief of the defence staff, Brig. Joseph Nunoo-Musah resigned, publicly voicing his disagreement with the policies of the PNDC.

In February and March 1983, there were minor attempts to overthrow the government. On 19th June Ghanaian military exiles from Togo, led by Sgt. Malik infiltrated Accra and released more than 80 prisoners from

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jail; many of the Togo based exiles and the freed prisoners had been participants in the coup of 23rd November 1982. They briefly seized the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, from where they broadcast a statement. Troops loyal to Rawlings quickly suppressed the coup, but many of the leading conspirators increased. In March 1984 three of the leading conspirators were apprehended and executed.

Three forms of internal opposition to the politics of the PNDC and the defence committees may be identified.⁵ One was open agitations against the government that emanated from the non-state political institutions that the ruling class dominated, namely, the Christian churches the bar and the bench, the independent press, and professional associations. The other was the covert actions of top bureaucrats within the financial and economic ministries - both old and new - in either frustrating new policy directions or shaping policies aiming for the material interests of the ruling class.

The third strategy of internal opposition was far more covert than the second. It involved the mobilization of deep-seated prejudices in the social structure to

5. Kwame A. Ninsin, "The PNDC and the Problem of Legitimacy", in Donald Rothchild (ed). Ghana" Political Economy of Recovery (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991) p. 52.

displace or suppress the conflict being fanned by the defence committees.⁶ The ruling class so effectively mobilized bias against the radical political activities of the defence committees - that public opinion was turned against the alleged excesses - including acts committed against chiefs in state enterprises; against market women, some of whom had been flogged in public.

By then the political implications of the country's economic crisis were becoming clear; if the economic situation did not stabilize and if a measure of security for accumulation was not ensured, there would be no political peace.

The shortage of capital for reviving the economy, for financing even the barest minimum of consumer imports, and for servicing the country's external debt had been compounded by the insistence of the country's creditors and the World Bank that the government should agree to implement the IMF's conditionalities before any relief in the form of new loans could be expected from the international financial community.⁷ Furthermore, an unofficial trade embargo by the country's traditional trading partners including Nigeria had also been

6. Naomi Chazan "Planning Democracy in Africa: A Comparative Perspective on Nigeria and Ghana". Policy Sciences 22 (1989) p. 326.

7. Eboe Hutchful (ed) the IMF and Ghana: The Confidential Record (London Zed Books), 1987, p. 18.

imposed. These actions exposed the grim reality of the regime's helpless dependence on external economic interests to manage its relation with internal political forces.

The substantial flow of external financial resources following the implementation of that economic reform package also assured sections of the ruling class that the government would not destroy the economic basis of its domination. But the economic reform measure satisfied the government of its urban-based lower-class support. Therefore, by the beginning of 1985, the government had lost substantial support among the urban-based lower classes without securing the total support of the ruling class.⁸

The external orientation of the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) had a significant impact on internal politics. By its nature, the ERP required the imposition of a strong government as the precondition for success. That meant mastery and use of the coercive organs of the Ghanaian state against all opposition groups. Moreover, the government combined authoritarian rule with a policy of divide and rule towards strategically placed social classes. A few instances of these strategies will provide useful examples.

8. *ibid.*

Between 1982 and 1984, the government exploited the support it enjoyed from labour as organized under the defence committees to contain opposition from the ruling class. Once the PNDC had subdued the organized and articulate sections of this class, it turned around to attack labour (under the leadership of the defence committees) for its alleged militancy and for "regarding itself as a parallel or alternative power".⁹ After 1985, the government relentlessly detained or intimidated critics and organized opposition within the Trades Union Congress (TUC); radical organizations such as the New Democratic Movement (NDM), the Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards (KNRG), and the others that operated clandestinely or from exile.¹⁰

As punishment for potential critics and opposition groups within the labour movement, the government pursued a policy of denying some unions access to resources under the ERP while giving preferential treatment to others by improving salaries and benefits or assuming them access to resources under the ERP. The Civil Servants' Association,

9. This charge was made by Rawlings in his inaugural address to the Western REgion Consultative Committee, December, 7, 1984. The speech has been reprinted as "Defending the Revolution" in the Process of Consoloidation, selected speeches and interviews of Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings (Accra: Information Services Dept., 1985, January 1, 1984 - December 31, 1984, Vol. 3).

10. By the summer of 1983, exiles had established an overseas movement to oust Rawlings; the campaign for Democracy in Ghana. Another group, the Ghana Democratic Movement led by J.H. Mensah, was formed in London.

railway workers, and mine workers benefited from such special treatment, as has the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU).

But most unions did not enjoy such government confidence. The government was not just hostile to some of the other unions - it also embarked on a deliberate policy of de-unionizing them.¹¹ For example, workers of the Customs, Excise and Preventive Services (CEPS), who belong to the Public Service Workers' Union, lost their union membership when the government turned the CEPS into a security agency of the government. Similarly, workers of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) were literally deprived of their right to form a union when the GBC was declared a security zone following a fracas between union and management. And the membership of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) was systematically depleted through retrenchment, privatization of state enterprises.¹²

The general air of resentment also affected Ghanaian students community. By May 1983, university students, initially supporters of Rawlings, were engaged in violent protests regarding a number of issues;

11. E. Dagadu, "Labour Under Fire", West Africa, June 5-11, 1989, pp. 918-919.

12. *ibid*

discontent with the apparent ineffectiveness of the government's economic policies, demands for a return to civilian rule; and resentment at the government's links with Libya and Cuba. After a series of clashes between the security forces and students, the PNDC closed the universities and converted them into training schools for revolutionary cadres.

In June 1983, the Ghana People's Solidarity Organization (GHAPSO) demanded the abolition of the judicial system, on the grounds that it was class based and undemocratic. In October, the PNDC reprimanded PDC members for using relatives in the armed forces to 'exact judicial retribution' from selected individuals.¹³ In the same month the PNDC disciplined PDC units in the Western Region for exceeding their authority.

During 1985, the elements of the army, sometimes acting in concert with groups outside the country, were reported to be conspiring against the PNDC. In February a member of alleged plotters was arrested in Ashanti and accused of planning to assassinate Rawlings. Later in that month, a coup plot was detected in the army and some majors and sergeants were tried in camera. Five conspirators, allegedly linked to dissidents in Togo, were executed in May.

13. Europa Encyclopedia of Sub-Saharan Africa, London, Europa, Pub., 1993.

The government's relationship with groups within urban-based non-lower-class circles also reflected the level of benefit one group or the other derived either directly or indirectly from ERP policies.¹⁴ Its relations with professional groups like the bar association and university teachers were characterized by either latent or open hostility. Other professionals, especially those with special technical expertise were euphoric about the sudden growth of the consultancy industry under the government's ERP; exporters received constant encouragement, monetary rewards and incentives, while manufacturers were blamed for the problems of the manufacturing sector. While a core group of economic technocrats enjoyed considerable monetary rewards and a boost in status through regular attendance at international conferences, workshops, etc., the bulk of the middle class that depended entirely on salaries from both the public and private sectors could not recover financially from the depressed state of the pre - ERP era.

The policy of divide and rule is remarkable for its inefficiency as a strategy for securing stable social support for government, and proved totally counter-productive. Thus, between 1985 and 1988, the government had to contend with demands from almost all the key political groups in the country, including labour and

14. Op. cited. 56.

students, manufacturers, professionals and politicians. Workers backed their demand for a living wage and improved working conditions with severe criticisms of the government's economic and social policies and a demand for constitutional rule as well as protection for civil liberties. Students of the country's three universities criticized the government's educational¹⁵ and economic reform policies and demanded a return to constitutional rule. Neither was the business community, especially manufacturers, happy with the government's open trade regime, which hurt local industry. Similarly, the political elite of the Ghanaian establishment was not enthusiastic about the government's continued monopoly of state power, which meant its exclusion from the direct exercise of political power.¹⁶

Therefore, by 1987, the PNDC had not been able to resolve satisfactorily the problem of legitimacy that confronted it on the assumption of power. Its urban support base remained quite fragmented. Given the fact that non-electoral politics in Ghana is largely urban

15. Students strongly opposed proposals that they might assist the economy by paying for their education; or in short privatization of higher education.

