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AFRICAN SOCIALISM : THE THEORY AND
PRACTICE OF KWAME NKRUMAH.

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Presented for the Degree of Master of Arts to the
Australian National University.

May 1972

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INTRODUCTION

For about a decade, Kwame Nkrumah was independent Ghana's foremost public figure. Firstly in his capacity as Prime Minister from 1957, when Ghana formally became independent, and then as President of the Republic of Ghana from 1960 to 1966, Nkrumah attracted world wide interest as the leader of the first independent black African nation, and as the flamboyant spokesman for African Unity and African Socialism. Nkrumah's fall from power, when he was toppled by a military coup on February 24, 1966, released a flood of theories and assertions as to the nature of his government during his decade of power.

A substantial proportion of such theories described Nkrumah as exercising dictatorial powers, creating a personality cult around himself, and suppressing any murmur of dissent. Colonel Akwasi Afrifa, a leading figure in the military coup, is one such critic. He asserted that Nkrumah's rule was characterized by "the terror of one-man rule, and the misery of dictatorship".¹ Nkrumah, having become the symbol of emergent Africa, "built a cult of personality around himself, and ruthlessly used the powers invested in him by his own constitution. He developed a strange love for absolute power".²

Needless to say, Afrifa is concerned in his book to justify his part in the illegal overthrow of government, and characterizing Nkrumah as a dictator may be one way of accomplishing this. However,

1 A.A. Afrifa, The Ghana Coup (London, 1967), p. 117.

2 ibid. p. 121.

it is unfair to dismiss Afrifa's allegations merely because they serve to rationalize his own actions. A considerable number of critics who do not share Afrifa's personal involvement in Ghanaian politics share his opinions. Henry Bretton is one of these. He describes Nkrumah's government in terms of "the malfunctions of personal rule", and his ideas and theories as "opportunistic, uncoordinated, unprincipled, nebulous and open-ended".³

Not all of Nkrumah's critics describe his rule in terms of dictatorship, however. Some speak of him in terms of socialism. Mary Fitch and Robert Oppenheimer, for example, in Ghana, End of an Illusion, describe the nature of their disillusionment with Nkrumah's Ghana in the following terms :

... the failure of the socialist experiment in Ghana did not lie in the peculiarity of African circumstances, and still less in the psychology of a single man. It failed because the attempt to break with Ghana's colonial past was not made soon enough, and because when it was made, it was not complete enough.⁴

The difference in the explanations of the Ghanaian government's failure is striking. According to Afrifa and Bretton, the government was a disaster because it was essentially a dictatorship, what is more, an inefficient dictatorship. Fitch and Oppenheimer, however, see the government as a failure because it was not sufficiently socialist, the assumption being that it was socialist to some extent at least.

3 H.L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah (New York, 1966), p.133.

4 M. Fitch and R. Oppenheimer, Ghana, End of an Illusion, (New York, 1966), pp. 83, 84.

It has become clear from a glance at only a few of Nkrumah's critics that there exists a considerable divergence of opinion about the nature of Nkrumah's government. This much is clear if we assume that dictatorship and socialism are incompatible, since socialism commonly connotes a broadening of the base of power, rather than its contraction to the size of one man. Perhaps this assumption itself is inapplicable when considering Nkrumah, for one observer manages to combine or at least link the concepts of dictatorship and socialism when he describes Nkrumah as "the Leninist Tsar".⁵

Nkrumah himself maintained a position different from any of the above. Firstly, of course, he denied that his government was in any way a failure, let alone a disaster. The critics' accusations of economic chaos he dismissed by stating that

Of course the Ghanaian economy was not without its problems, but is this not true of all national economies, and particularly of the growing gap between rich and poor nations? ⁶

As to the nature of his government, Nkrumah himself denied allegations of dictatorship. He consistently maintained that his government was based on a commitment to socialism. In 1957 he described himself as a Marxist socialist, in the 1960's as an African socialist.

The thesis attempts to penetrate through the confusions and contradictions of a welter of differing theories, and to come to an understanding of Nkrumah's government. The thesis approaches the problem in the light of Nkrumah's description of himself as a socialist.

5 Ali A. Mazrui, 'Nkrumah : the Leninist Tsar', in Of Heroes and Uhuru-Worship (London 1967).

6 K. Nkrumah, Dark Days In Ghana (New York, 1969), pp. 90, 91.

It attempts to ascertain if Nkrumah was in fact a socialist, and if so in which sense and to what extent. A concern that emerges within the thesis is whether the apparent contradictions in the observers' assessments of Nkrumah are reflections of actual contradictions in the man and his government.

The thesis considers Nkrumah in his capacities both as theoretician and practical politician. The first section of the thesis traces the development of Nkrumah's theories from the 1940's, when he was a student in Philadelphia and London, through the years of his climb to the zenith of political power. Nkrumah's own writings and speeches form the basis for this examination. Since Nkrumah in the early development of his ideas described himself as a Marxist, his pronouncements are compared both to Marx's theory itself, and to Marx as interpreted by Marxists. The latter basis of comparison is necessary since Marx wrote primarily of nineteenth-century industrialized society, and it is followers of Marx rather than Marx himself who extended the Marxist vision to include underdeveloped countries.

In this context, Nkrumah's ideas are compared with Leninist theory. The two main pivots of comparison are the nature and importance of the Party, and the nature of imperialism as an extension of capitalism. These two issues are chosen since Lenin himself emphasized their centrality to socialist development.

Since Nkrumah described himself as an "African Socialist" as well as a Marxist, his ideas are also compared to those of two other African leaders who so described themselves, namely, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Leopold Senghor of Senegal. An attempt is

made to understand what it is to be an African Socialist and how compatible this is with Marxism-Leninism. The entire section concerned with theory is devoted to exploring Nkrumah's ideas, what they are and whether they constitute a consistent theory.

The second part of the thesis is concerned with Nkrumah as a practical politician. Within this section, the overall political situation within Ghana is analysed. This is necessary to ascertain how much autonomy Nkrumah had as a political figure, and to what extent he was forced to respond to pressure from groups and forces within the nation and without. The nature and importance of the Opposition Party, known as the United Party, and Nkrumah's own Party, the convention People's Party, are considered at length, and the conclusion reached that their influence on Nkrumah was virtually nil. Their destinies were, in fact, substantially controlled by Nkrumah.

Having established the general political framework within which Nkrumah must act, the thesis considers the economic necessities and demands which forced themselves upon the President and to some extent determined his course of action. Two chapters are then devoted to Nkrumah's actions within the broad socio-economic context. It becomes apparent during these chapters that Nkrumah's activity in the economic sphere is consistent with his theories, but that between the President's actions and theory in the political realm there is not so much a gap as a contradiction. The conclusion attempts to explain the contradictions which have been revealed and so to reach an understanding of Nkrumah's government.

The sources which the thesis has utilized are considerable. In addition to Nkrumah's own writings, there are a number of very

useful sources available in Australia. These include several Ghanaian newspapers, The Ghanaian Times, Evening News, Daily Graphic and Weekly Spectator. Although the last three are available only from 1964 onwards, The Ghanaian Times is available from 1961. In addition to the newspapers, the entire range of Parliamentary papers, including Debates, is readily available. Even though the nature of Nkrumah's regime was one in which public criticism was actively discouraged, critical contemporary sources are available for all of the period covered by the thesis. World wide interest in Nkrumah meant that the President's actions were well-covered in the international Press.

CHAPTER ONE : A BACKDROP FOR 'SOCIALISM': MARX AND LENIN.

In trying to answer the question posed in the Introduction, namely, what was the nature of Nkrumah's concern with socialism, it is clearly necessary to discover what Nkrumah meant by "socialism". Since Nkrumah's ideas on socialism changed considerably between the 1940's and 1966, Nkrumah describing himself firstly as a Marxist, and then as an "African socialist", it will illuminate the nature of Nkrumah's socialism to compare it both with the "African socialism" professed by two other African leaders, Nyerere and Senghor, and with Marxism-Leninism. A comparison with Marxist socialism is valuable since Nkrumah exhibited many signs of being influenced by Marxist ideas (much of his writing is redolent of Marxist terminology). In this connection a display both of his main points of divergence from Marxist thought and of his points of conformity to it, will illustrate the character of Nkrumah's own socialist ideology.

Of course, even after Nkrumah's own political theory has been defined to some satisfactory degree, there still remains the further question as to the extent to which his practice matched his theory. However, that question will be discussed later; at this point it is the first, i.e. theoretical, question which is to be explored. In order to do this some considerable exposition of Marxism-Leninism is called for, but, since to define Marxism alone would entail, at the least, a doctoral thesis, a considerable degree of simplification of the theoretical issues is unavoidable.

In his Preface to the 1888 English edition of The Communist Manifesto, Friedrich Engels concisely identifies the 'fundamental proposition' which captures the essence of Marxism and which he attributes to Marx himself :

That proposition is: that in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class - the proletariat - cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class - the bourgeoisie - without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles.¹

The Communist Manifesto, written by Marx in 1848, sets out in some detail the theory briefly summarized above by Engels. Marx saw modern industrial society as divided into two classes; the "bourgeoisie" - defined by Engels as "the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour" - and the "proletariat", that is, "the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live".² Marx described the relationship of these two classes as that of "two great hostile camps". The power of the bourgeoisie Marx saw as being such that the "executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". Its nature is revealed through Marx's eyes by its having "resolved personal worth into exchange value",³ and as having "reduced the family relation to a mere money relation". Marx described the bourgeoisie, wherever it got the upper hand, as practising "naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation".³

1 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto, reprinted Penguin Books (London, 1967), pp. 62, 63.

2 ibid. p. 79.

3 ibid. p. 82.

Exploitation by the bourgeoisie has caused the proletarians to become virtually "a commodity, like every other article of commerce".⁴ Work has lost all individual charm and character for the workman, who has become merely "an appendage of the machine". The proletarians are "slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State",⁴ enslaved not only by the machine and the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself, but also by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker etc. To the proletarians, "law, morality, religion are ... so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurks in ambush just as many bourgeois interests".⁵ Indeed, Marx rejected religion as a soporific that prevented the oppressed from making any effort to better their lot by resisting their exploiters.

While the proletariat's oppression is so complete as to be virtually inescapable, the bourgeoisie, by contrast, is constantly able to better its position. Seeking to extend its margin of profit, it continually tries to increase its production. Subsequently, the constant revolutionizing of the instruments of production means that the bourgeoisie needs a constantly expanding market for its products. Marx maintained that it was here, within the gigantic means of production and exchange, that the downfall of the bourgeoisie lay, in that modern productive forces would, through the continually recurring crises of over-production, destroy the existence of the entire bourgeois society, in the following manner.

4 ibid. p. 87

5 ibid. p. 92.

The recurring commercial crises cause the wages of the worker to fluctuate and the conditions of his livelihood to become ever more precarious. "The modern labourer ... instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class".⁶ Marx maintained that the bourgeoisie was unfit to rule. He believed that, in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it could at least continue its slavish existence. The proletariat, however, was not even assured of this. Thus it becomes more and more evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class, because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery. The bourgeoisie thus, maintained Marx, produces its own gravediggers.

As industry develops, the proletariat both increases in number and becomes concentrated in greater masses, thereby coming to feel its own strength. Because the proletariat is so oppressed, and because of its growing political self-consciousness, it combines to form Trade Unions and a political party. Marx, however, was sceptical about the power of legislation to remedy the evils suffered by the proletariat. Marx believed that the economic forces described above led inexorably to revolution. Being the lowest stratum of society, the proletariat cannot raise itself up without the whole superincumbent strata of society being, in Marx's words, "sprung into the air". The bourgeoisie is, finally, violently overthrown when the more or less veiled civil war breaks out into open revolution, and the sway of the proletariat comes into being. Its fall, and the victory of the proletariat, are inevitable.

6 ibid. p. 93.

Into this framework Marx fits the place of the Communist Party. He describes the immediate aim of the communists as "the formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat".⁷ The authentic socialist (i.e. Communist) party has, thus, for Marx, the key role of being the actual political agent by which the historically necessary revolutionary transformation of society is to be brought about.

The revolution ensuring the political supremacy of the proletariat would be followed by the centralization of all instruments of production in the hands of the State, that is, the proletariat organized by the Communist Party as the ruling class. The abolition of private property would take place during this process.⁸ When all production has been centralized, on behalf of the whole nation, in the hands of the proletariat, the political sphere of the nation will have changed its character entirely. As the proletariat organizes itself as a class and by means of a revolution makes itself the ruling class and forcibly sweeps away the old conditions of production, then it will, by this act, both have removed the conditions for the existence of classes and also its own supremacy as a class. A classless society would then eventuate in which coercion would be unnecessary. Since the state was conceived of by Marx as an organ of repression it would become unnecessary in the new classless society and would "wither away".

7 ibid. p. 95.

8 ibid. p. 96.

Marx concluded, then, that in place of the old bourgeois society with its classes and class antagonisms, there would be an association in which "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". Following the development of such a society would come the end of international conflict. This would come about because "as the exploitation of one class by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end".⁹

Marx himself had very little to say about the question of socialism in Africa or, indeed, about Africa at all. This is, of course, not particularly surprising since the main context for his ideas was provided primarily by the modern industrialized societies of the West and, when he was writing, the massive European colonization of Africa had not yet taken place. It is Lenin, rather than Marx, whose thought more immediately relates to this question, since, in defending and developing Marxism within the framework of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, he was, in the words of one historian of political theory, "making Marxism succeed in a country that was relatively undeveloped industrially, with a chiefly agrarian economy and a largely peasant population".¹⁰

9 ibid. p. 102.

10 G.H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory, third edition (London, 1963), p. 806.

It is unnecessary to describe Lenin's development of Marxism fully. Those Leninist extensions of Marxist theory which are most relevant to an attempt to place Nkrumah's socialism within a scientific socialist framework, are ideas concerning the construction of a socialist society in a largely pre-industrial environment. The ideas developed by Lenin which seem crucial to this issue, for reasons which will become apparent, concern the importance and structure of the Party, and the nature of imperialism.

For Lenin above all, the whole general question of the introduction of socialism was intimately linked with that of the specific political means to be used to bring this about. For him this meant pre-eminently one thing: the development and operation of an authentically revolutionary socialist Party trained in 'scientific' (Marxist) theory, rigidly led by professional revolutionary cadres, imbued with revolutionary zeal, and single-minded both in long-range purpose (the dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary path to the classless society) and in the adoption of particular situational tactics based on 'scientific' analysis of the political-economic context at the specific time and place of action.

Lenin saw this Party not so much as a mass organisation aiming to be as inclusive as possible (of trade unions, etc.), but rather as a rigidly disciplined vanguardist movement.

He described it as

A small, compact core of the most reliable, experienced and hardened workers, with responsible representatives in the principal districts.

though also as having "the widest support of the masses".¹¹

11 V.I. Lenin, What Is To Be Done? Selected Works, Vol. 1, pt. 1, (Moscow, 1950), p.330. See also pp. 320, 321.

Lenin's Party was thus to be an elite, a small segment, chosen because of its advanced political consciousness from the working class as its revolutionary vanguard.

Lenin's emphasis on the need for a small, tightly disciplined party was based on his perception of the pragmatics of a revolutionary situation.

If we begin with the solid foundation of a strong organization of revolutionaries, we can guarantee the stability of the movement as a whole and carry out the aims of both Social Democracy and trade unionism. If, however, we begin with a wide workers' organization, supposed to be most "open" to the masses, when as a matter of fact it will be most open to the gendarmes and will make the revolutionaries most open to the police, we shall achieve the aims neither of Social Democracy nor of trade unionism ...¹²

Without the leadership of just such a (Communist) Party, he thought, there could be no real possibility of Socialism.

In order to conform to this idea of its role and purpose in the achieving of Socialism, Lenin saw the Party as necessarily having an appropriate mode of organization, viz "democratic centralism". That is, it was to be tightly organized in a hierarchical structure in which power and authority resides at the top and is transmitted downwards through the various branches, sections and cells. This entails there being virtually no autonomy for any local or constituent group, and necessitates absolute loyalty by all Party members to any decision reached by the Party. Lenin's firm conviction of the value of rigid, disciplined organization

12 . . . V.I. Lenin, 'What Is To Be Done', in Lenin On Organization (Chicago, 1926), p. 75.

was based on his belief that "In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization".¹³

If Lenin saw the existence of such a Party as the sine qua non of a socialist state, then it is clear that, by Lenin's standards, Nkrumah was no socialist, for, as will become apparent, Nkrumah's conception of a Party was far from Lenin's.

The second idea emphasized by Lenin which is important in a consideration of Marxist socialism in a pre-industrial society is concerned with the nature of imperialism. Lenin totally rejected, in the context of building a socialist society, spontaneity, by which he meant responding to a circumstance as though it were an isolated phenomenon. Rather, he emphasized "consciousness", meaning by this an awareness of the totality of the Marxist explanation. This awareness entailed seeing each phenomenon not as an isolated event, but as an occurrence explicable in Marxist terms and thus as part of a universal pattern. It therefore required from the Marxist socialist a response in appropriate terms.

In order therefore to act 'appropriately', that is, in accordance with the aims and methods of Marxism, "consciousness" was required, and basic to consciousness, of course, was a knowledge and acceptance of Marxist theory. On such a view, Nkrumah would therefore necessarily have to be conscious of the Marxist-Leninist concept of Imperialism, if he were to be capable of understanding the nature of the imperialism which had affected Ghana, and of coping adequately with those of its manifestations which still existed.

13 V.I. Lenin, 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back', Selected Works, Vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 644. See also V.I. Lenin, 'A letter to a Comrade on our Problems of Organization', Lenin On Organization, op cit., p. 115.

If his consciousness were limited, Nkrumah's attempts to create a socialist society, at least in the strict Marxist sense, would inevitably be to no avail in the face of capitalist manoeuvres. Here it is pertinent to ask what was the relevant Leninist doctrine of Imperialism, an understanding of which was necessary, though not sufficient for 'adequate consciousness' on Nkrumah's part. Very briefly it was as follows.

Lenin developed Marx's thought to explain the colonial scramble for undeveloped territories, including Africa. According to this theory¹⁴ imperialist expansion of just this kind is an inevitable historical consequence of the growth of the Capitalist system. As the units of industry increase in size they become, the theory asserts, increasingly monopolistic. Thus, after a certain stage of development has been reached within Capitalist countries, competition virtually ceases. Both commercial capital and banking capital are controlled by a "financial oligarchy". The Capitalist system relies, however, on the high profits created both by cheap labour and cheap raw materials in underdeveloped countries, and by the high returns from capital invested in these countries. An interesting situation thus arises, namely, that although competition within a national context has virtually ceased, international competition between Capitalist countries increases sharply as an imperialistic scramble develops between them for the possession of undeveloped nations and peoples to be exploited. Lenin concluded that the result of this imperialist competition would be war between the Capitalist nations. Thus, in short, Lenin's thesis was that

14 V.I. Lenin, 'Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism', Selected Works, Vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 442.

free, competitive Capitalism leads inevitably to monopoly; monopoly Capitalism is inexorably followed by competitive political imperialism, with war as the logical outcome.

The accounts both of Lenin's development of certain aspects of Marxist thought, and of the basic tenets of Marxism itself, together form a conceptual framework in terms of which Nkrumah's concept of socialism will, in the first instance, be viewed. As we shall see, there was some overlap, but considerable divergence.

CHAPTER TWO : NKRUMAH

It would be a mistake to consider Nkrumah's ideas on socialism in static terms, for over a period of time his thoughts changed considerably. It is advisable, then, to consider these thoughts chronologically, in order to trace fully their development.

Nkrumah's earliest work, a pamphlet entitled "Towards Colonial Freedom", written in the 1940's when Nkrumah was a student in England, deals at length with his position vis-a-vis Marxism. For this reason the pamphlet will be discussed in some detail.

Nkrumah described the pamphlet as a "rough blue-print of the processes by which colonial peoples can establish the realization of their complete and unconditional independence"¹ and as an analysis of the nature of colonialism. He began his analysis by endorsing Marx's basic tenet, namely, that economics is the primary determinant of political and intellectual action. He described the basis of colonial territorial dependence as economic, but, like Marx, saw the basis of the solution of the problem in revolutionary political terms.²

Economic realities were the major factor in the initial acquisition of colonies. The motives for colonization were threefold: to gain access to the raw materials of the colonies, to obtain markets for the manufactured goods of the home country, and to acquire a field for investment of surplus capital. To protect the colonizers' interests it was necessary to ensure that the

1 K. Nkrumah, Towards Colonial Freedom (London, 1962), p. xiii.

2 ibid. p. xv.

colonies remained non-manufacturing dependencies and that colonial subjects did not acquire the knowledge of modern means and techniques for developing their own industries. In addition, colonial subjects must produce raw materials through cheap labour, and colonies could not trade with other nations except through the 'mother country'.³

Nkrumah wholeheartedly accepted Lenin's analysis of economic imperialism, whereby imperialism is not only a natural stage in the development of the capitalist system, but its highest stage, in which the inner contradictions and inconsistencies of the system foreshadow its doom.⁴

The first contradiction takes the following form. The capitalist-producer is compelled to keep wages down in order to keep the margin of profit high. But the incomes distributed as wages form the body of the market for what he wants to sell. That is, the capitalist-producer, in seeking profit by limiting his wage bill, impedes his own effort to find buyers for the increasing volume of his production.⁵

To escape from this contradiction, the capitalist-producer has to turn to the colonies. He does so first

... by killing the arts and crafts in these areas through the competition of his cheaper machine-made goods (exports) and, secondly, by thrusting capital loans upon them for financing the construction of railways, harbours and other means of transportation and communication in so far as these constructions cater to his profits and safeguard his capital.⁵

3 ibid. p. 10.

4 ibid. p.11.

5 ibid. p. 12.

From this situation the second contradiction inherent in capitalism emerges. When the number of capitalist countries relying on foreign markets and fields of investment increases, and the number of potential colonies diminish, then rivalries among the colonial powers inevitably ensue. These rivalries first express themselves in minor wars of colonial conquests, and later in great imperialist wars which contribute to the self-destruction of the capitalist powers.

As well as accepting Marx's tenet of economic primacy, Nkrumah also shares Marx's assumption that the world is one of differing interests in necessary conflict with each other. The basic struggle with which Nkrumah is concerned is the one between colonized and colonizers.

The contradictions [are] between the handful of ruling 'civilized' nations and the millions of colonial peoples of the world The purpose of this exploitation and oppression is to squeeze out super-profits. The inevitable results of imperialism thus are: (a) the emergence of a colonial intelligentsia; (b) the awakening of national consciousness among colonial peoples; (c) the emergence of the working class movement; and (d) the growth of a national liberation movement.

The inevitable results of imperialism lead to a struggle because the determination of the colonized peoples to attain political and economic independence was matched by the determination of the colonial powers never to give up their dominance unless forced to do so.

The colonial powers attempted to conceal the reality of economic oppression and exploitation by erecting an humanitarian

facade. Nkrumah denounced this attempt as "deception [and] hypocrisy". The colonial powers might build a few schools and hospitals, but for economic rather than humanitarian motives. Hospitals were needed to take care of the health of the colonial subjects whose productive powers would otherwise diminish; schools were necessary to satisfy the demand for clerical activities and occupations. Nkrumah denied that any colonial government held colonies under benevolent trusteeship until they became capable of self-government. The economic realities of the capitalist system meant that colonial powers could not afford to expropriate themselves, and would never do so willingly.

According to Nkrumah, independence could be achieved only through political action. This must be based firmly on the organization of the masses; its aims and aspirations must be those of the masses - the labour movement, the farmers and the youth.⁷

It is clear from Towards Colonial Freedom that Nkrumah, at the time of writing, was a Marxist. He accepted, without reservation, the totality of the Marxist explanation. Furthermore, he accepted and endorsed the Leninist analysis of imperialism. The only point at which, perhaps, some difference emerges between his ideas and Lenin's is on the issue of mass organization. Nkrumah's continual emphasis on the necessity for a movement to be rooted in, and identical with, the masses, causes one to wonder whether he subscribes to Lenin's vanguard theory or not.

The vanguard theory does not, of course, exclude mass organization as well. Lenin, in fact, specifically stated that some degree of mass organization was a necessary precondition to revolution. He emphasized that the tightly-structured revolutionary

7 ibid. pp. 42, 45.

party could "with the wide support of the masses"⁸ carry out the work necessary to revolution, and that the network of executive agents must embrace the whole working class mass.⁹ However, in Lenin's eyes, the small vanguard party or group was the central force around which all other forms of organization revolved, and from which they received direction.

Nkrumah's emphasis on a movement being rooted in, and identical with the masses is unclear. It could mean that he concurs in the idea of a vanguard, but wants it to take in ideas from the "masses" as well as give instructions to them. On the other hand, a movement which is identical with the masses could well be totally indistinguishable from them, could be one and the same thing. This, of course, implies that there is, in fact, no vanguard. Nkrumah's lack of reference to any small group, any directive group, could well be taken as support for this interpretation.

If Nkrumah does mean that a political movement is actually the masses, it is difficult to see how such a movement could operate in practice. If it were to have headquarters, the latter could in a sense be termed the vanguard, for it would be an impossible task for headquarters merely to co-ordinate the various impetuses from autonomous districts without in fact imposing some direction on the movement as a whole. If there were to be no headquarters or vanguard of any kind, the movement would be regionalized and un-coordinated. This may be, of course, what Nkrumah had in mind. What seems most likely, however,

8 V.I. Lenin, 'What Is To Be Done', op cit. p. 74.

9 V.I. Lenin, 'A Letter to a Comrade on our Problems of Organization', op cit. p. 115.

is that Nkrumah did not fully accept Lenin's idea of a vanguard that was the supreme organizer of the revolution. His lack of commitment to the "vanguard" concept is indicated by his emphasis on the importance of the masses, coupled with the absence of any reference to a small group or vanguard, let alone any stress on the significance of such a group. That Nkrumah had thought out what actual form a mass organization would take seems unlikely at this point; he does not discuss the issue explicitly.

Whereas Towards Colonial Freedom is largely centred around socialist issues, and the author's stance towards them, Nkrumah's next book, his Autobiography, written in 1956, makes scant reference to socialism. At first sight, this apparent lack of concern is glaring, and leads one to wonder how serious Nkrumah was about the whole question of socialism. It may well be contended that with Ghana's independence on the immediate horizon, and since the book is, after all, an autobiography, it is natural that Nkrumah should have concerned himself primarily with the struggle towards independence and the part he himself played in it, rather than looking forward to the post-independence future and the part socialism might play in it. Such a contention, however, lacks substance. It is impossible to imagine that a dedicated socialist, no matter what the circumstances in which he was writing, would present or interpret his actions and prospects except within a socialist framework. It begins to seem that, whatever Nkrumah was, he was not a dedicated socialist.

It may be, of course, that the "playing down" of socialism in the Autobiography was merely a sop to British political opinion designed to facilitate the granting of independence. The question here immediately occurs: was it necessary, as late as 1956, to

facilitate either the granting of independence or Nkrumah's position within the new nation? By 1956 both Ghana's independence and Nkrumah's position were already assured. Indeed, by this time Nkrumah as head of the Gold Coast government had been engaged in independence talks with the British Colonial Secretary, Lennox Boyd, since 1955, and the possibility seems unlikely in the extreme that any book, even a rabidly socialist one, could have made any serious difference to the future prospects of both Ghana and Nkrumah.

If, then, by 1956 Nkrumah was something other than a dedicated socialist, one might well wonder what had happened to cause such a change of emphasis and priorities between the writing of Towards Colonial Freedom and the Autobiography. One answer, and one which cannot easily be dismissed, is that Nkrumah had by no means dictated the conditions under which Ghana came to independence. Nkrumah's own position was secure, but the form of Ghana's independence was subject to negotiation, and the final outcome of the extensive talks was as much the product of Lennox Boyd's wishes as Nkrumah's. The writing into the Ghanaian constitution of a multi-party system was a direct result of the Colonial Government's insistence that independence was unthinkable without the existence of such a system. This being the case, if Nkrumah had criticized severely the new constitution on socialist or any other grounds, he would have exposed himself as having been less powerful during the negotiations than he cared to admit. This is all the more significant when one realizes that a primary concern of the Autobiography was self-aggrandizement. This concern reveals itself in the inclusion of various snatches of conversation which are highly laudatory of Nkrumah. The following is typical

[Krobo Edusei] said

'Tell me Kwame - what sort of a man are you?'

I was a bit taken aback and asked him what he meant.

'I admit', he said, 'that the rally in Kumasi was a huge success. But at the same time there was something sadly lacking. When you are there it makes so much difference both to the crowds and to us'.

...

'But one should not wonder at that', he added, more brightly, 'for after all Kwame Nkrumah is the C.P.P. and the C.P.P. is Kwame Nkrumah!' 10

Nkrumah's consistent concern to present himself as the omnipotent leader meant that he could not overtly criticize the new constitution, for this would reflect adversely on his own importance in negotiations. Nevertheless, he could not conceal his ambivalence towards some of the provisions of the constitution. He stated that

the Government would welcome an official opposition ... we were fully conscious of the value of informed and constructive criticism and were determined to do everything possible to establish in the Assembly the procedures and conventions of parliamentary democracy, which must always include a properly organized Opposition. 11

At the same time, however, Nkrumah described Western parliamentary democracy as a "subtle and sophisticated type of administration, full of balances and checks". He then went on to say that it was "a very difficult and cumbersome system to apply to our traditional pattern of government". 12

Nkrumah's criticism of Western parliamentary systems as "too complicated" and, presumably, too alien to work successfully

10 K. Nkrumah, Autobiography, (London, 1957), p. 271.

11 Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. 214.

12 A speech to the Indian Council of World Affairs, January 1959, reprinted in I Speak of Freedom (New York, 1961), p. 158.

within an African nation leads one to infer that Nkrumah envisaged a political system which arose from, or was adapted to, its African environment. It comes as a surprise, then, when Nkrumah, a little further on in his Autobiography, describes himself as "a non-denominational Christian and a Marxist socialist".¹³ Nkrumah's statement, totally unqualified as it is, is surprising because it is at odds with the expectations created in the rest of the Autobiography. Marxist socialism is no less complicated than parliamentary democracy, and no less alien to African society. What is additionally surprising is Nkrumah's description of himself as both a Christian and a Marxist. Holding religious beliefs is incompatible with being a Marxist. The suspicion grows that Nkrumah's simple statement "I am ... a Marxist socialist" cannot be taken at face value.

Nkrumah's description of himself is, however, totally consistent with the beliefs expressed earlier in Towards Colonial Freedom. It seems that when Nkrumah wrote his early pamphlet he was indeed a Marxist. By the time the Autobiography was written, however, it was expedient, for the reasons expressed above, for Nkrumah to understate his commitment to Marxism. By this time too, Nkrumah's commitment to Marxism was no longer the straightforward allegiance it had been once. Doubts and hesitations had begun to creep in, doubt concerned with the suitability of any alien system of government for an African country. These doubts were, as yet, still half-formed, so that in 1957 it was more accurate for Nkrumah to describe himself as a Marxist socialist than as anything else. It was not until later that the concept of a political system being appropriate to African conditions was used to evaluate Marxist positions. It was at this

13 Nkrumah, Autobiography, p.12.

point that Nkrumah began to move away from Marxism and Leninism.