16. Because of the government's tight control over non-official political activities, these groups could not openly express their grievances. Accordingly, the association of workers, university students and lawyers, for example, could only take advantage of their respective congresses to define their positions on relevant government exercises.

centred, the PNDC's loss of decisive support among the urban based classes (a loss that was confirmed in the low voter turnout at the district assembly election) created a thorny political problem.

Rural Scenario

As the government alienated substantial sections of the urban based classes, it could not be complacent about its support among the non-urban classes. Agricultural producers who were alleged to be among the leading beneficiaries of the E.R.P. - e.g., the producers of cocoa, coffee, cereals, and other export crops - found that the benefits that accrued to them from ERP policies were tentative.¹⁷

A report to the United States Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives pointed out, the ERP had adverse effects on the material conditions of the rural population.¹⁸ For the 82 percent of rural households that do not grow cocoa, real per capita income stagnated. In brief, the majority of farmers - mostly peasants - were losers.

17. Case discussed in the next chapter.

18. United States Government, Report of a Staff Study Mission Great Britain, Ghana, Senegal and France, November 29 - December 20, 1988 to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989.

The loss of reliable urban support inclined Rawlings own populism towards the rural producers, whom he referred to as the "real" and "exploited" workers of the country and their generally low level of political organization and consciousness made them vulnerable to political manipulation.

The government's decision to organize local elections in 1988-89 for the establishment of district assemblies/councils has been interpreted in several ways. One popular view is that it was aimed at securing non-urban support. It must be conceded that the government achieved tremendous success in realizing a 59 percent voter turnout; of a total of 9,680 assembly members, 7,260 elected were representatives and 2,420 appointed members. Major disparities were noted between the turn out in rural and urban centres. In the capital, Accra, the percentage turn-out ranged from 34.4% to 46.29% except in two rural districts where the pattern was different. In Dangbe East the turn out was 61.4% and in Dangbe West, 50%. This contrasts sharply with the turn-out in Ablekoma (36%) and Kpeshie(34%) in Accra.

Several factors account for the rural-urban disparity in the voter turnout.¹⁹ In the first place, by

19. Mike Oquaye, "Democracy without Political Parties, the case of District Assemblies", in Kwame A. Ninsin and F.K. Drah (ed). Political Parties and Democracy in Ghana's Fourth Republic, (Accra, Woeli Publishing Services, 1993) pp. 154-174.

1987, the PNDC had lost favour with the urban working class and had shifted attention to the rural people who were being wooed consistently. With the sharp emphasis on rural development, and the PNDC's presentation of the District Assemblies as organs for local development, the rural people saw the process as a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between rural-urban development. Secondly, the PNDC which had been against chiefs²⁰ in the past, began to court the chiefs in a new policy of reconciliation. Thirdly, the lower turn-out in the urban areas could be seen in terms of a protest vote against the PNDC's refusal to return the country to constitutional rule. This protest movement, spearheaded by the NUGS, GBA, TUC, KNRG etc. was more urban than rural.

However, there were serious obstacles to the full realization of this potential. First, even though the elections to the district assemblies/councils were controlled, it would appear that they succeeded in reproducing existing grassroots political conflicts. Hence, there were persistent reports about assembly members getting engaged in chieftaincy and land disputes as well as other local conflicts. Second, in the case of the PNDC government, the district assemblies appear to have become captives also of the existing political

20. Head of Ethnic Group.

alignments in the country - namely, political coalitions of the Convention People's Party, (CPP) National Alliance of Liberals tradition, the United Party - Progress Party tradition and coalition of radicals, and populist grouping including pro-PNDC supporters. Third, reports about developments at the district level suggested that some of these political forces were determined to assert the independence of the District Assemblies from the central government.

These factors among others definitely limited the government's ability to use the District Assemblies as instruments of legitimation. Above all, the government was disadvantaged by the fact that the assembly members contested the elections as independent candidates because the government insisted on organizing the elections on a non-party basis.

Also the envisaged adoption of democratic reforms continued to be threatened by the effects of the grave economic situation. In 1988 three universities were closed for four months, following a student boycott over subsidies and proposed introduction of student loans. In December 1988 the PNDC discontinued free secondary and university education provoking considerable student discontent. In 1989 further controls were imposed on the media and in 1990 newspaper and magazine license became subject to review under new legislation. In September

1989 another attempted coup took place led by Major Quashigah, a former commander of the military police and a close associate of Rawlings.

Evidently, the severity of the economic crisis and the fact that the government had to solicit external financial support before it could cope with rural needs placed considerable constraint on its ability to nurture or buy social support. This left the government in a rather weak bargaining position, especially as several critical social groups continued to make economic, social and political demands.

The occasional appeals that Rawlings made directly to the rural people were an attempt to minimize the limitations imposed by a weak economy.²¹ Even though Rawlings was known for his charismatic appeal as far back as June 1979, during the post 1985 period he developed a strong inclination to interact more with the rural populations. In more dramatic instances he camped by villages, worked with them on community projects, and held durbars with them. To win the support of sections of the urban based classes, especially those that had traditionally subscribed to the African policy of Nkrumah's CPP, the government intensified its militant

21. E. Hensen and K.A. Ninsin (eds). The State, Development and Politics in Ghana (London: Cooksaria Book Series, 1989) p. 8.

stand on African issues, and tried to rehabilitate Kwame Nkrumah.²²

The foundations of Ghanaian politics were altered in the 1980s under PNDC rule. Periodic changes in regime orientations mirrored more elemental processes of resource redistribution and institutional remolding in the arenas of the state and civil society. The disaggregation of power in the early part of the decade paved the way for its reaggregation in redefined social and political spaces. Successive adjustments in regime policy outlooks in response to immediate challenges established a momentum of change with broad social and political ramifications. The stability of a change oriented leadership throughout the decade, with all its frailties, provided a necessary framework for maintaining a rhythm of innovation.

By the beginning of the 1990s, however, there was too great a gap between the authoritarian practices of the government and the pluralist distribution of power in society. This situation raised a new, and possibly insurmountable, dilemma for Jerry Rawlings and the PNDC.

22. To Mark the eightieth birthday of Kwame Nkrumah, on September 21, 1989, the PNDC government organized a highly publicized international conference in Accra. This was the first of its kind since Nkrumah's death, and the first event of such grandeur since the regime came to power.

The key issue was how to pursue the process of political reform by creating political institutions endowed with new rules of conduct without relinquishing power.²³

23. Naomi Chazan, "The Political Transformation of Ghana Under the PNDC", in Donald Rothchild (ed.); Ghana; Political Economy of Recovery (Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), pp. 38-39.

CHAPTER II

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE RAWLINGS REGIME

The PNDC regime confronted in 1982 an economy in the advanced state of collapse. By 1981, for example the real GDP had fallen by as much as 15 percent compared to 1974. Certainly, some of the problems were external and therefore lay beyond the country's control. A small state heavily dependent upon external sources for its import of petroleum, machinery and manufactured items and on foreign markets for its export of cocoa, timber and diamonds, Ghana is perceived by many as remaining firmly linked to a powerful international capitalistic economy.¹

On the other hand, Ghanaians view external reliance as resulting in unequal terms of exchange. Rawlings repeated references, therefore, to "neo-colonialism" as one of the causes of the country's present difficulties have struck a strong emotional chord among local audiences.²

Although Ghana is constrained by the external environment, this is hardly the full explanation for the

1. Donald Rothchild, 'Ghana and Structural Adjustment: An overview' in Donald Rothchild (ed.) "Ghana: The Political Economy of Recovery" Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991, p. 5.
2. Donald Rothchild and E. Boadi "Ghana's Economic Decline and Development Strategies", in John Ravenhil (ed) 'Africa in Economic Crisis', New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 256-57.

country's difficulties. Declining agricultural and industrial productivity in some cases despite rising international market prices contributed substantially to the country's economic malaise during the 1970's and 1980s. From 1970 to 1981 mineral production fell by 32 percent. Thus, diamond, manganese and bauxite exports fell heavily in this period. Between 1970 and 1980, Ghana's share of world coca exports fell from 33 to 17 percent. Animated by low food growth, droughts, increasingly massive budget deficits during the 1970s and early 1980s, and external oil price shocks, Ghana experienced socially destructive inflation that averaged over 50 percent a year between 1976 and 1981, 116.5 percent in 1981 alone.³

Declining productivity was in part attributable to policy failures and bureaucratic mismanagement. Overstaffed and inefficient parastatals, poor infrastructure, low produce prices, overpricing of the local currency, budgetary imbalances, skewed sectoral and regional allocations, inadequate agricultural research, ineffective disease control, and so forth, all played a part in the fall off in the production of minerals, manufactured goods, and food and cash crops.