Nkrumah's next book, I Speak of Freedom, gives an account of his thoughts and ideas from 1957 to 1961. In this book Nkrumah was trying to present a unified body of political theory applicable to African conditions. Indeed, the subtitle of the book is "A Statement of African Ideology", and its publication was timed so as to precede the first conference of the Organization of African Unity, held in Addis Ababa, at which Nkrumah hoped to play a major part. Connected with these aspirations is the book's self-laudatory tone, which reveals itself clearly, if incongruously, in Nkrumah's boast that he was one of the first to know that Queen Elizabeth was expecting a baby.

I was informed of the Queen's condition some weeks before the news that she was expecting a baby was made public. I believe I was the first person, outside the immediate royal circle, to be told. ¹⁴

In I Speak of Freedom, one of the ambiguities raised in the Autobiography is resolved to some extent. The ambiguity concerns the existence of a one-party or multi-party state. I Speak of Freedom reveals that Nkrumah was moving steadily towards the idea of a one-party system. He does not make this point explicitly, but a close examination of some of his comments is revealing.

During Nkrumah's visit to India at the beginning of 1959, for instance, one of the Prime Minister's answers at a press conference is interesting for what it omits.

Question: May we have your views on how far the Western parliamentary democracy could be adapted to conditions of emergent Africa?

14 Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom, p. 179.

Answer: Of course. The basic principles of parliamentary democracy are two: the first that there should be a periodic election, general election - and that there must be universal adult suffrage. ¹⁵

It seems significant that in Nkrumah's reply no mention is made of a two party or multi-party system. Nor can mention of a periodic general election be taken to imply the existence of more than one party.

In a speech to the Indian Council of World Affairs, Nkrumah expanded his viewpoint. No doubt, he said, Africans would "evolve forms of government rather different from the traditional western pattern but no less democratic in their protection of the individual and his inalienable rights".¹⁶

It seems highly likely that the sort of government Nkrumah had in mind was some sort of one-party system. Nkrumah expressed this idea in a slightly more explicit manner in a speech at the laying of the foundation stone of the Hall of Trade Unions in October 1959. Referring to the Farmers' Council, the Co-operative Movement, the Builders' Brigade, the Trade Union Congress and the proposed establishment of the Young Pioneers, Nkrumah said,

The Convention People's Party is the political vanguard of these movements within which we can find the expression of our ideals for the economic and social well-being of our people. ¹⁷

He then went on to say that "the Convention People's Party is the political expression of the Ghana Trade Union movement".

The speech reveals the same ambiguity expressed earlier concerning the nature of the party. A description of the C.P.P. as

15 ibid. p. 156.

16 ibid. p. 158.

17 ibid. p. 188.

"the political expression of the Ghana Trade Union movement" implies a degree of representativeness which is rather at odds with the C.P.P. being a political vanguard as well. It is clear from the speech that Nkrumah was at this time thinking in terms of a one-party system which embraced all facets of life. What is not yet clear is whether the C.P.P., although embracing a large number of people, would be run primarily by a small vanguardist group, or whether its principal impetus and direction would come from decisions made by the very large body of members. Nkrumah's attitude towards the party's role was ambiguous. On the one hand he could say

Mass movements are well and good but they cannot act with purpose unless they are led and guided by a vanguard political party ¹⁸

whilst also referring to the Convention People's Party as "the political expression of the Ghana Trade Union".

Not only was Nkrumah's idea of the Party different from Lenin's, Nkrumah found unacceptable the principle of the universal applicability of Marxism. A study of Nkrumah's division of the economy clearly illustrates this. Instead of the complete domination of the economy by the state, Nkrumah postulated different sectors to be dominated by different groups. He postulated¹⁹ a state-owned sector of the economy. Industries in this sector would include the manufacture of arms and ammunitions, alcoholic beverages, any hydro-electric projects, etc., and the supply of such facilities as electricity, water etc.

18 Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. ix. See also I Speak of Freedom, p. 188.

19 Broadcast by Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic of Ghana, on Sunday, 9th October, 1960. pp. 2,3.

The second sector included those industries in which the state held substantial interest, either because they conferred monopoly rights on their owners, or because they demanded substantial protective tariffs. Grouped into this sector, too, were those industries which private enterprise partners were unwilling or unable to undertake without Government participation.

The third or co-operative sector, Nkrumah maintained, was designed to build up Ghanaian enterprise in all fields. Although Nkrumah departed from orthodox Marxism in that Ghanaian private enterprise was not to be nationalised, he stated that the Government would no longer give it any assistance. It is interesting to note that the reason given for ending governmental assistance, was not one of socialist principle, but simply that the results of assistance to private enterprise were "negligible and disappointing".

The fourth sector concerns overseas investment. In a broadcast by the President - October 1960, Ghanaian policy towards overseas investment was made quite clear.

It is an accepted fact,
he maintained,

that there is not sufficient capital in the world to provide for the needs of all the developing countries which need it. This capital is therefore highly selective and tends to go where it feels it is welcome. I wish to leave no doubt in anybody's mind that the Ghana Government accepts these facts, needs capital investment from all sources and welcomes it. It has been brought to my notice that overseas investors have been in some doubt as to their welcome, due to views expressed on exploitation. If there are fears of permanent foreign domination in the commercial and industrial fields of our economy, these fears should be immediately and permanently abandoned. The Government has already taken adequate measures by limiting the tenure of leases and concessions and by clearing foreign elements from the ownership of land. 20

Nkrumah here revealed that his organization of the economy differed from the orthodox Marxist view of what the economy should be. That is, he was responding to Ghana's immediate economic needs, rather than seeing those needs within the totality of the Marxist explanation.

The urge to forge a system which would respond to and reflect Ghana's needs, both political and economic, lay at the heart of Nkrumah's creation of a specifically African theory. By 1961 the economic aspect of the theory had been clearly worked out; the political ideas, however, were still hazy and ambiguous.

The title of Nkrumah's next book, Africa Must Unite, published in 1963, reflects Nkrumah's increasing preoccupation with the entire African continent, rather than with Ghanaian domestic politics as such. Since Nkrumah did not, however, see the issue of unity as radically separate from the implementation of socialism, a substantial chapter of the book is concerned with building socialism in Ghana.

Even though Nkrumah re-affirmed his commitment to socialism, at the same time he maintained,²¹ that, by 1963, Ghana was not possessed of the socialist means to fulfil the people's needs, nor had Ghana even laid the foundations on which the socialist means could be built - namely, the modernization of agriculture, industrialization, and transference to the people of the major means of production and distribution. Nkrumah wrote that he envisaged "increasing government participation in the nation's economic activities".²² It never emerges, however, that he saw an ideal future economy as one in which all the means of production were in the hands of the state; the implication is, rather, that there would always be some private enterprise in existence.

21 K. Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite (London, 1964), pp. 119, 120.

22 ibid. p. 120.

In Africa Must Unite, Nkrumah further elaborated the idea of the all-embracing Government. In writing of the workers, for instance, Nkrumah stated that

The workers understand that they are working for a state which is directed by a government of their own choosing, whose programme they have helped to formulate through party membership, and which they actively endorse and support. Hence the aspirations of the people and the economic and social objectives of the government are synonymous.²³

He went on to say that "the trade unions are openly associated with the Convention People's Party as one of its wings". This statement indicates quite clearly that Nkrumah was moving right away from the Leninist concept of a vanguardist party, towards the idea of a party as a mass organization as inclusive as possible of groups such as Trade Unions etc. Although Nkrumah's earlier ambiguity about the nature of the Party had now been resolved, it was still not clear precisely how the Party would operate. Nevertheless, Nkrumah's resolution of the persistent ambivalence concerning the Party meant that his ideas formed a coherent theory for the first time.

By 1964, when Consciencism²⁴ was published, Nkrumah had developed his ideas on socialism to a much greater degree than before. He justified socialism for Ghana in terms of Ghanaian history, thus filling out the bare bones of his theory as expressed in his earlier works.

23. Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite, p. 126.

24. It is widely conjectured that Consciencism was not, in fact, written by Nkrumah. Whether this is true or otherwise is not particularly important since clearly, in claiming responsibility for the book, Nkrumah was committed to the ideas expressed in it.

In the vast rural areas of Africa, the people hold land in common and work it out on the principle of self-help and co-operation. These are the main features still predominating in African society, and we cannot do better than bend them to the requirements of a more modern socialistic pattern of society.²⁵

Nkrumah required²⁶ that the new socialism would forge

a harmony that will allow the combined presence of traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa, so that this presence is in tune with the original humanist principles underlying African society.

It is easy to see that a socialist system forged entirely in the West, such as Marxism-Leninism, could not fulfil the requirement of being in tune with the values of traditional and Islamic Africa as well as meeting its current needs. That Nkrumah himself was well aware of this is indicated by, among other things, his departure from Marxism in his organization of the economy.

Nkrumah was, however, still committed to some Marxist principles. In Consciencism, for instance, he makes it clear that he believes in both the Marxist tenets of an oppressed and an oppressing class, and in the theory of surplus value. These beliefs are revealed in the following quotations.

"In every non-socialist society, there can be found two strata which correspond to that of the oppressor and the oppressed, the exploiter and the exploited".²⁷

Nkrumah's acceptance of the concept of surplus value is implicit in the following two statements:

25 K. Nkrumah, Consciencism (London, 1964), p. 70.

26 ibid.

27 ibid. p. 74.

Increased productivity under capitalism does indeed lead to a rise in the standard of living; but when the proposition of distribution of value between exploited and exploiter is kept constant, then any increase in levels of production must mean a greater quantity, but not proportion, of value accruing to the exploited. 28

... the two real social-political alternatives facing society are either that one section should produce, and another section batten thereon, or that all sections should produce and all sections should be fulfilled by the value created by labour. 29

- that is, that the surplus value should either be enjoyed by an exploiting class, or be divided equally.

Furthermore, Nkrumah adheres to the Marxist idea that revolution is a necessary antecedent for the triumph of socialism.

Revolution is thus an indispensable avenue to socialism, where the antecedent social-political structure is animated by principles which are a negation of those in socialism, as in a capitalist structure... 30

He does, however, concede that in some circumstances revolution may not be necessary - that is, in a society which is already communal in nature. Thus he writes:

But from the ancestral line of communalism, the passage to socialism lies in reform, because the underlying principles are the same. 31

Apart from this exception made by Nkrumah, both he and Marx despised reform as an attempt to achieve socialism, and maintained that it would not succeed.

For in reform, fundamental principles are held constant and the details of their expression modified. In the words of Marx, it leaves the pillars of the building intact. 32

28 ibid. p. 71.

29 ibid. p. 73.

30 ibid. pp. 74, 75.

31 ibid.

32 ibid. p. 74

Although Nkrumah rejected one of Lenin's principles relating to the achievement of socialism, namely, the vanguardist nature of the political party, he totally accepted another, concerning the nature of imperialism. Nkrumah's last book before he was overthrown, Neo-Colonialism : The Last Stage of Imperialism, published in 1965, follows Leninist lines very closely. The book is concerned with the replacement of colonialism by neo-colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism, and is a development of ideas Nkrumah had begun to formulate earlier. In Africa Must Unite he had already recognized that "the greatest danger at present facing Africa is neo-colonialism".³³

Nkrumah adhered to the Leninist argument that the essence of imperialism is exploitation, economic and political. He brought the argument up to date and developed the theme by describing, under the label of neo-colonialism, the kind of exploitation that takes place once former colonies achieve independence. Balkanization of former large united colonial territories³⁴, and the use of foreign capital for exploitation rather than development³⁵ are perhaps the two most basic methods used by the neo-imperialists. Nkrumah concluded³⁶ that the only way neo-colonialism in Africa could be stopped was for socialist action by the various African countries on a pan-African basis.

33 Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite, p. 173.

34 K. Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism (London, 1965), p. xiii.

35 ibid. p.x.

36 ibid. p. 259.

Nkrumah's support and development of the Leninist analysis of imperialism may be taken as signifying his return to the flock of orthodox Marxists. This conclusion is unjustified, however.

Nkrumah was committed to Lenin's analysis

not because it represents a statement of Communist dogma, but because it is consistent with the African perception of realities of life on the continent ... Lenin need not have been its author; it might have been accepted regardless of source.³⁷

That Nkrumah accepted or rejected ideas according to their apparent relevance, rather than because they were part of an ideology, is indicated by Nkrumah's rejection, within the book, of some Marxist ideas. For instance, although he agreed with Marx that "foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world",³⁸ he differed on the practical consequences of holding this belief. Nkrumah had become aware quite early of the dangers of accepting foreign capital. In I Speak of Freedom he argued that

It is unreasonable to suppose that any foreign power, affluent enough to give aid to an African state, would not expect some consideration of favour from the state receiving the aid.³⁹

Nkrumah maintained that nevertheless foreign capital could be accepted provided it was "invested in accordance with a national plan drawn up by the government of the non-aligned State with its own interests in mind".⁴⁰ In addition, Nkrumah maintained⁴¹ that the Marxist contention that the development of capitalism would produce a crisis within each

37 D.C. Beller and M. Rejai, 'Communism In Subsaharan Africa' in The New Communisms, ed. D.N. Jacobs (New York, 1969), p.233.

38 Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism, p. x. See also p. 245.

39 Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom, pp. ix-x.

40 Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism, p.x.

41 ibid. pp. 255, 256.

individual capitalist State was not to be fulfilled; rather, the crisis caused by the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" would take place, not on a national scale, but on the international scene. In fact, Nkrumah scarcely ever refers to the central nineteenth century image of the class struggle, the factory worker versus the capitalist industrialist. Rather, it is in terms of a world-wide conflict.

It is clear that Nkrumah in the decade ending in 1966, was moving steadily towards a position he called socialist. At all times some elements in this position were Marxist, some not. A comment on Nkrumah's position by a Marxist will be relevant at this point. Ivan Potekhim, former Director of the African Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., was known as a leading Soviet Africanist.⁴² In his article entitled "On African Socialism : A Soviet View", which first appeared in 1963, Potekhim makes several pointed criticisms of African socialism. Potekhim criticizes the "erroneous counterposing of scientific socialist theory to 'African Socialism' and the idea that scientific socialism is not suitable for African reality, and that therefore an African socialism must be built". Potekhim maintains⁴³ that the main point of both African and scientific socialism is to abolish the exploitation of man by man, and that the only difference is in the ways of achieving this aim. Potekhim maintains⁴⁴ that Marxists have never denied that ways of attaining

42 A.J. Klinghoffer, Soviet Perspectives On African Socialism (New Jersey, 1969), p. 60.

43 I. Potekhim, 'On African Socialism : A Soviet View', in African Socialism, ed. W.H. Friedland and C.G. Rosberg (Stanford, 1964), p. 106.

44 ibid. pp. 110, 111.

this aim may vary. He is described as often writing that there can be no such thing as "African socialism" but only an "African road to socialism".⁴⁵

Nevertheless, although Potekhim admits that there are various roads to socialism, he also maintains that there are certain boundaries these roads cannot transgress. Potekhim firmly denies - and this is particularly relevant to Nkrumah - the possibility of establishing a socialist system unless ownership of all the means of production is socialized, and insists that those African Socialists who "openly acknowledge the possibility of private capitalist enterprises existing under socialism" are deluding themselves with a Utopian idea which is designed to preserve capitalism.

It has been established that Nkrumah differed from Marx and Lenin. Is it the case, however, that Nkrumah, though differing from Marx on some points, nevertheless could still be called a "scientific socialist"? Nkrumah's differing from Marx could mean that Nkrumah had found a flaw or inconsistency in Marxism, in which case he would not be a Marxist but would still be a scientific socialist since he would be trying to eliminate errors, thereby placing socialism on a more scientific basis. Nkrumah did not, however, criticize Marx and suggest alternatives. Indeed, in perhaps the most significant instance in which he differed from Marx - namely, the issue of overseas investment and private enterprise - he admitted the strength of Marx's case, and never attempted to refute it in theoretical terms, but in organizing the Ghanaian economy bowed to what he considered to be practical necessity.

45 Klinghoffer, Soviet Perspectives on African Socialism,
p. 60.

Since Nkrumah had consistently chosen only those aspects of Marxism that suited Ghanaian conditions, and had rejected western parliamentary democracy as "too complicated" for Ghana, it is reasonable to see his theory of African Socialism in terms of establishing an African identity. What Ghana needed, Nkrumah had long maintained, was a political economic system that would reflect both her own traditions and satisfy her own needs within a twentieth century context. The system must allow "the combined presence of Traditional Africa, Islamic Africa and Euro-Christian Africa" to function in harmony both with each other and with the rest of the modern world. Only thus, through African socialism, could a new identity emerge that would be modern as well as African. To reach a complete understanding of Nkrumah's African socialism, it is necessary not only to see how it actually worked, within Ghana, but also to compare its theory with the theories of other African socialists.

CHAPTER THREE : NYERERE AND SENGHOR

Julius K. Nyerere, President of Tanzania, and Leopold Sedar Senghor, President of Senegal, are both concerned with the question of socialism, and have evolved their own theories of it. An examination of their ideas will provide a context within which Nkrumah's African Socialism may be viewed.

One useful method of proceeding is to compare Nyerere's and Senghor's theories with some third position in order to see how, in diverging or agreeing with it, they stand in relation to each other. The third position here is a fairly standard view of "orthodox" Marxism-Leninism.

It will be useful to look first at Senghor's and Nyerere's reasons for rejecting capitalism, since these reasons are, of course, closely tied up with their reasons for espousing socialism. Senghor's main criticism of capitalism is its divisive and alienating nature. He maintained that it is divisive because it works only for the well-being of a minority, and whenever state intervention and working-class pressure forced it to reform itself, it conceded only the minimum standard of living. So far, no orthodox Marxist would quarrel with the above. Senghor continues: "There can be no concrete freedoms - political, cultural, or spiritual - without economic freedom. Now we can hardly define economic freedom as the freedom granted to a minority to exploit the majority".¹

From this apparently orthodox Marxist base, Senghor wanders into territory which begins to sound less standardly Marxist.

1 L.S. Senghor, 'Negritude and African Socialism', St. Antony's Papers, XV, (London, 1963), p.15.

Capitalism is alienating, he insisted,² in the spiritual realm, in that "it holds out no prospect of a fuller being beyond material well-being". Senghor goes on to quote a statement on the nature of freedom by Teilhard de Chardin. "Freedom," he wrote, "means the opportunity offered to each and every man (by suppressing the obstacles in his path and equipping him with the appropriate means) of transcending his human state by extending himself to the limits of his being".³ Senghor asserted that capitalism did not offer each man this opportunity of attaining the fuller being which lies beyond well-being, since well-being itself was not conceded.

Although this criticism of capitalism as denying man's fuller-being clearly owes something to Marx's theory of alienation, Senghor's emphasis on a "fuller being beyond material well-being" and his commitment to man's transcendence of his human state marks a divergence from Marxism-Leninism. Senghor himself points out this divergence in the following terms:

"Lenin's definition of matter proceeds from a one-sided concept, from a purely materialistic and deterministic postulate on a material basis, but broader and more profound than that of Marx, Teilhard emerges above and ahead on the spiritual level. "As I like to say", he concluded in a letter of May-June 1952, "the synthesis of the Christian 'God' on high and the Marxist 'God' of the future is the only God we can henceforth adore in spirit and in truth'."⁴

In other words, Senghor's basic divergence from Marxist-Leninist materialism springs from his belief that the 'whole man' cannot be expressed only in terms of materialism, but must also be described in spiritual terms.

2 . . . ibid. p. 14.

3 . . . ibid.

4 . . . ibid.

Nyerere, too, is less than a committed Marxist. Nyerere wrote, concerning Marx and Lenin,

We can learn from their methods of analysis, and from their ideas. But the same is true of many other thinkers of the past. It is no part of the job of a socialist in 1968 to worry about whether or not his actions or proposals are in accordance with what Marx or Lenin wrote. . . . Marx did contribute a great deal to socialist thought. But socialism did not begin with him, nor can it end in constant reinterpretation of his writings. ⁵

Nyerere's rejection of the universality of Marx does not mean that he does not share some views in common with Marx. Nyerere, for instance, rejects capitalism on the grounds that it leads to exploitation and the development of inequality where formerly there was equality.⁶ This view is totally compatible with Marxist theory. In their emphasis on the divisive and alienating nature of capitalism, Nyerere and Senghor appear to hold very similar views.

To bring out more fully the nature of Nyerere's and Senghor's views on socialism, it will be useful to look briefly at their attitudes to specific aspects of Marxist Theory. On the question of the single-party system, for instance, Nyerere and Senghor disagree both with standard Leninist dogma, and with each other. Nyerere believes in a one-party system, but he intended the party to be a mass organization, rather than a small vanguardist group, as in Leninism. Nyerere made the mass nature of the party quite clear when he wrote,

Supposing we accept the fact that there is only one party, and stop trying to follow the rules of a multi-party system; then, as long as TANU⁷ membership is open to every citizen, we can conduct our elections in a way which is genuinely free and democratic. ⁸

5 J.K. Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism (London, 1968), p. 15.

6 J.K. Nyerere, Freedom and Unity (London, 1967), p. 11.

7 Tanzania African National Union.

8 Nyerere, Freedom and Unity : Uhuru na Umoja, p. 200.

By contrast, Senghor rejects the whole idea of the one-party system, in the following terms :

I believe that the positive contribution of the regimes called "socialist" is neither the one-party system nor the party of the cadres. The example set by these regimes is the best argument against them. . . . In an under-developed country, where independence has been the work of all, as a national revolution, the single party seemed to present the danger of government by clique, the danger of sclerosis. ⁹

Senghor rejects, at least in theory, the one-party system because he believes that it inevitably becomes undemocratic. Like Nyerere, however, he espouses a party of the masses, but within a multi-party system. ⁹

Senghor and Nyerere are both adamant in their rejection of the relevance to their countries of the Marxist class struggle. Nyerere doubts "if the equivalent for the word 'class' exists in any indigenous African language; for language describes the ideas of those who speak it, and the idea of 'class' or 'caste' was non-existent in African society".¹⁰ Nyerere believed that the class struggle would be transferred from a national to an international plane, where the conflict would be fought not on ideological grounds such as capitalism versus socialism, but simply between 'have' and 'have-not' countries.¹¹

Senghor, too, rejects the primacy of the class struggle. Class struggle, he maintains, "becomes simply one aspect among many

9 L.S. Senghor, 'The Theory and Practice of Senegalese Socialism', On African Socialism, (New York, 1964), p. 145.

10 Nyerere, Freedom and Unity, p. 170.

11 ibid. p. 208.

of the conflicts which sets social groups, nations and continents one against the other".¹²

Concerning matters purely economic, in accepting the need for scientific planning in order to ensure the well-being of members of society, Senghor is in agreement with Marx's rejection of free enterprises and laissez-faire in favour of development both planned and controlled. Insofar as Senegal's first Four-Year Plan which was put into practice in 1961 entailed the establishment of state banks, state enterprises, and various agricultural co-operatives, it accorded with Marxist Theory. Yet it did not nationalize anything -- Senghor in fact described nationalization as "killing the goose that lays the golden egg"¹³ -- nor did it suppress private capitalism. Senghor wrote,¹⁴ in justification of the latter,

When private capitalism comes into peaceful competition with Socialism, the latter must, I feel sure, emerge triumphant, provided that it transcends the goal of mere well-being, and does not secrete hatred. In the meantime, we need capital, even from private sources.

Nyerere, too, wanted private investment, but on his own terms. This meant a "limitation on the purposes and practices of private investment". However, Nyerere was prepared to offer tax concessions and investment guarantees.¹⁵ At the same time, he postulated¹⁶ effective state control over the principal means of production, communal

12 Senghor, 'Négritude and African Socialism', St. Antony's Papers, p.20.

13 Senghor, On African Socialism, p. 58.

14 Senghor, 'Négritude and African Socialism', St. Antony's Papers, p.19.

15 Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism, p. 41.

16 J.K. Nyerere, Ujamaa : Essays on Socialism, (Oxford, 1968), p. 14.

use of agricultural facilities¹⁷ and leasehold land,¹⁸ that is, land which remains the property of the public although available for individual use.

In this economic sphere, thus, it can be seen that Nyerere's and Senghor's theories are very similar. They are both eclectic, in that they encourage both socialist practices such as state enterprises and agricultural co-operatives, and capitalism in the form of private investment. Their eclecticism is based in both cases on a firm pragmatism, namely an intention to incorporate into their practice of socialism those features which will be most useful, no matter from which source they originate nor under which label -- Marxism, capitalism, etc. -- they might be described.

In connection with the comparison of Senghor's and Nyerere's theories to each other within the framework of Marxism, one final point should be touched upon. This is the matter of religion. It has already been made clear that Senghor places a great deal of emphasis on the fulfilment of man in religious or spiritual terms, and that in this respect he finds Marxism one-sided and inadequate. Nyerere, too, rejects Marx's insistence upon atheism. He writes, "A man's relationship with his God is a personal matter for him and him alone; his beliefs about the hereafter are his own affair". It can be seen from this statement that Nyerere does not see his own brand of socialism as excluding religion. It is also apparent, however, that Nyerere attaches much less importance to religious fulfilment than does Senghor,

17 Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism, p. 346, p. 351.

18 Nyerere, Freedom and Unity, pp. 56, 57.

in that Nyerere sees religion as something which can co-exist peaceably with socialism, whereas for Senghor religion or spirituality must be a central part of socialism.

Having now briefly indicated some details of Nyerere's and Senghor's views on Marxism-Leninism and its main tenets -- the nature of capitalism, the class struggle, the party system, the state in economic practice, etc. -- it is appropriate to move away from this framework and to look at those features which Nyerere and Senghor themselves consider central to their socialism.

Nyerere constantly emphasizes that "ujamaa" is at the root of Tanzanian socialism. He elaborates on the significance of the word as follows: "First, it is an African word and thus emphasizes the African-ness of the policies we intend to follow. Second, its literal meaning is 'family-hood', so that it brings to the mind of our people the idea of mutual involvement in the family as we know it."¹⁹

Nyerere described²⁰ traditional African family life in detail. According to Nyerere there were three factors vital to African family life. One of these was an attitude of respect or love between the members. Nyerere uses "love" with the caution that it does not imply romance or even, necessarily, close personal affection. An additional factor was that although some private property existed, basic property such as land was held in common. Thirdly, every member of the family accepted the obligation to work. Within the family there was some authority,

19 Nyerere, *Freedom and Socialism*, p.2.

20 Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity*, pp. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

usually the head of the family, but the authority was limited both by checks and balances and by the concept of "primus inter pares" which was accepted by all. Thus, sharing, in matters of both property and authority, was an essential feature of the family.

Nyerere makes the point that insofar as the family was subject to vicissitudes such as poverty and fear, this was because the family unit was too small to cope with emergencies. Nyerere contends that the principles which work for the small family unit are equally valid for larger societies, such as a nation, and ultimately, all nations. In fact, these principles are the only ones which can prevent breakdown and splits in the family unit, a civil war within a nation, or a war between nations. In contrast, capitalism operates on the basis of individualism and competitiveness, and leads inevitably to division.

It is clear that Nyerere emphasizes "ujamaa" not just because it is an African word, but because it is an authentically African concept. What is connoted is not just the family, but a specific expression of family life in terms of multi-lateral interactions and contributions. This is, of course, a concept which has largely disappeared in Western industrialized society with the advent of the nuclear family.

"Ujamaa" then, is the basis of African Socialism as Nyerere sees it. The principles on which the family operated harmoniously need to be extended and institutionalized within the context of the entire nation. This will enable the best use to be made of the nation's economic and social resources. Following on the successful establishment of socialism in different countries, Nyerere sees a World Government and world unity as the logical conclusion.

Senghor, in describing African Socialism in his own terms, does not, of course, use the Swahili word 'ujamaa' nor does he lay particular emphasis on the concept of the family. He does, however, in his own way, emphasize what he takes to be the intrinsically socialist nature of African life as it has come to exist historically. He, however, operates with a different paradigm. Whereas Nyerere sees this historical socialist base in terms of the reality of the African family, Senghor's paradigm is Négritude.

Senghor describes Négritude as "the whole complex of civilized values - cultural, economic, social and political - which characterize the black peoples, or, more precisely, the Negro-African world".²¹ Undoubtedly, the special character of the African family would be part of this complex of civilized values but it is clear that Senghor's concept of Négritude is a much wider one than "ujamaa", since Négritude includes much else besides. It clearly has ramifications in, for instance, art, modes of feeling and response. Unfortunately, this is not the place to elaborate more fully upon this. The African Socialism espoused by Senghor consisted of certain elements, certain scientific and technical values borrowed from the various socialist experiments, which were to be "grafted like scions on to the wild stock of Négritude. For this latter, as a complex of civilized values, is traditionally socialist in character".²²

It is clear that although Senghor does not single out the family as the basis of African Socialism in the way Nyerere does,

21 Senghor, 'Négritude and African Socialism', St. Antony's Papers, XV, p.11.

22 ibid., p.16.

the two are not in opposition on this point. For whereas Nyerere takes the family as embodying all the values of African life, Senghor is content to say that all the values of the African -- i.e., Négritude -- are socialist. No doubt these values deeply permeate institutions such as the family.

Senghor shared in common with Nyerere the wish to put into modern form the traditional African socialism. He saw the basic problem to be solved by African Socialism, not as

how to put an end to the exploitation of man by his fellow, but to prevent its ever happening, by bringing political and economic democracy back to life; our problem is not how to satisfy spiritual, that is, cultural needs, but how to keep the fervour of the black soul alive. It is a question, once again, of modernizing our values by borrowing from European Socialism its science and technical skill, above all its spirit of Progress.²³

The very different consciousnesses of Nyerere and Senghor emerge clearly in their concepts of African Socialism. Whereas Nyerere sees the ultimate goal in political terms, as a World Government, Senghor speaks in terms of placing love of the Superperson above human love and of utilizing the love which is at the heart of Négritude in order to achieve the civilization of the Universal.

Nyerere's and Senghor's different modes of expression should not be taken as evidence of incompatible ideas. Nyerere speaks in the characteristically pragmatic tone of the politician, Senghor is more disposed to launch into visionary metaphysics, but Nyerere's ideas would appear to take their place harmoniously within Senghor's larger vision.

23. *ibid.* p.16.

Senghor's and Nyerere's writings reveal a feature which is common to both and basic to an understanding of African Socialism. That is, an attempt to find, within a political system, self-identity or African identity. African identity, lost and confused through the loss of political autonomy under colonial rule, now, with independence, had to be refound, but necessarily had to differ from the African identity of pre-colonial days, since this would hardly be an adequate basis from which to face the modern world.

The very title of Senghor's paper -- Négritude and African Socialism -- as well as statements to the effect that to create African socialism various socialist elements were to be "grafted like scions on to the wild stock of Negritude" and that such a socialism must entail keeping "the fervour of the black soul alive", indicate quite clearly that African socialism was to be an expression of "African-ness" and that it was to be in itself a manifestation of African identity.

Nyerere's rejection of both capitalism and Marxism as un-African and his constant linking of his concept of socialism to those qualities of life which he considers peculiarly African, both point to an attempt on his part, also, to create a system which is African above all and which expresses the African consciousness. Nyerere's emphasis on "ujamaa" or "familyhood" -- the traditional extended family -- as the basis of African socialism, may be seen as an effort to incorporate into the politico-economic system a specifically African concept, rather than having as a basis either the idea of inevitable interpersonal conflict, as in Marx, or of class divisions and exploitation,

as in capitalism. Both of these he rejected as alien to the African way of life.