In brief, when Rawlings assumed power in December 1981, the economy was indeed in dire straits. The reasons

3. Mathew Martin, 'The Crumbling Facade of Africa's Debt Negotiations', London; Macmillan, 1991, p. 38.

were multiple and overlapping and included international constraints, drought, policy failure, and bureaucratic mismanagement.⁴ To unleash the forces of recovery, it was necessary for Rawlings to take drastic action, first in the direction of radical populism and then by an extremely induced structural adjustment programme.

This chapter will pursue sever major questions related to these issues. First what had been the impact of the stablization and SAP policies upon Ghana's economic growth and development. Second, what has been the impact in terms of distribution of benefits ? Have the benefits systematically tended to favour certain classes ? Third, have the IMF, World Bank, and capitalist aid, donor country, SAP policies, resources and leverage altered the political or class coalition of power in Ghana ? Finally, can the SAP policies be successful over time if broadly positive socio-economic effects are felt and if government cannot develop stable political coalitions of groups support for these policies?

The radical populism articulated by Rawlings, PNDC regime in 1982-83 seemed to promise the possibility of an alternative, more equitable, politically accountable and effective regime. The early months of the PNDC regime involved a wide range of ad-hoc measures to increase

4. *ibid.*, p. 64.

output and exports and to enforce price control and reductions.⁵ The PNDC mandated the organization of People's Defence Committees for neighbourhoods and villages and Workers Defence Committees for workplaces to mobilize the energies of the popular state in implementing revolutionary decrease (on prices, rents, etc.), checking corrupt managers and supporting the PNDC.

The state and capitalist bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie were removed from power and their wealth and bank accounts checked by Citizens Vetting Committees for tax evasion. The PDCs and WDCs, led by the NDC and RCC, threatened to challenge the PNDC's power, some acting on their own to dismiss managers, attack judges, and challenge PNDC economic allocations. PNDC leadership and governmental affairs were disorganized and chaotic.

The radicals opposed price decontrols, subsidy reductions and devolution on the grounds that they would increase consumer prices and they constituted a sellout to the IMF and imperialism. Rawlings and others strongly opposed their demand for new nationalizations.

At the same time, the institutional disruptions (e.g. purges of serious managers), and the frequent

5. Thomas M. Callaghy, "Lost Between State and Market: The Politics of Economic Adjustment in Ghana, and Nigeria", in Joan M. Nelson (ed.) 'The Politics of Economic Adjustment in Developing Nations', Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 39.

violence displayed by undisciplined military, police and some PDC members had animated a broad and intense opposition to the regime by late 1982 and early 1983. The opposition called upon the PNDC to resign and permit a transitional democratic government. The PNDC's opponents in late 1982 to early 1983, many of them vociferous, included the very numerous market women, some of them beaten and abused by price control enforcers; many food farmers reluctant to provide food at controlled prices, especially to armed soldiers; trade union leaders and many rank and file unionists, who liked radical egalitarian views but opposed vigorously the PNDC's takeover of their unions; traditional chiefs; Catholic and Protestant clergy, who repeatedly denounced the military's violence; and senior military officers who had largely lost control over the other ranks; the merchant professional bourgeoisie, and consumers angered by hyperinflation.⁶

While some assistance was forthcoming from the Soviet Union, their limited foreign capital resources were already strained by prior commitments.⁷ They were in no mood to help Ghana in any big way. In fact, the Soviet Union at that time was more obliged to close allies such

6. West Africa, July 11, 1983, pp. 1596-97.

7. Europa's Encyclopedia of Sub-Saharan Africa, London, Europa Publications, 1993, p. 1836.

as Cuba, Afghanistan and Vietnam. Besides the eastern block countries, Libya was another non-western sources of aid for Ghana. Libya did even provide food and oil at the beginning of the revolution. It is said that Rawlings refusal to accept the stationing of Libyan troops in Ghana led to that country's refusal to provide more aid. But this is not confirmed.

After having calculated what it would get from socialist countries, the country's economic strategy was bound to be changed. Under the direction of Dr. K. Botchway, Secretary for Finance and Dr. J.S. Abey of National Economic Recovery Commission a four year (1983-87) Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) was planned in 1982.

Overall, Ghana's Economic Recovery Programme has involved the following key policy and strategy emphasis:

- 1) the maintenance of price incentives, especially to exporters, which involves continuous devaluation;
- 2) major efforts to encourage domestic and foreign private capital;
- 3) reduction of the role of the state enterprises in production and marketing, a schedule for which is one major condition of the IMF's 1987 SAP loans; and
- 4) the need to reverse Ghana's deterioration through economic, not simply stabilization.⁸

8. Kwame Asiedu - Saforo. 'Economic Reform Programme and Agricultural Development: Macro Policy Sequencing in Ghana 1983-88' Food Policy Accra, November, 1989.

Ghanaian leaders did managed to moderate and soften some IMF and World Bank conditions in continuous bargaining.

Impact of Structural Adjustment Programme on Economy:

In November 1985 Ghana presented to the Third Meeting of the Consultative Group for Ghana in Paris the policy framework for 1986-88, which constituted the second phase of the ERP. The funding for the second phase included the World Bank's US \$ 130 million structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) for 1987-89, and the IMF's US \$ 245.4 million Extended Fund Facility (EEF) for 1987-90.

The main instruments and policies under the two phases of the ERP, the SAP and EEF were the following:-⁹

1. **Trade and Exchange Rate Policy Reforms**- Between April 1983 and October 1985, the cedi (official currency) was officially devalued from 2.75 - US \$ 1.00 to 60 = US \$ 1.00. By the end of 1989, the cedi was valued at 280 = US \$ 1.00.

2. **Administered Price Reforms**- The main reform has been the adjustment of the price paid to cocoa farmers. The prices were steeply raised from time to time and by 1989 the price was fixed at 16500/mt.

9. Alexander Sams and Hadi Sams 'Ghana under Structural Adjustment: The Impact on Agriculture and the Rural Poor', New York, University Press, 1991, p. 4.

3. Public Sector Reforms- At the end of 1984, public sector wages and salaries were raised by an average of 89 percent. The minimum wage was equal to US \$ 180 per month by October 1989.

4. Interest Rates- Interest rates were gradually raised to that by 1985 they were positive in real terms. The nominal deposit and lending rates have more than doubled since 1982.

5. Fiscal Policy reforms- Reforms introduced were centered on the elimination of various subsidies and mobilization of new resources through improved tax collection.

6. State Enterprise Reforms- With the help of the World Bank, a review of all state owned Enterprises (SOEs) took place in 1986-87. Under the restructuring programme some of the SOEs were to be privatized, merged, diversified, turned into joint ventures or liquidated.

7. Social Sector Management- The Government sought to address the plight of groups severely hit by the economic decline of the previous 20 years. Assistance to these groups, mostly women, rural youngsters and urban poor was in form of programmes designed to increase employment and raise incomes.

In mid 1987 Finance Minister Kwasi Botchway told Ghanaians that "we must jump for joy" because for the three-years 1984-86 Ghana experienced real gains in GDP of

over 6 percent, compared with 1 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa and 3.3 percent in developed countries.¹⁰ Investment and saving as proportion of GDP increased considerably and financing of the public sector declined in favour of cocoa and the private sector. Inflation declined drastically and the balance of trade improved.