If we were to take Nyerere and Senghor as provisionally definitive of African socialism, we would be justified in using that term, because when we come to examine the ways in which they both differ from Marxism, although there are some differences in the way they differ, there are other important ways in which there is a striking consonance between them in their joint difference from Marxism, and this emerges in the comparison of "ujamaa" and Négritude, which both take account of present realities in Africa as well as the socialist roots which existed in Africa long before the Europeans.

Nkrumah's position vis-a-vis Senghor and Nyerere does not need to be spelt out. There are some differences. Nkrumah, for instance, does not have a concept which is the basis of his African socialism. He occasionally makes use of the idea of the "African Personality" but he does not develop this idea nearly as consistently as Nyerere and Senghor develop the concepts of "ujamaa" and "Négritude". Nevertheless, the similarities are obvious; Senghor, Nkrumah and Nyerere all try to develop a political - economic system which takes account of the modern world while remaining true to much of the African tradition.

A characteristic of Nkrumah's ideas which emerges from the analysis is that his theory was continually ongoing. It did not remain static for any of the period during which he held power. Its position in relation to Marxism-Leninism was constantly changing,

from the early years when he described himself, more or less accurately, as a Marxist socialist, through to the development of his African socialism, which differed from Marxism-Leninism in several important respects. The issues on which he differed all related to Nkrumah's idea, at first only vaguely conceptualized, but increasingly clarified, that the form of political life must be appropriate to African conditions. It was inappropriate for an African party to be vanguardist since, according to Nkrumah, traditional (pre-colonial) African governments were democratic. It was inappropriate for an underdeveloped socialist country to reject foreign capital and investment even though the latter were recognized as manifestations of capitalism. Likewise, it was more realistic for an underdeveloped nation to think in terms of a struggle between the "haves" and "have-nots" on an international rather than a national scale.

The other proponents of African socialism, Nyerere and Senghor, have also adopted a stance distinct from that of an orthodox Marxist-Leninist, a stance, moreover, which differs on much the same issues as Nkrumah's socialism - the nature and importance of the Party, the question of foreign investment, the appropriateness of the class struggle to African conditions. Their theoretical positions naturally differ somewhat from each other's, and from Nkrumah's. There is, however, a more pronounced difference, and it concerns the vagueness of Nkrumah's political theory compared to those of Senghor and Nyerere. The broad lines of Nkrumah's political attitudes and policies are clear, but very few of the details.

Nkrumah's conception of 'African socialism' has to some extent been displayed by an examination of his speeches and writings whilst using a Marxist-Leninist theory of socialism as a model. This study revealed that Nkrumah's ideology did indeed owe much to Marxism-Leninism, but it also revealed that this commitment was of a somewhat piecemeal nature; it seemed to go only as far as it was consistent with a very central concern of his, namely, the emergence of 'African identity'. This notion of African identity manifested itself in two dimensions. The first related to the whole African continent as an entity, both as regards its relation to the outside world and also as regards its internal relationship between its constituent states. Here the overall watchword was seen as the issue of African unity. The other dimension concerned the socio-politico-economic structure of a particular state. Here Nkrumah, like Nyerere and Senghor, felt that a particular type of system could realize 'African identity' at the national level. Such a system must give expression to those changes brought about by Ghana's colonial experience -- such as the loss of power by the chiefs and the advent of widespread education -- whilst not forfeiting those qualities or habits of life which were seen as specifically African or Ghanaian. The system must contain, and shape, an emerging African identity.

CHAPTER FOUR : THE POLITICAL SCENE

It is now time to turn from Nkrumah's verba to the concrete realities of Ghanaian political life and of his role in them. After all, it is primarily as the leader of that country's emergence to independent nationhood and as the dominant figure in its first ten years of such independence that he is most significant. His theories must be tested against his actual practice in that arena in order to see what they, and it, really consisted of. In any case, of course, one can not place uninhibited reliance on the speeches and writings of someone who is above all an active political power-figure. The publications of such a man are prone to be influenced by other than purely theoretical considerations; motives of self-justification and rationalisation are liable to be dominant when particular political exigencies give rise to them. In Nkrumah's case there is also an additional difficulty involved in treating his writings, namely, widespread doubts as to his actual authorship of some at least of them. This last difficulty, however, does not seem to be a particularly troublesome one. It is far from rare for political leaders to make use of the literary and theoretical talents of others. In such cases what is relevant is not so much the literal authorship of the material as the fact that the political leader in question is prepared to present it as his own. In Nkrumah's case there appears to be no doubt of his commitment in this respect.

Just as it would be misleading to display Nkrumah's 'African socialism' purely by reference to his speeches and publications whilst ignoring his political actions, so would it be inept to scrutinise

his actions in a merely pragmatic spirit. What seems to be required here is an attempt to bring both aspects of his public self-presentation into a dialectical focus, that is, to see them both in a dynamic inter-relation. For while it is true that it is his actions which, bearing in mind the special circumstances which modify them in each case, provide the clearest guides to his thoughts and motives, it is also the case that the proper explication of his actions requires some insight into what he at least thought he was doing in performing them. Thus, in seeking to understand his performance we cannot afford to forget his dominant ideological preoccupations. It is in this spirit that a study of Nkrumah's actions is necessary for an exploration of what African socialism meant for him in both senses of "mean", i.e. what his actual concept of it was, and how important it was to him as a goal.

Nkrumah's actions can not be viewed in vacuo. They need to be seen against an overall background of Ghanaian political life, so that a clear idea may be gained of the interplay between his actions and other factors and events. A man's actions are seldom, if ever, purely expressive of his own spontaneous intentions and over-riding goals. The extent to which they are is a function of the number of 'degrees of freedom' his concrete circumstances allow him in each case. Thus in using Nkrumah's political actions as a test of the nature and depth of his commitment to African socialism it will be necessary to take note of the circumstances which may have modified or influenced particular decisions. Only in that way will we be enabled to estimate the extent to which he was actually implementing his own ideas as against merely reacting to

exigencies determined by factors outside his control or believed to be outside his control.

An adequate understanding of the Ghanaian political scene within which Nkrumah acted must encompass two factors. The first of these is the relationship of Nkrumah to the Convention People's Party¹, the majority party in Parliament, and, after 1963, the only party in the nation. The second factor is the relationship between Nkrumah and those groups which opposed him. It is important to determine how far both the opposition and the C.P.P. influenced Nkrumah in his capacity first as Prime Minister, then as President.

Under other circumstances it would be appropriate, in describing the political scene in Ghana, to examine the 1957 constitution which brought Ghana independence and under which Nkrumah led the country as its Prime Minister till 1960. Since, however, Nkrumah was acting in circumstances which severely limited his own initiative, there is little point in paying much attention to the provisions of this constitution in the hope that they will reveal Nkrumah's aspirations and commitments. The part played by Nkrumah in the discussions leading to the formation of the constitution was necessarily limited since the British colonial government was clearly not going to grant independence unless the form of Ghana's government met certain specifications -- the existence of a two-party system, for instance. Although Nkrumah was an active force in the formation of the constitution, its provisions cannot be read as simply indicative of his ideas and intentions.

1 Henceforth referred to as the C.P.P.

Perhaps the 1957 constitution, largely determined as it was by the colonial power, was not the only extrinsic factor limiting Nkrumah's freedom of action. Perhaps it was also the case that both the Ghanaian opposition and, indeed, the C.P.P. itself, constituted a framework giving Nkrumah only limited scope for personal expression? In order to probe this question, it is necessary to examine the Ghanaian political parties in some detail in order to determine how influential they were.

In 1957 two main political parties existed. The Convention People's Party, led by Nkrumah, was the numerically stronger party with a substantial majority in the National Assembly. The other main party, the United Party (U.P.), was composed of several relatively small political groups. The component parties were the Northern People's Party (N.P.P.), the National Liberation Movement (N.L.M.), the Moslem Association Party (M.A.P.), the Togoland Congress (T.C.), the Federation of Youth Organisations (F.Y.O.), and the Ga Shifimo Kpee. As is clear from their names, several of the parties were regionally-based. The National Liberation Movement (N.L.M.) was an Ashanti-based party, and the Ga Shifimo Kpee — the "Ga Standfast Association" — was based in and around Accra, its objective being to regain control over tribal lands now in the city of Accra.

A glance at the relative statistics² shows the very considerable extent of the C.P.P.'s parliamentary dominance over the U.P. The General Election of 1956 had produced 398,141 votes for the C.P.P., and 298,616 for the combined opposition³. Although these figures

2 David G. Apter, 'Ghana', Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa, (ed.) James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, (California, 1966), p.290.

3 From a population of six million a total of 696,757 votes seems a remarkably — and inexplicably — small percentage.

indicate a considerable preponderance of votes for the C.P.P. as against the opposition, the actual result in terms of parliamentary seats won was even more dramatically unbalanced. The C.P.P. won just over fifty-seven percent of the votes, but held just over sixty-eight percent of the seats.

<u>Party</u>	<u>Number of Seats</u> ⁴
C.P.P.	71
N.L.M.	12
N.P.P.	15
M.A.P.	1
F.Y.O.	1
T.C.	2
Independents	2

The gap between the C.P.P. and the U.P. -- in terms of their numerical support and parliamentary strengths -- was to increase steadily in the following years.

It is probably fitting to examine first the numerically stronger party.

The C.P.P. has been the subject of conflicting claims. Nkrumah claimed that it represented virtually the whole of the Ghanaian people. He described it as "based ... on the support of the overwhelming majority of the people",⁵ and as "representative of the broad mass of the people".⁶ By contrast, the C.P.P. has also been described as unrepresentative of the people and/or powerless.

4 David G. Apter, 'Ghana', op. cit.

5 Nkrumah, Africa must unite, p. 128.

6 ibid. p. 54.

It has been called "a monolithic machine in which the building of a personality cult is substituted for discussion and genuine participation in government".⁷ Ali Mazrui maintained that

The 'masses' were eulogized by C.P.P. party ideologies right up to the end, but the party became increasingly elitist de facto. It got beyond even that, as authority became personified in Nkrumah himself.⁸

These conflicting descriptions immediately give rise to two questions. One concerns the actual nature of C.P.P. membership, the other the power situation of the C.P.P. -- its membership and organs -- vis-a-vis its leader.

The exact membership of the C.P.P. is difficult to estimate because the figures available are sporadic. A survey conducted in Ghana by Immanuel Wallerstein in 1957 provides data as to the supporters of the C.P.P. in 1956 and 1957.⁹ In his analysis, Wallerstein took ten characteristics according to which, he maintained, Ghanaians typically ranked other Ghanaians. The ten variables were education, tribe or ethnic group, religion, occupation, participation in voluntary associations, style of dress, place of birth, occupation of spouse, sex, and legal form of marriage. The data was drawn from a random sample of all persons on the voting rolls in Accra, the capital of Ghana. The interviews were conducted in April-June 1957 by local residents in a variety of languages. It was estimated that over seventy-five percent of the adult population registered to vote at the time of the compilation of the list.

7 James Fairbairn, 'After Nkrumah', New Statesman, Vol. 71, 4 March 1966, p. 285.

8 Ali A. Mazrui, 'Nkrumah: the Leninist Czar', On Heroes and Uhuru-Worship, p. 118.

9 Immanuel Wallerstein and Michael Hechter, 'Social Rank and Nationalism: Some African Data', Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. XXXIV, Fall, 1970. No. 3.

Wallerstein consolidated individual ratings on each of these ten variables into a computed status index figure. Each participant in the survey thus was allotted a status index rank. The particular method of computation used by Wallerstein resulted in all participants having a rank value between three and nineteen (inclusive) on his scale. The distribution of the sample over his scale represents something approaching normal frequency distribution.

Respondents were asked how they had voted in the last national election in 1956, and who they would vote for now (i.e., 1957). Sixty-six percent said they had voted for the Convention People's Party; sixty-four point eight percent said they would now vote for the C.P.P.

The following table¹⁰ shows the results of the survey in detail.

TABLE 10

Vote for C.P.P., by Status Index

Rank on Status Index	N	Voted for C.P.P. in 1956	Intended to Vote for C.P.P. in 1957	Difference 1956-1957
3	6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0
4	31	29.0	29.0	0.0
5	38	28.9	30.5	+10.6
6	99	30.3	34.3	+ 4.0
7	90	33.3	45.6	+12.3
8	109	43.1	48.6	+ 5.5
9	107	69.2	73.8	+ 4.6
10	133	70.7	69.9	- 0.8
11	182	82.4	79.1	- 3.3
12	134	79.1	83.6	+ 4.5
13	170	81.8	74.7	- 7.1
14	109	86.2	73.4	-12.8
15	45	73.3	64.4	- 8.9
16	79	73.4	62.0	-11.4
17	34	73.5	61.8	-11.7
18	18	77.8	61.1	-16.7
19	3	66.7	66.7	0.0

10 ibid. p. 367.

It indicates that most C.P.P. support in 1956 and 1957 came from a middle group of voters, that is, those who were ranked neither at the bottom nor at the top of the Status Index. Kilson suggests that this group would be composed of persons educated up to primary or middle school level who had gained occupations as clerks, drivers, cocoa brokers, traders, primary school teachers, etc.¹¹

Wallerstein interprets the data as follows. He suggests that the middle group which voted for the C.P.P. did so because their relatively high social rank and consequent standing and skills meant that they were likely to inherit much of the power and privilege of the colonial administration with independence.

The lower stratum did not vote for the C.P.P. because its members feared that the advantages of political success would not spread as far as them, while those who enjoyed the highest social rank were not, on the whole, supporters of the C.P.P. because they feared having to share the benefits of independence with too large a stratum. Kilson identifies the latter group as the upper bourgeoisie of lawyers, journalists, doctors, merchants, and businessmen.¹²

Wallerstein's interpretation is rather misleading, however, on several counts. Firstly, although the 1956 figures for ranks fourteen to nineteen inclusive indicate that there is a slight decline in support for Nkrumah, Wallerstein overstresses it. All the 1956 figures from ranks fourteen to eighteen are still over seventy-three percent; this indicates considerable support for Nkrumah among the upper groups. The last entry, nineteen, is clearly

11 Martin Kilson, 'Elite Cleavages in African Politics: the Case of Ghana', Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 24, 1970, No. 1, p. 77.

12 ibid. p.78.

statistically non-significant since only three persons of that rank were interviewed. If ranks eighteen and nineteen are combined, and the responses of the twenty-one persons considered, there would be a 76.2% vote for the C.P.P. in 1956, and a 61.9% vote in 1957.

In addition, Wallerstein's interpretation fails to take into account fully the importance of the increase in support for Nkrumah from the lower groups, as shown in the last column. The segment of the sample below rank ten shows substantial increase in support for Nkrumah in 1957 over 1956. It is not really until one gets to rank thirteen that one notices a substantial decline in support for Nkrumah; the falling away of support in these upper echelons is quite marked.

Finally, the data provided by Wallerstein will be seen in the wrong perspective if we do not consider this factor. The voters' desire for independence may have been the primary determinant of their vote for the C.P.P., which stood for immediate independence, rather than the other platforms of that party. Similarly, those who voted against the C.P.P. may have been sufficiently impressed with its other policies to have voted for it in other circumstances but their negative feeling towards immediate independence meant a vote against the C.P.P. Unfortunately, the limited range of Wallerstein's survey does not help much on this issue. Of the figures which are available, however, those for 1957 indicate that those who voted for the C.P.P. in 1956, even if largely on the independence issue, were prepared, on the whole, to vote for it again after independence.