In 1987, agriculture contributed about 75 percent of total foreign exchange earnings derived mainly from cocoa and timber. With increased output, cocoa foreign exchange earning capacity increased from US \$ 269 million in 1983 to US \$ 465 million in 1987. The income from non-cocoa items (gold, diamond, manganese, bauxite, timber) also went up from US \$ 171 million in 1973 to US \$ 322 million in 1987.¹¹

Analysis of trade imbalances, long term loans, medium term loans and net private capital transfers and grants shows that the balance of payments position improved steadily from a deficit of 3.3 percent of GDP in 1983 to a surplus of 3.3 percent of GDP in 1987.

The pressure to generate more export earnings from agriculture to lessen the debt burden has been heightened by the trends towards declining international cocoa prices and the subsequent strain on the balance of payments.

10. West Africa, June 15, 1987, p. 1173.

11. West Africa, February 1, 1988, p. 164.

Despite the modest increase in foreign exchange earnings from non-traditional exports of US \$ 27.07 million in 1988, the total agriculture export declined in value to US \$ 264.62 million. Cocoa contributed US \$ 233.05 million substantially less than the low figure of US \$ 269 million in 1983.¹²

The government budget has continued to serve as an instrument not only for rehabilitating run-down infrastructure but also for financing high-priority investments. The public finances have shown substantial improvement since 1983. Due to fiscal stringency, increased revenue collection and sales tax reform, total revenue increased by 153 percent and grants by 125 percent during the 1983-87 period.

Deficit financing of development expenditure was reversed by more closely monitoring government expenditure and by monetary and fiscal stringency. While in 1983 the deficit was about 2.7 percent of GDP, in 1987 a surplus equivalent to 0.6 percent was registered. Thus in 1987 the budget surplus, together with high domestic non-bank borrowing enabled the government to reform as much as 74 billion of debt owed to the banking system.¹³

The most important creditor governments were the United States, West Germany, the United Kingdom and -----

12. Europa's Encyclopedia of Sbu-Sharan Africa, 1993, p. 2022

13. *ibid.*, p. 2022.

Canada. The PNDC made strenuous efforts to attract foreign investment after 1985. It introduced new incentives; replaced bureaucratic multiagency approval with one fast moving agency, the Ghana Investment Center, and joined the World Bank's Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). In March 1990, MIGA's first African investment promotion conference in Accra produced \$ 65 million. Overall, gross inflows of foreign exchange rose from \$ 472 million in 1983 to \$ 740 million in 1988.¹⁴

Impact on Real Wages and Living Standards.

There have been dramatic changes in relative prices under the PNDC government, and this has occasioned some significant benefits to certain groups in the socio-economic order. In the Acheampong regime of 1972-78 and its short lived military and civilian successors, the hyperinflation and unraveling of the fabric of the economy and society drastically reduced the beneficiaries of the economic order to traders, importers, farmers, smugglers and those in senior government and managerial positions who could sell state resources on the black market.

Under the PNDC government, the changes in relative prices brought about by devaluation and the ending of

14. Mathew Martin, 'Negotiating Adjustment and External Finance: Ghana and the International Community, 1982-89', in Donald Rothchild (ed.), 'Ghana: The Political Economy of Recovery', Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991, p. 5.

price controls and subsidies have tended to benefit cocoa farmers, export businesses, and traders. Those on fixed incomes were hurt badly by the hyperinflation of the 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁵

The SAP policies of 'rationalization' of state owned enterprise or their liquidation or full or partial privatization have raised the issue of retrenchment since 1986. The government selected thirty enterprises for the first phase of divestiture, some for sale, others for liquidation. Few sales had been announced by mid-1990; the slow pace is one indication of internal opposition.¹⁶ Retrenchments have been undertaken to prepare some State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) for sale. Although the government insists that actual unemployment is low, there is massive unemployment and under-employment in all urban areas. Some people have been without job for years.

The World Bank and PNDC government have been relatively insensitive to the pain associated with structural adjustment. However, PNDC leaders have not believed entirely in the market, aware as they are of its imperfections. Rent control laws continue in effect making rent a small part of most workers' budget. The PNDC ensures regional distribution of some essential

15. op. cit., p. 68.

16. Nicholas Norton, 'Ghana Social Profile', Africa: Economic Digest, January, 30, 1989, p. 42.

commodities. But it was only when confronted with insistent UNICEF studies on the levels of poverty, malnutrition and disease, and the added pain of structural adjustment that the World Bank started to support UNICEF's "Programme of Actions to Social Cost of Adjustment" (PAMSCAD).¹⁷ The PAMSCAD promises to create 40,000 mostly unskilled jobs in the next several years and to stress nutrition, job training, and basic needs programmes. Its valuable components however, were only belatedly getting started in 1989.

The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Political and Class Coalitions and the Structure of Power.

The stabilization and SAP policies animated a substantial change in the political and class coalitions of support for the regime and also in the structure of power. Importantly, the pursuit of these policies provided the state with major resources of rebuild state capabilities and attempt to develop some relative autonomy from major contending class and other group forces in Ghanaian society.¹⁸

However, it explicitly gave up some autonomy from international focus (the IMF, World Bank, major western

17. Joan M. Nelson (ed.). The Political of Economic Adjustment in Developing Nations. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 72.

18. *ibid.*, p. 96.

donors) and served the class interests of domestic and to a lesser extent, foreign capital. On the other hand, in postcolonial political life in Ghana, no class or coherent class coalition or alliance with ethnic/regional groups, had been able to establish political hegemony for its interests and values for any length of time. That remains true today.

The Rawlings regime has used a number of resources to mobilize or demobilize support: material goods, directly or indirectly, public offices; social status; access to power and coercion.

Crucial to the economic success, it thought, was soliciting the economic participation and support of Ghana's domestic and foreign commercial, construction and industrial bourgeoisie. The regime offered these economic actors major access to material resources and capital and fewer regulations but provides them with little access to power and consults with them rarely.¹⁹

Of these, only the senior managers, bureaucrats, and officers were actively part of the regime. The prior opposition of the others in 1982-83 period were partly neutralized. With the renewal of economic growth came

19. Gilbert K. Bluwey 'Obstacles to an Orderly Transition to Constitutional Rule under the PNDC in Kwame A. Ninsin and F.K. Drah 'Ghana's Transition to Constitutional Rule', Accra, Ghana University Press 1991, p. 63.

grudging consent from some. But the persistence of extremely harsh living standards has consistently tempered any enthusiasm for the regime. The agents of the IMF and World Bank have become major participants in policy making and have provided the regime with major resources that have helped it to manage political and economic life.

The PNDC, however, had also major opponents. If the most open have been the lawyers and the Ghana Bar Association, the most important has been the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and its 17 members unions with roughly 650,000 members. If the regime excited the union members with populist rhetoric and deeds early on, it engaged them by ousting the union leaders and temporarily suspending their collective bargaining rights.

Resistance from lower unions compelled the PNDC to permit the unions to elect their own leaders in 1983. The new general secretaries were united in behalf of a number of demands that created continuous conflict with the regime; their own autonomy; collective bargaining rights; the need to increase the minimum and other wages drastically; and strong opposition to the PNDC's core macro economic stabilization and adjustment policies, especially devaluation and retrenchments. Union leaders have also demanded repeatedly a return to civilian democratic rule.²⁰

20. West Africa, July 24, 1990, p. 1216.

The PNDC has minimized consultation with union leaders, sought to curtail worker benefits, and threatened and used coercion, if unions demonstrated and went on strike. Coercion has kept strikes lower in 1982-90 period.

From mid - 1990 on, public opposition has increased, with two new major movements announcing their organization, opposition to PNDC rule, and demand for multiparty democratic rule; the Movement for Freedom and Justice and Front for National Unity, Democracy and Development.

CHAPTER III

EVENTS LEADING TO THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The leading opposition organization in Ghana from August 1990 through 1991 was the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), a loose alliance of all the former political groupings of the earlier republics. The MFJ's demands were for the PNDC to draw up a constitutional timetable, lift the ban on political activities, release all political detainees and grant an unconditional amnesty to all exiles.

The PNDC established a committee of constitutional experts to formulate proposals for a draft constitution by the end of July 1991. This would be placed before a Consultative Assembly towards the end of the year. From April 1991, onwards, Rawlings and the PNDC appeared to be setting the agenda and timetable while at the same time conceding most of the MFJ's substantive demands, such as release of detainees and abolition of various obnoxious decrees and draconian laws which were enacted during the regime of Rawlings.

The Committee recommended the election of an executive President for a fixed term, the establishment of a national assembly and the creation of the post of a Prime Minister.¹ However, the proposed creation of the

1. Europa's Encyclopedia on Sub-Saharan Africa 1994, London, 1993.

post of Prime Minister was rejected by the Consultative Assembly. The constitution was presented to the people in a referendum on 28 April 1992. It was approved by 92 percent of the votes cast with 43.7 per cent of the electorate voting.

Meanwhile an Interim National Election Commission (INEC) had been established in November 1991 for the purpose of conducting the referendum and the subsequent elections. Rawlings was already campaigning before the ban on party politics was lifted. He continued to make regular tours and made a concerted effort to cultivate the support of the chiefs and churches.

By comparison with many African states, the process of democratization in Ghana was, up until November 1992, and on the surface at least, remarkably smooth. This relative smoothness was certainly not the result, however, of any degree of trust, of mutual respect, or of any ongoing process of consultation between the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) and opposition leaders. From what might well be considered the beginning of the process in July 1990 through to the end of 1992, the two sides talked a great deal at each other and, even more commonly, and in the most disparaging terms, about each other but not once did they talk to each other. In consequence, no real consensus on observing the rules of

the game, or even on what those rules were, was developed.²

Given the continuing strength of identifications among the older members of the professional, intellectual and business elites with the two dominating post-1945 political traditions - Nkrumahism and the conservative liberalism associated with J.B. Danquah and Kofi Busia - it was probably inevitable that the main opposition political parties should identify themselves with one or other of these broad positions.

On the Nkrumahist side, four main parties emerged out of these clubs.³ The National Independence Party (NIP) had the largest concentration of CPP 'old guard' politicians. Other parties were People's National Convention (PNC) headed by Dr. Hilla Limann, the People's Heritage Party (PHP) and the National Convention Party (NCP).

On the other hand, the newly formed National Patriotic Party (NPP) headed by Prof. Adu Boahen clearly enjoyed the backing, in fact, of most of the Ghanaian business people, professionals and civil servants and was accordingly financially relatively well endowed.

2. Richard Jeffries and Clare Thomas, 'The Ghanaian Elections of 1992', African Affairs, Sept. 1993, p. 338.

3. Ibid., p. 337.

Observers frequently remarked during the year or two prior to the election, that Rawlings remained more popular with many ordinary Ghanaians than did the PNDC as the whole.⁴ Several of the PNDC Secretaries of state were actively disliked, in some cases because of suspected corruption. It was partly an expression of this division that, in late 1991, the Eagle Club was formed, subsequently to become the Eagle ('Every Ghanaian Living Every where') party. The Eagle liked to present itself as a grass root Rawlings fan club, but its membership seems to have been drawn almost exclusively from the CDRs, which scarcely recommended it to most ordinary Rawlings admirers.

It was unclear for quite some time whether it would prove possible to form a unified party of the PNDC. Quite apart from the above division, there were major ideological differences within the ranks of the PNDC members and Secretaries with the more left wing members, feeling politically miles apart from relative conservative liberals, such as Justice Annan and Dr. Mary Grant.⁵

4. Richard Jeffries, 'Urban Popular Attitudes Towards the Economic Recovery Programme and the PNDC regime in Ghana', African Affairs, April 1992, pp. 207-26.

5. Yaw Manu, "Party-System and Democracy in Ghana" in Kwame A. Ninsin and F.K. Drah eds, Political Parties and Democracy in Ghana's Fourth Republic. Accra, Woeli Publishing Services, 1993, p. 127.

Eventually, a group of centrist pragmatic Secretaries, headed by Dr. Obed Asamoah, the Foreign Secretary, formed the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and set about establishing it as the main PNDC party with Rawlings as its presidential candidate.⁶ When the Egle party refused to merge, a series of measures were taken to discredit it. The NDC, clearly enjoying access to government funds and other resources, emerged as by far the stronger political force. Rawlings, perhaps rather pointedly, wishing not to be seen as beholden exclusively to any one PNDC faction, stood as the presidential candidate of both the NDC - NCP alliance and the Egle Party. In September 1992, in accordance with the new constitution, Rawlings retired from the armed forces although he retained the title of 'commander in chief' of the armed forces in his capacity as head of the state.

The list of presidential candidates were therefore as follows:⁷

New Patriotic Party (NPP)	Prof. Adu Boahen
People's National Convention (PNC)	Dr. Hilla Limann
National Independence Party (NIP)	Mr. K. Drao
People's Heritage Party (PHP)	Lt. Gen. (retd.) E.A. Erskine
National Democratic Congress (NDC)	Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings
National Convention Party (NCP)	Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings
Every Ghanaian Living Every where (EGLE)	Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings

6. Ibid., p. 134.

7. Ibid., 140.

The election did not, despite the expectations of some outside observers, turn on competing economic policies. All parties advocated the primacy of private enterprise and a market-let-economy and none challenged the continuation of, or the thinking underlying, the Economic Reform Programme (ERP).⁸ The NPP claimed that the ERP was in fact a continuation of their policies under the Busia government and criticised various aspects of the PNDC's implementation of it. They stressed for instance that they would implement structural adjustment with a greater regard to its human costs (the implicit reference being here to civil service retrenchments among the urban poor). The economic debate never, in any case really took off, partly because Rawlings skilfully skirted it, emphasizing simply 'continuity' - the NDC, significantly did not even produce a manifesto. The election tended rather to centre on the personalities of Rawlings and his rivals more especially Adu Boahen, and the issue of whether, as the opposition believed most Ghanaians, to feel, "11 years is enough".⁹ Behind this lay of course the issues of open government, freedom of the press, and human rights.

Election Campaign

It is difficult to separate aspects of INEC's performance from the campaign itself. INEC as such was an

8. West Africa, 9-15 November, p. 1930.

9. Op. cit., p. 348.

issue in the campaign and its performance and response to criticisms were very much a part of the political landscape. Throughout the campaign INEC went to considerable lengths to win the confidence and respect of all political parties. One particular achievement of INEC was the brokering of an agreement amongst all the parties of a Code of Conduct to which all would adhere and in which all pledged themselves to accept the results of a free and fair election.¹⁰ This was based on such Commonwealth precedents as Bangladesh, Namibia and Pakistan.

The style of campaigning involved a mix of posters, street marches, pamphlets, broadcasts paid and free, and the holding of rallies. One matter to which parties returned time and again was the alleged misuse of state resources in support of the NDC. It must also be said, however, that in many areas of the country the NPP appeared to be well resourced; in the Ashanti and Eastern regions, for instance, NPP vehicles and hoardings were more visible than those of the NDC.¹¹

In any election, the media has a crucial responsibility to inform voters about the political parties, candidates, issues and arrangements for the

10. Commonwealth Secretariate, The Presidential Election in Ghana, 3 November 1992. The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group, p. 42.

11. Ibid., p. 37.

election. This campaign, however concentrated on the state of Ghanaian society, which was afraid to speak out. The bulk of the newly established newspapers embarked unfettered and zestful way on their reporting of the campaign. Almost without exception, the privately owned media abandoned any serious attempt to address the issues, and chose instead to indulge in wanton mudslunging, the likes of which none would have thought possible.¹²

On the other hand, the state owned broadcasting media performed with surprising impartiality during the period of main election campaign. All political parties were given equal time on radio and television, with parties being allowed five minutes free and five minutes paid per week.