Wallerstein's data shows that in 1956 and 1957 the C.P.P. received some support, often considerable, from all groups studied,

but that its most consistent support was from members of the middle group. Kilson's analysis indicates a corresponding situation so far as the actual C.P.P. parliamentary membership was concerned. Kilson's study¹³ of some seventy-two C.P.P. legislators in 1957 reveals that thirty-six percent were traders, twenty percent clerks, and twenty-seven percent teachers. Each of these groups would fall into Wallerstein's middle category encompassing ranks eight to fourteen. Only five legislators (seven percent), all of whom were cabinet ministers, were professionally educated. Among these were the Minister for Agriculture, Archie Casely Hayford, a lawyer; the Minister of Local Government, E. O. Asafu-Adjaye, a lawyer and son of a wealthy Ashanti merchant, and the Minister of Justice Aaron Ofori Atta, also a lawyer and son of an Akan chief who had been Knighted by the British.

The data supplied by Wallerstein and Kilson is limited but unambiguous, showing as it does the predominance of the middle-group in support for, and parliamentary representation of, the C.P.P. in the early years of Ghana's independence. Nor is the limited nature of Wallerstein's survey too serious a problem as further evidence is available as to the membership of the C.P.P. The extent of C.P.P. membership has been a matter of some controversy. The Party has been described¹⁴ as having in 1966 two million members, out of the total Ghanaian population of over six million. Cohen,¹⁵ however,

13 ibid. p. 79.

14 Bob Fitch and Mary Oppenheimer, 'Ghana: End of an Illusion', op. cit. p. 2.

15 D.L. Cohen, unpublished paper on 'The Structure of the C.P.P.'

having examined Party records as far as they exist, claimed that in 1966 the membership of the C.P.P., defined as people paying dues and belonging to branches which actually held meetings, was little more than 400,000. Cohen goes on to admit, however, that the Ghana Young Pioneers, a functional organization which was part of the C.P.P., had a membership of 569,601 in 1965. He points out, though, that twenty-three percent of these members were less than seven years old, and that only twenty thousand members had uniforms, a good criterion for judging their degree of organization.¹⁶ Cohen goes on to show that another functional organ of the C.P.P., the National Council of Ghana Women, had just over twenty thousand members.¹⁷ Furthermore, Cohen asserts that although membership figures for the Ghana Trade Unions Congress and the United Ghana Farmers' Council are not available, there is no question that these affiliated bodies of the C.P.P. did maintain genuine mass memberships because of the economic necessity for farmers and workers of belonging to them. To obtain work in a State Enterprise or government department TUC membership was necessary, and to sell cocoa UGFCC membership was necessary. It seems probable, then, that neither Cohen nor Fitch and Oppenheimer would deny that there were approximately two million Ghanaians belonging to the C.P.P. either through membership in regional branches or in affiliated organizations.

Although the analyses of Cohen and Wallerstein appear to contradict each other, on closer examination it seems that this is not necessarily the case. Wallerstein sees C.P.P. support as

16 Charles A. Ballard, 'A Contemporary Youth Movement', an unpublished M.A. Thesis, Institute of African Studies, U. of Ghana, April, 1967, quoted in D.L. Cohen, op. cit.

17 Summaries of Work Done at the National Party Headquarters, 1964 and 1965, quoted in D.L. Cohen, op. cit.

largely from the middle group. Cohen maintains, however, that the largest groups within the C.P.P. were the TUC and the UGFC; the membership of both these organizations would fall primarily within Wallerstein's lower group. The apparent contradiction may be explained in two ways. During the ten-year chronological gap between the two surveys, support for the C.P.P. may actually have changed from largely middle- to largely lower-group. Another explanation is that the lower groups in 1966 were no more supporters of the C.P.P. than they had been in 1956, but that the economic necessity outlined by Cohen forced them to become part of a body affiliated to the C.P.P., nevertheless. Membership of a union, or of the Farmers' Council, even though these bodies were linked with the C.P.P., would neither entail support of the C.P.P., nor formal membership of it. We cannot infer from the existence of a large number of unionized workers that the latter either supported, or failed to support, the C.P.P. Consequently, the estimate of C.P.P. membership as two million is misleading if it includes the members of the TUC and the UGFC.

The picture that thus emerges of the C.P.P. in 1966 contains elements which negate the impressive membership figure of two million. Of the two largest groups, it seems likely that many had joined under compulsion. Of another large group, the Young Pioneers, approximately 131,000 were under seven years old, and almost two-thirds of the group's entire membership were so disorganized that they did not have uniforms. Even if one bears in mind the relatively large numbers (400,000) of adult volunteers in the regional branches, the elements of compulsion, extreme youth,

and disorganization which characterize various groups within the C.P.P., considered together with Wallerstein's statistics, lead one inescapably to the conclusion that the C.P.P. was representative of the mass of the Ghanaian people neither in 1956 nor in 1966.

In the absence of further specific studies such as those conducted by Wallerstein, Kilson, and Cohen, it is necessary to ascertain the power of the C.P.P. vis-a-vis that of its leader by looking at its organization and operation.

After independence, the C.P.P. had a dual organization.¹⁸ On the one hand, there was the party branch including the constituency and executive, and the regional organization with its executive and secretariat. On the other hand, there were the affiliated organizations, particularly the trade unions and co-operative associations, which cut across the geographically-based party units.

The Party was structured in the following manner. In each of Ghana's eight regions there was a C.P.P. Regional Headquarters; the Headquarters controlled all the C.P.P. branches within their regions. When an order was issued from the C.P.P. Headquarters by the Life Chairman, a position filled by Nkrumah, the order would go to the Regional Headquarters and from there to the various branches, of which there were reputedly more than six thousand. Regional officers' salaries were under the direct control of the President, as were their emoluments and privileges. The branches carried, or were meant to carry out the basic policy and programme laid down by the National Annual Conference guided by its national

18 David E. Apter, 'Ghana', Political Parties and National Integration In Tropical Africa, p. 300.

executive. Each branch sent an elected representative to the Annual Conference. The Party executive -- known as the National Executive Committee -- was elected from the delegates to the Conference. The National Executive Committee had an inner controlling body, the Central Committee, or "Directorate". This Committee consisted of the leader, Nkrumah, the eight C.P.P. members selected by him and approved by the National Executive. In 1962, at the eleventh National Delegates Conference of the C.P.P., Nkrumah had been voted power to change the membership of the Central Committee unilaterally, so from this time onwards Nkrumah's selection of the Directorate members did not need even the formal approval of the National Executive. At the top of the hierarchical structure of the C.P.P. was the position of General Secretary, a position filled by Nkrumah. The duty of the General Secretary was to "give directions to the Party".¹⁹

It emerges, then, that the formal structure of that part of the C.P.P. which has been studied was not such as to guarantee that the Party's members were able to participate in the running of the Party, the formation of its policies, etc. Although at the Annual Conference the delegates were able to choose representatives, who comprised the National Executive Committee, the latter body was subservient to the Central Committee, which was not elected, but handpicked by Nkrumah. In addition, Nkrumah as General Secretary was virtually in command of the Party, according to G.K. Osei, a member of the C.P.P. and a loyal supporter of Nkrumah. It appears, then, that Nkrumah, as Life Chairman and General Secretary, appointer of the Central Committee and the issuer of orders to regional officers, was the fount of power and policy-making in that part of the C.P.P. so far considered.

19 G.K. Osei, The Spirit and Structure of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party, (London, undated), p. 7.

Perhaps it is the case, however, that the affiliated organizations which also comprised the C.P.P., enjoyed a more autonomous role and were able to take some more significant part in the decision making process. The functional organizations included the Workers' Brigade, the State Construction Workers, the National Council of Ghana Women, the Ghana Young Pioneers, the Trade Union Congress, the United Ghana Farmers' Council and the Co-operatives. All these bodies were greatly extended and expanded after 1960. As has been indicated, however, it is not correct to assume that the members of these organizations were actually supporters of the C.P.P., and hence, of Nkrumah.

The functional organizations were connected to the rest of the C.P.P. in the following two ways. After 1961, each organ was given representation in the National Executive. It has become clear by now that representation in the National Executive did not constitute significant sharing in decision and policy-making. In addition, though, some of the organizations were represented in parliament. In 1961, for instance, the entire co-operative movement, including the United Ghana Farmers' Council, was loosely consolidated into a single organization, the Ghana Co-operative Movement. A minister was then placed at the head of the movement, to supervise it. Similarly, the leader of the Trades' Union Congress, John Tettegah, was admitted to parliament by becoming an ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the connection of these two organizations to parliament -- the National Assembly -- meant that thereby they were able to participate more in the control of their

own destiny.²⁰ The nature and workings of parliament must be examined before any such conclusion can be drawn.

Before going on to discuss the workings of parliament, it is necessary to consider further the C.P.P. It could be argued that since the Party was not, except in numbers, a mass Party, but in effect, at least in matters of decision-making, a very small, tightly-knit Party, it was run along Marxist lines. This contention would be a mistaken one, however, for two reasons. Firstly, weight must be given to Nkrumah's words on this score, not so much because his claims compel belief, as that his claim that the C.P.P. was a mass party virtually ensures that the existence of a vanguardist party could not be the case. It would be inconceivable to Marx, and more especially, Lenin, that a party could exist which could be so lacking in self-awareness that it could claim to be a broadly-based party while actually being vanguardist in nature.

Secondly, it was not the case that there was a small group -- the vanguard -- which actually directed policy. The only group which could conceivably fill this role was the Central Committee (the Directorate), but it is apparent that this Committee, being composed solely of Nkrumah himself and his handpicked men, represented the will of virtually only one man.

It is possible, of course, that although the Party was formally subservient to Nkrumah, there was in reality a constant

20 This section is mainly concerned with the structural inter-relationships between various institutions in the Ghanaian body-politic. For a more episodic treatment of the political reality, of, for instance, the relationship between Nkrumah and the Trades Union Congress as revealed in the Sekondi-Takoradi strike of 1961, see Chapter 6.

dialogue between the two that negated to some extent the nature of the relationship. It seems unlikely, however, that this was the case, if the attitude of those party members who were members of parliament, is any guide. It can only be described as a mixture of hero worship of Nkrumah and subservience to him.

The existence of such an attitude is not particularly surprising when it is noted that the last general election was held in 1956, and the last contested by-election was in August 1960.²¹

From this date onwards candidates were selected and approved by the central committee of the Party, the Directorate, and then declared elected unopposed. Consequently, after August 1960, those candidates who entered the National Assembly owed their positions directly to Nkrumah. It would be unlikely, therefore, that such members would have views which would be inconsistent with Nkrumah's.

While no parliamentarian ever went as far as The Ghanaian Times, which published the following on Nkrumah's return from an overseas trip:

Yes, a thousand voices shall sing
Sing the praises of Africa's great Redeemer
Sing the Glories of the Great Messiah
Who returns today, in triumph
From a mission of peace, over the seas²²

statements such as the following were by no means uncommon:

21 David E. Apter, 'Ghana', Political Parties and National Integration In Tropical Africa, pp. 294, 295.

22 The Ghanaian Times, editorial, Sept. 16, 1961.

Our great and illustrious leader as I know
 him - Osagyefo²³ Dr Kwame Nkrumah,
 the first President of the Republic of Ghana,
 is blessed with the possession of rare
 powers of memory ... Osagyefo Dr Kwame
 Nkrumah is our king of peace. Long may he live.²⁴

Hand in hand with such adulation went subservience.

Mr Speaker, I wish you to tell the Osagyefo
 that he should forgive us our mistakes.²⁵

If the attitude of the more powerful members of the C.P.P., namely
 those who were Members of Parliament as distinct from being part
 of the rank and file, is so subservient to Nkrumah, it is unlikely
 that the attitude of the other C.P.P. members would have been
 any more independent. The possibility, therefore, of a constant
 dialogue between Nkrumah and the C.P.P. seems slim indeed.

In considering the relationship between Nkrumah and the
 members of the National Assembly, it is interesting to note that
 there was no criticism of Nkrumah within Parliament by C.P.P.
 members. Party members of course, do not usually criticise the
 leader within parliament or any other public forum; commonly, they
 present a united front, with perhaps the exception of a few
 backbenchers. However, in such cases the lack of public criticism
 is more a matter of public solidarity rather than indicating that
 the leader is considered, per se, above criticism. In Nkrumah's
 case, the latter, not the former, appeared to be the case. It
 was not that Members of Parliament refrained from criticising, or
 differing from, Nkrumah in Parliament, but that there were constant
 suggestions and criticisms offered within the party when it was

23 A title indicating esteem.

24 Parlt. Debates, 24th April, 1961, col 153.

25 ibid. 25th April, 1961, Col. 189.

out of public view. Rather, Nkrumah appears as so elevated as to be far above criticism. Nkrumah is the term of reference for everyone else. Criticism of Ministers is criticism for not carrying out Nkrumah's policy,²⁶ rather than criticism of the policy itself. Nor was there criticism by C.P.P. members of a policy expounded either by Nkrumah or by one of his righthand men such as Kofi Baako or Krobo Edusei. It was instantly applauded without reservation from within the ranks of the C.P.P.

A speech made by Mr Quaidoo, Minister of Social Welfare, points both to the subservient atmosphere and to the accompanying problems.

Instead of people speaking out their minds and saying the pros and cons about what should be done and giving advice they keep silent and would rather want to know what the Leader would like to hear. That is the danger, because the Leader himself might have thought of this thing, but he would only like to have a few criticisms on it in order to know the pros and cons of it. And that is why he has got groups around him ... You can never have any executive President who is infallible. This is common sense. But those people in order to win favours go about the country saying that the Leader does no wrong ... They think that for us to be united we must be uniform. Unity is not the same thing as uniformity.²⁷

The speech by Quaidoo, a high-ranking member of the C.P.P., and a Minister, is interesting. It could be interpreted as a call from the C.P.P. for criticism, and as a statement that it was the official policy of the C.P.P. to encourage criticism. The structure of the C.P.P., however, meant that its leadership was under no compulsion to act upon criticism. Moreover, Nkrumah's pre-eminence was such that critics who incurred his wrath were totally at his mercy. Quaidoo's statement is interesting as it

26 See Ghana Parlt. Debates, 24th Feb. 1961, col. 246.

27 Parlt. Debates, 25 April 1961, cols. 174, 5, 8.

indicates a certain dissatisfaction with this state of affairs within the C.P.P., and a hint that the C.P.P.'s subservience to Nkrumah had been bought at the price of some uneasiness on the part of at least one C.P.P. member.

It is important to understand the relationship between Nkrumah and the members of the National Assembly, in order that his influence in Parliament, quite apart from his constitutional position re the passing of Bills, may not be underestimated.

Some additional light is thrown onto this relationship by the Dawn Broadcast which was made by the President on 9 April 1961, over Radio Ghana. The broadcast was necessitated, according to Nkrumah, by the accusations and counter-accusations of corruption which took place between the Trades Union Congress and some Parliamentarians. Nkrumah urges members of Parliament to rid themselves of bad influences so that Ghanaian socialism would be realized. He maintained that

They [some Party members in Parliament] are tending, by virtue of their functions and positions to become a social group aiming to become a new ruling class of self-seekers and careerists.²⁸

and that corruption was rife.

One of the most degrading aspects of Party conduct is the tendency on the part of some comrades to go round using the names of persons in prominent positions to collect money for themselves.

Following the broadcast, there was a spate of newspaper articles criticising parliamentarians.