Results

The real voter turnout in the election was around 60 percent, which was quite impressive. The results were announced from constituencies as they were received at INEC's headquarters in Accra. By the afternoon of 4 November 1992, the trend was clear, and the following day Flt. Lt. (Retd.) J.J. Rawlings was declared elected after the results of 198 of the 200 constituencies had

12. Ibid., p. 45.

been received. A total of 3,937,783 valid votes had been cast and these were divided between the candidates as follows:¹³

Ft. Lt. (Retd.) J.J. Rawlings	2,306,761	(58.6%)
Prof. Adu Boahen	1,184,625	(30.1%)
Dr. H. Limann	2,66,204	(6.8%)
Mr. K. Darko	112,527	(2.9%)
Lt. Gen. (Retd.) E.A. Erskine	67,726	(1.7%)

Four interesting patterns of voting emerged.¹⁴ First, Rawlings gained more than 50 percent of the vote in every region except for NPP's stronghold Ashanti, where the latter gained 60 per cent of votes as against NDC's 32 per cent. Second, Adu Boahen turned out to be his nearest rival except Upper East and Upper West. Third, a breakdown of the constituency shows Rawlings polling less strongly and Boahen more strongly, in most urban constituencies than in rural parts of the corresponding region. Fourth, all three Nkrumahist party presidential candidates were humiliated at the polls.

In contrast to disunity and factional squabbling among the Nkrumahist faction of the political class was united, disciplined and well organized. The NPP presented the only credible alternative to the NDC, and Adu Boahen

13. *ibid.*, p. 59.

14. The Ghanaian Chronicle, 14-20 Nov. 1992, p. 1.

seemed likely to present a powerful challenge to Rawlings, whether or not they had any previous history of attachment to the Progress Party of 1969-72 or the Popular Front Party of 1979-81, Boahen was the logical tactical vote.¹⁵ Yet Boahen succeeded in gaining a majority of votes, generally speaking, only amongst those sections of the population whose attachment to the NLM/PP/PFP had historically been especially strong - the western educated and the Asante. Why was this ?

One might first observe that there were contemporary reasons, quite apart from a tradition of attachment to the NLM/PP/PFP, why these sections of the population should have been particularly keen supporters of Boahen, or at least fervent opponents of Rawlings. The western-educated naturally tended to feel more frustrated by the PNDC's 'closed' style of governance, its intolerance of criticism and the consequent lack of real public debate under its rule. Some professional groups, most notably the lawyers, had carried a kind of continuous running battle with the PNDC. In addition, the western educated proportionately had more reason to fear the PNDC's practice of political detention and other human rights abuses. These concerns were not necessarily shared, however at least not to the same extent, by other sections of the population, such as the urban and rural

15. Op.cit., p. 359.

poor. For very many ordinary Ghanaians the human rights issue figured less prominently in their electoral calculations than the questions of economic management and economic distribution.

Similarly, many Asante were likely to vote for Boahen because they were especially inclined to perceive Rawlings' government as an oppressive Ewe cabal. It is a matter of common knowledge among Ghanaians that the long-dating Asante antipathy towards and suspicion of the Ewe - a prejudice admittedly shared, though normally to a much lesser extent, by members of the Akan cultural groupings more generally - has intensified in recent years and coloured Asante perceptions of the PNDC regime. However it is important to note that there had been no discernible ethnic or regional favouritism in the PND's distribution of development projects.

3

A survey of Ghanaian popular opinions before the elections indicated that a large proportion of the electorate continued to admire his apparent integrity, truthfulness, common touch and hard work.¹⁶ Crucial to Rawlings' victory was the credibility of his claim to have fulfilled many of his promises. He was offering, several Ghanaian commentators have said, 'continuity'. This is no doubt true, but it should be qualified by noting that the appeal lay partly also in the prospect of -----
16. West Africa, 22-28 June, 1992, p. 1087.

1992 Presidential Election—Result by Region

Region	Turnout (est)	Valid votes	Prof. A. Adu Boahen		Dr Hilla Limann		Mr Kwabena Darko		Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings		Lt. Gen. E. A. Erskine	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Western Region	45.9	394,286	89,800	22.8	33,760	8.6	21,924	5.6	239,477	60.7	9,325	2.4
Central Region	45.6	334,031	86,683	26.0	6,308	1.9	11,631	3.5	222,092	66.5	7,312	2.2
Greater Accra Region	46.2	507,445	187,892	37.0	22,038	4.3	20,721	4.1	270,933	53.4	5,861	1.2
Volta Region	60.8	478,417	17,295	3.6	7,431	1.6	3,530	0.7	446,365	93.3	3,796	0.8
Eastern Region	50.9	516,874	198,744	38.5	9,754	1.9	11,730	2.3	292,983	56.7	3,663	0.7
Ashanti Region	49.1	712,584	431,380	60.5	17,620	2.5	25,298	3.6	234,237	32.9	4,049	0.6
Brong Ahafo Region	43.2	392,864	116,041	29.5	20,646	5.3	8,979	2.3	243,361	61.9	3,837	1.0
Northern Region	47.3	320,973	52,539	16.4	35,452	11.0	4,682	1.5	203,004	63.2	25,296	7.9
Upper West region	47.7	129,600	11,535	8.9	48,075	37.1	2,329	1.8	66,049	51.0	1,612	1.2
Upper East region	47.5	201,946	21,164	10.5	66,644	32.5	2,791	1.4	108,999	54.0	3,348	1.7
Country Total	48.3	3,980,020	1,213,073	30.4	266,728	6.7	113,615	2.8	2,327,600	58.3	68,099	1.7

Based on 200 constituencies out of 200 estimated giving 8,255,056 out of 8,255,056 Registered Voters—By courtesy of INEC

a degree of change, the prospect that the less attractive features of Rawlings' past rule, the intolerance of criticism and the government harassment, would be moderated within the new constitutional framework.

The Opposition Parties Reaction

The NPP published on 7 April, 1993, 'The Stolen Verdict' in which it presented its compilation of evidence that the ballot was rigged in favour of Rawlings. Opposition cries of foul play revolved to a large extent around the size of the electoral roll. There was actually two quite distinct complaints here. The first was that many eligible voters with anti PNDC sympathies were not registered because the roll had initially been drawn up for the District Assembly elections of December 1988 to March 1989 and these voters had wished, by abstention, to protest against the PNDC's refusal to democratize more fully. A number of exiled Ghanaians were also disenfranchised before they returned to Ghana to take part in the elections.

The second and potentially far more serious complaint was that the roll was inflated and that this gave opportunity for double-voting, under age voting and other electoral malpractices in support of Rawlings. It is generally accepted that the total of 8,255,056 registered voters was an impossibly large number for a

population variously estimated at between 14 and 15.5 million. They favoured a resident population figure of around 14 to 14.5 million, giving an eligible registration population of 6.6 million. 'The Stolen Verdict' provides abundant, and fairly persuasive, allegations of plots by particular groups of NDC supporters in particular constituencies to stuff boxes with falsely thumb-printed ballots.

Nevertheless, the transparency of the counting and counting of votes was one effective safeguard against any widespread rigging of the poll. A representative of one of the teams of international observers was also present at most polling stations.¹⁸ Numerous cases of electoral irregularity, for example of presiding officers failing to follow stipulated procedures, undoubtedly did occur. The flawed electoral roll disenfranchised a number of voters who couldn't trace their name or were unable to vote in time before the poll closed. The Commonwealth Observers Group clearly underestimated the extent of such irregularities in its initial report and was understandably criticized by opposition leaders for doing so.

The Carter Central Observer Team, however, acknowledged that irregularities were as numerous and widespread as the opposition claimed, but at the same time

18. The OAU and the EC also sent observer missions but did not issue reports.

attributed most of them to inadequate training for polling officers and to logistical difficulties, rather than to deliberate misconduct. Its report concluded that the team 'did not encounter a systematic pattern that would suggest fraudulent conduct or the rigging of the elections'. The COG's finding that the conduct of the elections was 'free from fear' was virtually echoed by all other observers. All observers were agreed that the prevailing popular attitude was one of the extreme keenness to vote, queuing for hours in the blazing sun.

In all probability, Rawlings' victory was as genuine as it was emphatic.¹⁹ It is possible, of course, without any malpractice, Rawlings would have attained slightly less than 50 percent of the vote and would therefore have been forced into a run-off against Adu Boahen.

Rawlings won, then, in part because he enjoyed the advantages of incumbency and because majority of the Ghanaians cared more about their material standard of living than about 'human rights'. Although, the Economic Recovery Programme had produced only marginal improvements in real incomes for the mass of the urban population the living standards of the rural population had improved. He stood for the right of ordinary farmers,

19. Op.cit., p. 354.

fishermen, hairdressers and mechanics to be considered equal citizens with lawyers and university lecturers, and for their interests to be equally considered in the formulation of government policies. Rawlings electoral victory was perfectly credible on this basis and did not explanation in terms of election rigging.²⁰

20. Op. cit., p. 362.

CHAPTER IV

POST-ELECTION SITUATION

In 1993, for one full year, Ghanaians have been living under a new political dispensation of multiparty politics, constitutionalism and the rule of law which in reality contains little that is new. In terms of personnel, policies and strategies the Fourth Republic and the PNDC appear to most people as one and same. This means for many Ghanaians the Fourth Republic has been an era of unfulfilled dreams, dashed hopes and aspirations.¹ All this is of course not an accident of history. The seeds of all the present political distrust, disappointment and cynicism in Ghana was shown during the political transition process which culminated in the denunciation of the presidential election results and boycott of the parliamentary polls.

After the declaration of presidential election results rioting and looting broke out in Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti Region and the NPP's stronghold and a series of bomb blasts took place in Accra. After a rally which took place in Accra in early December 1992, Adu Boahen of National Patriotic Party (NPP) that the opposition had direct evidence of electoral fraud

1. Kwesi Jonah, "Continuity in Politics", West Africa, 10-16, January, 1994. p. 17.

perpetrated by the government, and this would be made public in due course. The opposition parties declared however, that they would not contest the results of the presidential election in court, but they would boycott the forth coming parliamentary elections.

Accordingly, the legislative elections (which had been postponed until December 29 to facilitate opposition parties participation) were contested only by the proestablishment National Democratic Congress (NDC) and its allies the EGLE Party and the National Conventional Party (NCP). In 23 of the 200 constituencies the single candidate was returned unopposed, 29 percent of the registered electorate voted in the remaining 177 constituencies. The NDC won 189 of the 200 seats in the parliament while the NCP secured eight seats, the EGLE Party one seat, and independent candidates two seats.²

The opposition wanted to postpone the parliamentary elections for two years, time enough to complete a new register of voter's list and set up an identification card system. But the government side agreed that the people had voted for a new constitution to take effect from January 7 and that time table could not be side stepped. And so, on January 7, for the third time, Jerry Rawlings at the age of 46 assumed the leadership of Ghana.³

2. Europa's Encyclopedia of Sub-Saharan Africa, 1993, p.416.

3. Africa Report, July-August, 1993.

In his first address to the Parliament the President invited the opposition parties to a dialogue with the ruling parties in Parliament. He said a new electoral register would be compiled before 1996 together with an ID card system. In early June, 1993, a shadowy organization Farigon claimed responsibility for a spate of bombings in Accra after the declaration of Presidential elections.

Due to the total domination of Rawlings supporters in the Parliament, the rich variety of opinion, exhibition of fundamentally difficult approaches to the solutions of socio-economic problems which Ghanaians looked forward to have not happened. That is not to say that every single MP sings his master's voice. It is just that principled and fundamental disagreement with the Executive on policy issues is simply not on.⁴

It is probably in the composition of the cabinet that continuity has seen its fullest fulfilment. Eleven out of 17 being a carryover from the PNDC era and are most likely to survive any impending reshuffle. In his sessional address the President made it quite clear that he will stick to policy directions chartered by the PNDC. The core of policy continuity will be the economic recovery programme with its ascent on economic liberalization, diversification of state owned enterprises, further redeployment and trade liberalization.

4. Asian Age, New Delhi, 16 March, 1994.

The principal obstacle to the attainment of these policies is not economic but political, that is, the government's poor track record in handling state-civil society relations. Even under the Fourth Republic attacks on Ghanaian business man rights is not and uncommon phenomena. As the prolonged strike of the University Teachers Association and the Cocobod workers and subsequent acceptance of demands by the government demonstrates civil society is wide awake and cannot be easily cowed into submission. After having presided for a decade over the most dictatorial regime in the country's history, the decision of the PNDC chairman to seek a popular mandate on the slogan of continuity was bound to pose grave problems for constitutional rule.

The NPP, itself does not know where it stands in relation to the government. One minute it is all for holding a dialogue with the government, the next it is calling off the exercise. What the party has failed to realize is that the NDC, ruling the roost; calls the shots and would not allow the opposition to dictate to the government. Even on the issue of elections in 1996, the NPP after accepting its participation is once again talking of a boycott.⁵

5. Desmond Davies, "Uneasy Calm Prevails", West Africa, 16-22 May, 1994, p. 865.

The Opposition parties have been haggling over the matter of providing identity cards for the electorate. Agreement has been reached in April 1994 that these would be provided. But the opposition parties, in their haste to embarrass the government, may have forgotten how inimical to civil liberties identity cards can become. They could be used for all sorts of nefarious actions by a government bent on keeping its population in check. If, by any chance the identity cards are misused by an unscrupulous government, Ghanaians will know who to blame for their misery.

The political parties, some of which appeared dead or to be dying after the elections are at long last moving out of their slumber. The badly fragmented Nkrumahist Parties out of their unity talks, created the People's Convention Party (PCP). Hilla Limann and his drastically diminished People's National Convention (PNP) are the only Nkrumahists who refused to join the PCP. He is not likely to do so in near future unless he is accepted as the living leader of the Nkrumahist family. Almost all his members have joined and he risks losing the little CPP base he still commands and sinking into complete political oblivion.⁶

It is the Progressive Alliance that faces the most of the critical choices. All indications are that the NCP

6. Op. cit., p. 18.

and the EGLE carry little or no political weight and contributed little to the Rawlings victory. The obvious choice for them is to either a total absorption into the PNDC or join hands with the Nkrumahist forces.

The one institution that has woken up to a remarkable self discovery is the judiciary. Confidence in the judiciary was all but gone just before the Fourth Republic. Successive legal defeats of the government and its agencies in cases involving constitutional interpretation restored hope in the judicial institutions. Thanks to these bold decisions Presidential appointments of District Chief Executives made in March 1994 was stopped.

The Executive and the Legislature have both worked hard to ensure that certain state institutions were put in place in time to beat the July 7, 1994, deadline required by the constitution. Apart from the Council of States which came in early, these institutions include the National Commission on Civil Education, the Election Commission, the District Assemblies Common Fund, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Media Commission.⁷

Important though these institution are some of them have become avenues for the redeployment of the

7. West Africa - 27 February - 5 March, 1994, p. 816.

comrades of the Rawlings revolution who offered loyal and meritorious service but could not be accommodated in the mainstream of government.

The relationship between the government and the vibrant press has become strained. The government is accusing the press of being irresponsible, sensational, peddlers of lies and half truths. President J.J. Rawlings labelled the press as having nothing good in stock but lies and falsehoods. The attacks on the press are seen as tactics to move against the important independence of the Ghanaian Press (The Ghanaian Chronicle, The Independent, Ghanaian Voice) which the government does not control.