28 The Ghanaian Times, April 10, 1961

No more shall be the stench, filth, ignominy, rapacity and dishonesty of the handful of self-seekers and avaricious shameless citizens which threatened to ruin our new Republic by destroying the rich foundations upon which the Osagyefo is building this great, throbbing, dynamic country.²⁹

That there was both inefficiency and corruption within the government seems likely. As early as February, 1961, and constantly thereafter, there were allegations of corruption in, for instance, the Ghana Farmers' Council. One Member of Parliament alleged that, with the subsidy given to it, the Council instead of growing food, was growing cars for its members.³⁰ His allegations were later repeated by other parliamentarians, and similar criticisms made about other bodies affiliated with the government.³¹

Whether or not the rumours of corruption were well-founded, Nkrumah's method of dealing with them is open to several interpretations. The President's motive in making the broadcast may have been simply to rid the government of corrupt elements and to make known publicly his stance on the question of corruption. It is open to question, however, whether some less public method of castigating those parliamentarians and officials who were corrupt would not have been equally effective. The Dawn Broadcast, not specifying who exactly might be corrupt, cast a general shadow over all Members of Parliament and, as is reflected in newspaper articles and editorials, tended to engender public distrust of parliamentarians in general. At least one Member of Parliament

29 ibid. April 11, 1961.

30 C.C.K. Baah, Parlt. Debates, 24 Feb. 1961, col. 246.

31 See, for instance, Parlt. Debates, 3 May 1961, col. 331, for charges of misuse of public funds.

maintained that the reports were intended to "separate the people from the Members of Parliament".³² Nkrumah, by contrast, appeared publicly in the role of defender of honesty and fighter against corruption.

Subsequent to the Dawn Broadcast, Members of Parliament were feeling rather vulnerable about the relative positions and strengths of President and Parliament. The following remarks reveal their defensiveness.

I have on many occasions made it plain to the House that there is nothing in this country that the Parliament of Ghana cannot do ...

The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana lays down quite clearly that after the life of the present Parliament, the election of the President shall be done by this august House. When the nation goes to elections, the leader of the party with the majority of votes automatically becomes the Head of State. The fact that Parliament elects the President of the State shows clearly the supreme power of Parliament. It is a pity that some people in this country fail to realize this.³³

Following the Dawn Broadcast, Nkrumah asked a number of leading figures to resign from Parliament. These figures were Gbedemah (Minister of Health), Kojo Botsio (Secretary of the Central Committee of the C.P.P.), S.Y. Yeboah (Commissioner for the Brong Ahafo Region), E.K. Dadson and W.A. Wiafe (Ministerial Secretaries), and Ayeh Kumi (Executive Secretary of the Development Secretariat) and Krobo Edusei (Minister of Transport and Communications). This action may be interpreted as either purging the Party of corrupt elements or as a deliberate move, which, by purging the Party of its leaders, would further increase

32 Krobo Edusei, Minister of Transport and Communications, Parlt. Debates, 25 April 1961, col. 182.

33 Parliamentary Debates, 25th April, 1961, Col. 179. Krobo Edusei, Minister of Transport and Communications.

Nkrumah's power at the expense of other members of the C.P.P. Gbedemah, for one, protesting his innocence in the National Assembly, before immediately fleeing the country, maintained that Nkrumah's growing power, manifested in the purge and in repressive legislation, was creating virtually a reign of terror.

"Today, there are many people whose hearts are filled with fear -- fear even to express their convictions ... Today, we may think that all is well, it is not my turn, it is my brother's turn, but your turn will come sooner than later".³⁴

Nkrumah's relationship to the members of the National Assembly is important in two respects. Firstly, it enables the various Bills and Acts to be looked at in the light not only of Nkrumah's constitutional position, in that his assent was necessary before they could become law, but also of his undoubted influence within the National Assembly itself. Many parliamentarians, as is revealed in parliamentary debates, seemed to be governed largely in their speech and actions by a consideration of what would please Nkrumah. Secondly, the relative strengths of President and Parliament reveal something of Nkrumah's political aspirations. There is little indication that the enormous influence Nkrumah exercised was unwelcome to him, or in any way foisted upon him against his will. And yet his influence virtually ensured that the government could not operate upon that basis which Nkrumah himself had described as being important for socialism to succeed, namely, the basis of mass representation.

Busia, a steadfast opponent of Nkrumah's, remarked³⁵

34 Parliamentary Debates, 16th October, 1961.

35 'Interview with Dr K.A. Busia', Transition, No. 28, January 1967, Vol. 6 (iii).

that in socialism there is an ethic of seeking a kind of general welfare not compatible with the megalomaniac search for eminence of one individual " 'Nkrumah' became much bigger than any socialist idea".

Whether or not Nkrumah's enormous prestige and power can be traced at this stage to megalomania, it is certainly the case that his pre-eminence meant that socialism could not operate. The development of African socialism according to Nkrumah must be firmly rooted in the masses, and inseparable from their aspirations and needs. The pre-eminence of an individual to the extent of Nkrumah's pre-eminence meant that the importance of the masses was considerably less than the theory of African socialism would have it. Nkrumah's overwhelming prestige meant that those members of parliament who, in representing their constituents, wished to oppose or criticize a proposal known to have Nkrumah's support, were under a considerable pressure not to do so. The atmosphere within the House was one in which the members' freedom to speak was in a subtle sense, limited, and the will of one man was the dominant factor in determining what action took place.

The relationship of Nkrumah to the C.P.P. has been described in some detail. The United Party cannot be ignored, however, and in fact there was considerable criticism of the President from the Opposition. This criticism gradually got fainter and fainter, however, as the numbers of the opposition dwindled. Several defected to the C.P.P., some went into exile, others were detained under the Preventive Detention Act, and others lost their seats in by-elections.

In November 1958, for instance, the government detained thirty-eight of its opponents. In June, 1959, Busia, the leader of the Opposition, having suffered a resounding defeat³⁶ in losing his seat to his C.P.P. opponent, C.E. Donkah, went into exile.

In addition, the U.P. endured a number of electoral defeats, which still further diminished its voice in Parliament. In February, 1958, for instance, the United Party lost its former seat at the Kumasi municipal elections, and again in Kumasi, a former U.P. stronghold, lost a parliamentary by-election in April, 1959. In the by-elections held in June 1959 at Sekyere West the C.P.P. candidate received 10,840 votes as against the opposition candidate's 5153.³⁷ In October, Wenchi West was lost by the U.P. in parliamentary by-elections. In the last major election held, in 1960, Danquah, then leader of the U.P., and Nkrumah both stood for president. Danquah received 124,623 votes, Nkrumah 1,016,076.³⁸ These results, part of a widespread pattern, may be substantially attributed to the increasing demoralization of the U.P., no doubt due in part to the Government's repressive legislation and exacerbated by Busia's voluntary exile, and to the inducements and rewards associated with a C.P.P. election victory. In addition it is likely that the repeated allegations of C.P.P. intimidation at polling booths, made by the Ashanti Pioneer,³⁹ had some substance

36 David Apter gives the figures as 13,676 for the C.P.P., and only 1,589 for the U.P. 'Ghana', Political Parties and National Integration In Tropical Africa, p. 292.

37 David Apter, 'Ghana', p.29.

38 ibid.

39 According to the then editor of the Ashanti Pioneer, Mr A.D. Apea, in a discussion with the writer.

at least. A combination of these three factors is the most convincing explanation of the gradual demise of the U.P. voice within Parliament.

In 1960, the numbers of the opposition in the National Assembly had dwindled from the thirty-two at independence. Three were in detention, one was in exile, and twelve had joined the ranks of the government.

The subservience of the C.P.P., together with the dwindling numbers of the Opposition, meant that the National Assembly was not a forum of genuine debate, but rather a mouthpiece for Nkrumah.

Having considered the relation of Nkrumah to the C.P.P. and the amount of influence it was able to exert upon him, one is led to two conclusions. Firstly, it was not the case that decisions reached by the lower levels of the C.P.P. were transmitted upwards, eventually becoming incorporated into policies and decisions. Rather, the structure of the C.P.P. was such that decisions emanated downwards from Nkrumah himself. Secondly, the growing weakness of the United Party was such that it, too, was not able to exert significant influence or pressure upon Nkrumah.

Nor was it the case that Nkrumah could be influenced by public opinion expressed through the Press, for the newspapers, with the exception of the Ashanti Pioneer which soon came to an abrupt end,⁴⁰ were not only uncritical but also adulatory of Nkrumah. Descriptions of him ranged from "His Messianic Dedication Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah"⁴¹ to "Osagyefo the President is a father who loves

40 The Ashanti Pioneer was suppressed, and its editor and four members of staff detained at the end of January 1962.

41 Evening News, Nov. 7, 1964.

children".⁴² Moreover, the most trivial remarks of or concerning the President were reported as though they were major events. The remark of Major-General Sir Edward Spears⁴³ that the Osagyefo was "a most pleasant and courteous man of great charm" made headlines in the Daily Graphic⁴⁴ The excesses of adulation - hardly a page was not graced by a photograph of Nkrumah - and the extremely low standard of journalism⁴⁵ meant that the press could not be taken seriously as an independent force.

Consequently, it must be concluded that the number of "degrees of freedom" Nkrumah's concrete circumstances allowed him was high. The stage is thus set for a consideration of the economic scene, so that Nkrumah's actions may be examined against the political-economic background, and these actions viewed in terms of the President's own theory of African socialism.

42 Daily Graphic, April 5, 1965.

43 Chairman of Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, Ltd.

44 Daily Graphic, April 10, 1965.

45 "How Ghana's enemies tell lies to cover evil intentions" was the title of a typical article in the Evening News, Nov. 9, 1964.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Economy

It is necessary at this point to examine Ghana's economy as directed by Nkrumah, both because it is important for an understanding of the political scene, and also because it itself is significant in understanding Nkrumah's commitment to socialism. Ghana's economic system in fact reflects to a very large degree the ideas and theories advanced by Nkrumah in speeches and publications.

The economy of independent Ghana during Nkrumah's era divides conveniently into two phases, 1957 to approximately 1960, and 1960 to 1966. It is the second phase which embodies the economic vision of African socialism as described by Nkrumah.

In the very early years of independence Nkrumah believed Ghana's economic growth could be accelerated by three means. If Ghanaian exports increased, if the inflow of foreign capital grew, and if Ghanaian import substitution developed satisfactorily,¹ then the economy would thrive. By 1960 or 1961, however, it had become apparent to Nkrumah that these three methods could not achieve their desired end.

Although the volume of Ghana's most important export, cocoa, almost doubled between 1958 and 1961, expanding by thirty-three percent between 1960 and 1961 alone,² the value of this export did not increase correspondingly. Cocoa prices, as revealed in the following table, were steadily declining owing to a continued discrepancy between the growth of production and the growth of consumption.

1 Daily Graphic, April 19, 1965.

2 Economic Bulletin for Africa, U.N., vol III, January 1963, p. 18.

International Market Prices of Cocoa, New York,³
London and Le Havre. Annually 1954-1960,
Average, and monthly 1960-1961.

	<u>New York</u>		<u>London</u>	<u>Le Havre</u>
	<u>Spot Accra</u>	<u>Spot Bahia</u>	<u>Spot Accra</u>	<u>Ivory Coast</u>
	U.S. cents per pound		sh. per cwt.	Francs per kg.
1954	57.8	55.7	467/6	4.33
1955	37.4	36.2	302/-	2.78
1956	27.3	25.5	221/7	2.07
1957	30.6	30.5	247/2	2.55
1958	44.3	43.3	352/5	4.25
1959	36.6	35.4	285/6	3.71
Monthly averages				
1960				
Jan-June	28.5	27.0	229/5	2.99
July-Dec	28.2	26.4	222/2	2.89
1961				
Jan-June	22.2	22.3	176/4	-
July	22.0	22.0	176/10	-

The exceedingly low cocoa prices meant that although Ghana's cocoa exports had almost doubled, the total export proceeds derived from cocoa sales 1958-62 had fluctuated only within narrow limits, from \$175 million to \$195 million. Nor was the situation likely to improve, the United Nations' Economic Bulletin for Africa gloomily (and accurately) forecast.⁴ World production of cocoa had exceeded a million tons in the 1960/61 season for the second consecutive year. Further, the apparent unconsumed surplus in 1960 was of the order of 100,000 tons compared with 30,000 tons in 1959. The average level of prices in the first six months of 1961 was almost 19% lower than in the corresponding period of 1960. There was unlikely to be a significant recovery of prices unless production in

3 Economic Bulletin for Africa, U.N., vol. II, no. 1, Jan 1962, A-41.

4 ibid. A-40, A-41.

1961/62 turned out to be considerably smaller than anticipated. Since cocoa was by far Ghana's most important export commodity, accounting for approximately 60% of the value of Ghanaian exports, the futility of relying much on an increase in exports to stimulate the economy was painfully apparent.

If the results of increased exports had proved disappointing, so did the hopes for increased foreign capital inflow. Foreign investment, which had dropped sharply in 1957, no doubt at least partly due to the caution with which businessmen regarded the first independent black African nation, did not increase significantly. The failure of Nkrumah's hopes for increased foreign investment, coupled with the dismal export situation, meant that the large financial reserves which Ghana had accumulated from high cocoa prices during the early and mid 1950's, were simply used up, and not replaced.

Nor was the third method of stimulating the economy, that of encouraging import substitution, successful. Ghanaian private enterprise proved ineffective in this respect, largely due to the poor quality of Ghanaian entrepreneurship.⁵ The quality, or lack of it, in no way reflected on Ghanaian abilities, but rather on the adverse conditions within which local entrepreneurs had to operate.

One of the disadvantages Ghanaians suffered was that the largely foreign-owned banks were more reluctant to lend money to them than they were to their foreign competitors. Part of the reason for this was that Ghanaians, operating under adverse circumstances, were not, on

5 Sayre P. Schatz, 'Government Lending to African businessmen', Journal of Modern African Studies, 1968, vol. 6, no. 4.

the whole, good business risks. Not only did foreign competitors have greater access to loans and credit, they could also, through their overseas connections, import more easily those mechanical spare parts which could not be made locally. Moreover, Ghanaian entrepreneurs usually lacked both the social connections so often useful in gaining business and the wide business experience of their British or other rivals in Ghana.

The combination of these factors meant that Nkrumah could not rely on the private sector of the economy to effect any significant import substitution. This was a severe blow, for the volume of imports was rising markedly. The amount of imports had increased by fifteen percent from 1959 to 1960.⁶ Almost all import groups showed an increase in 1960, but the greatest increase was in the category of machinery and transport equipment, which rose by 31.7% in value and 53% in volume terms.⁷ The major increases within this category were in imports of non-electrical machinery and appliances, which more than doubled in value, and motor vehicles, rolling stock and agricultural machinery, which increased nearly six times. Nor was the increase in imports confined to the years 1959-60, as the following table reveals.

6 Economic Bulletin for Africa, vol. II. A-22.

7 ibid. A-23.

Ghana-Imports by Commodity Groups (million \$US)

	1960		1961	
	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>%</u>
Food	58.9	16	73.4	19
Beverages & Tobacco	10.6	3	9.8	3
Agric. raw materials	1.4	-	3.9	1
Fuels	19.0	5	18.2	5
Chemicals	26.6	7	28.3	7
Textiles	55.3	15	60.2	15
Other manufactured consumer goods & base metal & their manufactures	91.5	26	101.6	25
Machinery	50.1	14	52.4	13
Transport equipment	44.5	12	40.3	10
Miscellaneous	5.0	2	6.1	2
	<u>362.9</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>394.2</u>	<u>100⁸</u>

The failure of the Ghanaian policies of increased import substitution, increased exports, and increased incoming foreign capital as means of accelerating the economy's growth, meant that Nkrumah had to adopt alternative policies. These alternative policies characterize the second phase of Ghanaian economic development, beginning in 1960. The fall in the world cocoa price was something Nkrumah could do nothing about, and, indeed, it continued to decline for twelve years, reaching an all-time low of twelve cents a pound in July 1965. The failure of private entrepreneurship, and the decline in foreign investment were, however, matters within Nkrumah's sphere of action.

Realizing that the indigenous private sector could not effectively develop import substitutes, Nkrumah turned to a reliance on state industries. This meant, in effect, a creation of state industries.

8 'External Trade Statistics of Ghana', quoted in Economic Bulletin for Africa, vol. III, Jan. 1963, p. 19.