Eighteen months is, perhaps too a short period to undertake a critical review of the human rights record of constitutional Ghana, after nearly 11 years of dictatorship under Rawlings. A major instance of human rights violation was the government sponsored police brutality against anti-budget demonstrators on February 16, 1993, organised by the Joint Action Committee (JAC) comprising all the opposition parties.⁸

The police on its part explained that the organisers of the demonstration had failed to obtain a

8. Kweka Baako, "A Conflict of Interests", West Africa, 10-16, January 1994.

police permit as demanded by the law. The correctness of the opposition line of thought and thrust of action was ultimately made manifest when the New Patriotic Party (NPP) won a victory in the Supreme Court on the issue of permits as a precondition for demonstrations. The Supreme Court ruling was a major victory for civil liberties and human rights in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

On the social front, Ghana's harmonious interethnic relations received a serious threat when ethnic violence resulted in 1000 deaths and heavy loss of property in Northern Ghana in February 1994.⁹ The recent Konkomba - Nanomba clashes are not the first of their kind in Northern Ghana. The reasons often attributed to the Konkomba uprisings who originally belong to neighbouring Togo are inaccessibility or inability to own land, exploitation by local chiefs, and the marginalisation of the Konkomba by other ethnic majorities of the Northern Region. Eventually, the warring factions agreed to a peace plan on April 12, 1994.

Economy Update

The boycott of the parliamentary elections by the opposition parties reduced the potential for real divergence between the Executive and Parliament on economic policy. There were hopes that policy formulation

9. Pioneer, New Delhi, 24 February, 1994

would no longer be confined to a few individuals who, after reaching policy agreements with the IMF and World bank, would implement these policies without public debate or discussion. On the whole these expectations were disappointed in the first year of constitutional rule.

In early January 1993 a number of severe economic austerity measures were introduced under the 1993 budget resulting in an immediate increase in transport and supply costs, and food prices. In the budget statement the government admitted the existence of significant imbalances in the fiscal and balance of payments accounts.

The government also launched its Accelerated Growth Programme which aims at growth rates of 7-8 per cent by the end of the century. The World Bank formulated South Asian model, based on 'accelerated growth strategy' (AGS) is a low risk high benefit option. The World Bank is gently trying to nudge the Ghanaian authorities along this road.

In its report titled 'Ghana 2000' which was published in January 1993, the World Bank insists that for A.G.S. to work, the state must rid itself of costly, overmanned, badly managed companies. The report says that another obstacle to growth is Ghana's low saving ratio. For investments to grow, saving must be high, but Ghana has one of the lowest saving rate in Africa at -----
10. Op. cit., p. 422.

around 8 to 9 per cent of GDP compared to African average of 18 percent. The report further says that the greatest challenge facing Ghana is to attract the vast pool of skilled, affluent Gnanaians living in Europe and America.

The second budget of the Fourth Republic was presented on 14 January 1994. Real GDP has been projected to grow up by 5 per cent but this was not achieved. The budget statements was silent about the actual GDP rate achieved for 1993, but admitted that the growth in economy has been less than expected.

'Finance Minister Dr. Kwesi Botchway should have resigned after admitting that there was weaknesses and lapses in the government's financial management, which led to the loss of billions of cedis in government revenue'. This was one of the many strong conclusions in the opposition NPP's analysis of 1994 budget.¹¹

The NPP statement described the budget as being 'anti-poor', 'anti rural', 'anti industry' and 'anti urban'. The party noted that the 18 per cent price rise of petrol and 10 per cent hike in the price of kerosene would "aggravate the already unbearable cost of living, and reduce local industries competitive advantage".

In the final analysis Ghana appears to be a symbol of relative political peace and tranquility within a sub-

11. West Africa, 14-20 February, 1994, p. 118.

region rife with war and civil strife. It is the only country that possesses the political and economic capacity to receive nationals of other countries where there is political turmoil and reabsorb en masse its own nations who fall prey to violence in other countries. What is needed is a drastic political surgery to improve democratic political practice. Ghanaians agree that things could be a lot better.¹²

12. Op. cit., p. 18.

CONCLUSION

The PNDC government differed dramatically at the outset from its authoritarian predecessors. Its composition was distinctly populist, it surpassed even the young Nkrumah in its reformist zeal and commitment to thoroughgoing change. The principal theme of the new government was the need for a greater degree of participatory democracy through decentralisation, which it sought to achieve through People's and Workers Defence Committees renamed Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR).

The new government was confronted by serious economic problems. In 1983, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) introduced an austerity budget and a four year economic recovery programme was developed in close collaboration with the World Bank and the IMF. The structural economic reforms were instrumental in bringing about a slow but steadily revival in the economy, which even opponents of the regime acknowledge.

By 1985, however it was apparent that the regime was having difficulty in translating economic success in political terms. Although still rhetorically committed to mass participation, the government increasingly downgraded its own populist structures, and insulated itself from public protest. Corruption resurfaced in ruling circles. The contradictions set in motion by the PNDC were

unavoidable. The inability of the PNDC to institutionalize itself meant that its control weakened, and that some realignment of institutional processes - whether by design, failure, or transfer would be imminent.

A significant step in Ghana's transition to multi-party democracy was the establishment in 1982 of the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) vested with statutory responsibility for registering voters, considering elections and the delimitation of boundaries. The NCD was responsible in May 1987 for the creation of 110 districts in Ghana for the purpose of district level elections. In the 1989 District Assembly elections, an estimated 65 percent of the electorate participated in the simple majority, single vote elections. Two thirds of the members of the District Assemblies were elected and one third appointed by the PNDC.

In 1990, there were widespread demands for an end to the ban imposed by the PNDC on political activity. In May, 1992, the PNDC lifted an 11 year ban on political activity and restored freedom of the press, ushering in the final phase of the transition to a democratic political system. In July, 1991, a 260 member Consultative Assembly was established consisting of 117 members elected by District Assemblies, 121 members direct from 62 established organizations and 22 members appointed by the Government. The draft constitution agreed by the assembly recommended a strong executive with emphasis on the protection of

human rights, democracy and freedom of association and speech. The presidential election was scheduled for 3 November and parliamentary elections for 8 December.

In the end, the outcome must have been severely disappointing to the large majority of Ghanaians. Rawlings officially won the presidential election with 58.3 percent of the vote to Adu Boachen's 30.4 per cent. But the opposition parties' refusal to accept the validity of the result or to participate in the subsequent parliamentary election soured the taste of victory even for Rawlings' keen supporters. Most of these, delighted as they were with Rawlings' election as president, had nevertheless hoped to see a change in Ghana's mode of governance, with Rawlings obliged to adopt a more conciliatory style of rule and with more effective checks on government policies and behaviour via a genuinely representative parliament. In the event, it is doubtful whether such changes would be achieved with a parliament composed almost entirely of candidates of the incumbent regime's party the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and its electoral ally, the National Convention Party (NCP).

This outcome was also disturbing to all those who hope to see the 'redemocratization' of Africa. The electoral victory of the opposition movement for Multiparty Democracy in Zambia and, more especially,

Kenneth Kaunda's acceptance of defeat, induced an optimism in this regard which may now seem premature. Following on from the case of Angola, the Ghanaian election was the second African election in recent years in which, notwithstanding the declarations of international team of observers that the electoral process was sufficiently free and fair for the official returns to be accepted as valid, the 'pro-democracy' opposition parties refused to accept the result.

The case of Angola, with its recent history of civil war and consequent intense ethnic and personal antagonisms, could fairly readily be dismissed as exceptional, if tragic in terms of the resulting loss of life. The case of Ghana, with its relatively harmonious inter-ethnic relations and a seemingly sophisticated, comopolitan liberal opposition leadership, was far more dismaying in its potential implications for the rest of the continent.

Without discarding old authoritarian attitudes it would be extremely difficult to see how the government can create the peaceful social atmosphere to pursue its economic programmes. A vital area where a changed attitude on the part of the government is badly needed is in relations with the opposition parties. The critical ingredient which was missing in the transitional programme was national consensus. Effective reconstruction of this consensus is a very urgent national task requiring

productive discussions aimed at substantial issues of democratic governance.

The badly needed adaptation and adjustment to a new set of democratic political institutions has not been realized. The only Ghanaians who appear to believe seriously that there has been a transition to democracy are the power holders themselves. For the rest there has been a transition from military to multiparties, democracy is still to be awaited.

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