Accordingly, in 1961 the Minister of Finance reported that the policy of the Government was for the orderly development of consumer co-operatives and for the setting up of a National Trading Corporation.⁹

The concern with establishing co-operatives may be seen as a specifically socialist concern, since co-operatives embody the traditional socialist emphasises on collective rather than individual action on a laissez-faire basis. The Government manifested its concern in the devising of several schemes to implement co-operatives.

In 1961, the Government proposed to set up various agricultural co-operatives. One part of the plan entailed the establishment of stations which would act as pools for farm machinery, including tractors. Such stations were to be set up in various regions of the country, and from them farm machinery would be made available on hire to the farmer. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture decided to set up at least thirty large scale co-operative farms, in conjunction with the Ghana Farmers' Council. The farms, which were to be mechanised, were to be in units of five hundred to two thousand acres. The aim of the scheme - couched in practical rather than ideological terms - was

to further increase the output of agricultural commodities of the country by associating farmer co-operatives with well run farms which eventually will become paying concerns¹⁰.

9 Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, 16 May, 1961, Col. 590.

10 Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, 20 Feb., 1961, Col. 121.

The co-operative farms were to be provided by the Government with capital, technical assistance, agricultural machinery and implements, and processing and storage facilities. It was envisaged that when the farms reached an (unspecified) stage of development, the government would withdraw and the co-operatives would assume control. In 1961 the total number of co-operative farming projects was forty-two, and the estimated cost over ten and a half million pounds.¹¹

One wonders, however, how serious the Government was about the matter of co-operatives, since it was alleged,¹² and by a Member of Parliament and a member of the C.P.P., that the

co-operative set-up, the trading organisation mentioned by the Minister, is ... in confusion because no concrete plans have been formulated for it by the Ministry of Trade

It was stated that although co-operative shops were supposed to have been opened throughout the country twelve months previously, not a single one had yet been set up.

..... Despite criticism; it is clear in retrospect that the talk of state-owned industries was not merely idle. By 1966, indeed, there were fifty state-owned and twelve joint state-private enterprises.¹³ By 1963, however, few of these had actually got off the ground and begun to produce, often because of administrative bungling and inexperience.¹⁴ Many were still on blue-paper while negotiations for

11 ibid., col. 260.

12 Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, 16 May 1961, col. 593.

13 'Reshaping the State Industries', West Africa, March 30, 1968.

14 Sayre P. Schatz reports seeing on a Ghanaian state farm twenty of twenty four tractors standing idle, rusting in the tropical climate. The expensive tractors were not being used partially because the state farm had cultivated much less land than the plan called for, and partially because the tractor batteries had gone dead and no one had recharged or replaced them. 'Ghana and Nigeria: Coups and Consequences', The Harvard Journal of Negro Affairs, p. 47.

aid and material equipment were in progress.

Clearly, there was some growth of the public sector of the economy in the 1960's, and it was Nkrumah's intention that there should be much more, as the following table reveals.

	<u>Share in total Government investment of directly productive investment. (percentage)</u>	
	Agriculture	Industry, Construction, Mining.
First Development Plan (beginning 1951)	6.5	4.7
Second Five Year Plan (beginning 1959)	7.9	11.7
Seven Year Plan (beginning 1964)	14.3	22.9 ¹⁵

The following figures reveal in some detail how much faster Nkrumah intended the public sector in agriculture to grow, compared to the private sector. The figures are calculated from the Seven Year Development Plan.

	<u>private sector</u>	<u>public sector</u>
cereals	+ 38%	+ 447%
roots and plantain	+ 10%	+ 285%
legumes and oils	+ 101%	+ 880%
vegetables	+ 117%	+ 180% ¹⁶

Although Nkrumah planned to accelerate the growth of the public sector, there is no indication that he wished to eliminate entirely the private sector. The ideal economy for Ghana, according to government sources, was a mixed one in which could be seen features of both the capitalist and socialist economic systems.

15 A. Killick and R. Szereszewski, 'The Economy of Ghana' in The Economies of Africa, (ed.) P. Robson and D.A. Lury, (London, 1969), p. 112.

16 ibid.

Although Birmingham et al. maintain¹⁷ that a mixed economy was only a transitional step on the road to complete socialism, it is implied from the Seven-Year Plan that even at the end of the transition period a segment of the economy, though small, would still be under private control. According to the Plan, by "the end of the transition period the state will be controlling on behalf of the community the dominant share of the economy".¹⁸

The growth of the public sector, both the actual growth and that still on the drawing-board, has been criticized as being based on no consistent plan other than that of expanding state-controlled industrialization regardless of cost.¹⁹ If this were the case, then it itself would be a negation of the socialist principle of organizing and planning the economy.

If one interprets this claim to mean that Nkrumah was expanding the public sector regardless of cost as part of his commitment to socialism, one would have forgotten the pragmatic basis of Nkrumah's economic policies. Nkrumah expressed his pragmatism quite explicitly:

It is not socialism for the sake of socialism, but a practical solution of the country's problems. We want to see full employment, good housing, and equal opportunity for education and cultural advancement for all the people up to the highest level possible.²⁰

17 Birmingham, op. cit., p. 29.

18 quoted ibid., p. 411.

19 Michael E. Blunt, 'State Enterprise In Nigeria and Ghana: the end of an era?' African Affairs, vol. 69, no. 274, Jan. 1970.

20 Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite, p. 119.

The fact that Nkrumah waited till the private sector had clearly shown itself inadequate, before embarking on expansion of the public sector, lends credence to his claim for pragmatism. On the other hand, the criticism may mean that the expansion of the public sector was insufficiently planned or directed, even though its impetus was pragmatic. However, in so far as expansion of the public sector was included in each of the Development Plans, and estimates supplied as to the extent of expansion, development of the public sector was at least as well planned as were other aspects of the economy. A more precise criticism would be not that the economy was undirected, but rather that it was not directed skilfully enough. What ever truth this claim may have, it is undeniable that the economy was much more directed after 1960 than it had been previously. Before 1960, plans, such as they were, had been drawn up simply with a "shopping list" technique. Since the state had no control over the means of production, as Fitch and Oppenheimer²¹ rightly point out, the question of how to generate the maximum surplus for development purposes could not even be raised. Instead, the various ministries simply suggested lists of whatever projects they thought might be both useful and economically feasible. The planners were then limited to dropping or modifying proposals in order to keep within the total budget: considering the interrelationships between projects in different sectors at the economy was not part of the planner's job.

Nkrumah's development of the public sector in the form of co-operatives and state-owned enterprises is harmonious both with Marxism-Leninism and "Nkrumaism", if this word is taken to mean Nkrumah's own theories. Nkrumah's attempts to attract

21 Fitch and Oppenheimer, 'Ghana: the end of an illusion', op.cit., p. 90.

foreign investment, however, while consistent with his theories of African socialism, were radically in opposition to Marxist theory.

That Nkrumah was very eager to attract overseas investment is demonstrated by the Capital Investment Act of 1963. The act provided foreign investors with a 'tax holiday' of up to ten years, exemptions from tariffs and other indirect taxes, and exemption from property taxes. Guarantees were also given concerning the freedom to repatriate profits and of fair compensation in the 'exceptional' circumstances of nationalization.

Ghana's acceptance of overseas economic assistance and investment was conducted without regard for political affiliation. This may be illustrated by looking at those projects that were being sponsored, during 1961, by foreign assistance of some kind. Under Russian technical direction were five agricultural projects:

two rice plantations (of 4,000 and 2,000 acres) in the Northern Region and the Volta Region respectively.

A plantation of maize (2,000 acres) in the Central Region.

Mixed arable cropping for livestock (500 acres) in the Chindri District.

Cotton-growing on an experimental basis in the Brong-Ahafo Region.

America sponsored four similar schemes. These were:

a 1,000-acre citrus-growing area spread over the central and eastern regions.

Two plantations of 1,000 acres each devoted to cashew and avocado growing, in the central and eastern regions.

1,500 acres for growing groundnuts in the central region.

1,000 acres for growing rice in the Volta Region.

East Germany sponsored a large-scale sugar beet cultivation project, and Israel sponsored four, namely:

the growth of cassava combined with the manufacture of starch and alcohol, in two areas of 2,000 acres each, in the Central and Eastern Regions.

The development of cola nuts in a 500 acre area in the central and Ashanti regions.

An irrigation scheme over 1,000 acres, in the Volta Flood Plains.

The carrying-out of resettlement in connection with the Volta River Project in the Volta, Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo regions.²²

The organization of the Volta River Project provides another illustration of the economic pragmatism inherent in African socialism as postulated by Nkrumah. This huge project was designed to harness the flow of the Volta in the form of hydro-electric power, and to smelt Ghana's large deposits of bauxite into aluminium. On completion, the electric power capacity of the dam would be more than twenty times that of the entire Ghanaian Electrical Department of 1960. The Project would also provide ancillary benefits such as irrigation, fisheries, and a means of water transport.

It was an American head of state, President Eisenhower, who arranged for the International Co-operation Administration to assist in finding ways and means of making the Project attractive".²³

The Henry J. Kaiser Company, which was chosen to undertake the Project, was American, but an extension of the Volta River Project, the construction of an hydro-electric station at Bui, was undertaken by the Soviet Union.

The sources of finance for the hydro-electric project were as follows:-

22. Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, Feb. 1961, cols. 23, 24.

23. Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, 21 Feb. 1961, col. 127.

<u>Source of finance</u>	<u>period of years</u>	<u>Amount £ G million</u>
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	25	16.8
U.S. Agency for International Development	30	9.6
U.S. Export-Import Bank	25	3.6
U.K. Export Credits Guarantee Department	25	5.0
Ghana Government		35.00
Total		70.00 ²⁴

And in 1961 it was announced that an American Company known as VALCO (the Volta Aluminium Company) was to finance the construction of an aluminium smelter, a by-product of the Volta River Project.

Just as Ghana was eager for investment and assistance from any country offering acceptable terms, regardless of its political affiliation, so too it was prepared to trade with both capitalist and socialist nations. The Minister of Finance summed up Ghana's trade policy by saying that Ghana would "always be ready to negotiate ... agreements with ... socialist or non-socialist countries".²⁵

The Minister of Finance explicitly affirmed the policy in his 1961 Progress Report on behalf of the Ministry of Trade. He stressed the importance Ghana placed on her adherence to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, both because G.A.T.T. sought to remove barriers in world trade and also because most of the important trading nations of the world, some of whom, presumably, were capitalist, were members of it. At the same time, however, mention was made of trade agreements which had been made with socialist countries such as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the U.S.S.R.,

24 Seven-Year Development Plan, quoted in Birmingham, op.cit., p. 396

25 Parlt. Debates, vol. 24, 16 May, 1961, col. 590.

Poland and Hungary.

That Ghana tried to increase her trade with socialist countries is indicated by the import and export figures available. By 1963 Ghana's import trade with Eastern Europe and China amounted to £ G14.3 million, that is, eleven percent of the total import bill.²⁶ Exports were £ G14.9 million, representing 13.7 percent. These figures can be compared with those for 1959, when Ghana exported to Eastern Europe and China goods worth only £ G2.23 million, and imported £ G3.65 million worth.²⁷

It seems clear however, from the statement by the Minister of Finance, (quoted on the previous page), that Ghana was not aiming to trade only, or even primarily, with socialist countries but rather sought to develop trade with as many countries, socialist or capitalist, as possible. Trade with socialist countries was not justified on ideological grounds, but purely in pragmatic terms. An editorial in The Ghanaian Times concerning the downward trend of the world cocoa price exemplified this pragmatism in the following terms:

.... we suggest in all humility that there is a limit to the ability of the west to absorb the quantity of cocoa being produced now ... THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE ... CONDUCIVE TO THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF BOTH PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS IS FOR PRODUCING COUNTRIES TO EXTEND THEIR MARKET IN THE SOCIALIST ONE-THIRD OF THE WORLD.²⁸

The relative strengths of Ghana's trading connections with socialist and capitalist countries are illustrated in the following table.²⁹

26 Evening News, Dec. 4, 1964.

27 statistics taken from Birmingham et al., op.cit., p. 32.

28 The Ghanaian Times, April 15, 1961.

29 statistics taken from The Annual Estimates, Govt. Printer, Accra, reprinted in W. Scott Thompson, Ghana's Foreign Policy 1957-1966. (Princeton, 1969), Appendix D.

DIRECTION OF GENERAL TRADE, 1961-1965

<u>1961</u>	Imports C'000	%	Exports C'000	%
Sterling Area	140,143	41.0	90,646	32.8
Of which United Kingdom	124,358	36.3	79,366	28.7
Of which African Countries	2,150	0.6	3,574	1.3
European Economic Community	74,362	21.7	88,075	31.9
Dollar Area	37,690	11.0	68,141	24.7
Centrally Planned Economies (U.S.S.R., China and other Countries of Eastern Europe)	18,737	5.4	13,128	4.7
African Countries excluding those in Sterling Area	23,038	6.7	4,217	1.5
Japan	26,494	7.7	3,900	1.4
Other	17,366	5.1	7,910	2.9
Parcel Post	4,963	1.4	259	0.1
Total	342,792	100.0	276,324	100.0

1962

Sterling Area	108,869	38.8	97,157	35.2
Of which United Kingdom	96,809	34.6	86,815	31.5
Of which African Countries	1,486	0.5	2,851	1.0
European Economic Community	62,611	22.3	77,213	28.0
Dollar Area	31,776	11.3	54,043	19.6
Centrally Planned Economies (U.S.S.R., China and other Countries of Eastern Europe)	20,890	7.5	24,502	8.9
African Countries excluding those in Sterling Area	17,285	6.2	6,881	2.5
Japan	18,578	6.6	5,916	2.1
Other	17,467	6.3	10,366	3.7
Parcel Post	2,712	1.0	10	0.0
Total	280,188	100.0	276,086	100.0

DIRECTION OF GENERAL TRADE, 1961-1965

<u>1963</u>	Imports C'000	%	Exports C'000	%
Sterling Area	119,870	38.8	83,342	31.9
Of which United Kingdom	102,802	32.8	73,663	28.2
Of which African Countries	6,938	2.2	1,903	0.7
European Economic Community	79,272	25.3	74,659	28.6
Dollar Area	27,425	8.8	44,107	16.9
Centrally Planned Economies (U.S.S.R., China and other Countries of Eastern Europe)	34,318	11.0	35,798	13.7
African Countries excluding those in Sterling Area	14,234	4.5	2,887	1.1
Japan	19,327	6.2	8,880	3.4
Other	15,266	4.9	11,582	4.4
Parcel Post	3,283	1.0	5	0.0
Total	312,998	100.0	261,262	100.0

<u>1964</u>				
Sterling Area	103,402	35.4	72,535	26.4
Of which United Kingdom	80,059	27.4	63,420	23.1
Of which African Countries	10,529	3.6	1,958	0.7
European Economic Community	67,109	23.0	80,897	29.4
Dollar Area	33,811	11.6	62,923	22.9
Centrally Planned Economies (U.S.S.R., China and other Countries of Eastern Europe)	46,318	15.8	32,530	11.8
African Countries excluding those in Sterling Area	16,783	5.8	3,593	1.3
Japan	15,641	5.4	9,806	3.5
Other	7,049	2.4	12,850	4.7
Parcel Post	1,752	0.6	2	0.0
Total	291,864	100.0	275,136	100.0

DIRECTION OF GENERAL TRADE, 1961-1965

<u>1965</u>	Imports C'000	%	Exports C'000	%
Sterling Area	110,810	28.9	64,768	23.8
Of which United Kingdom	99,125	25.8	56,619	20.8
Of which African Countries	5,201	1.6	2,706	1.0
European Economic Community	82,171	21.4	75,709	27.8
Dollar Area	40,510	10.5	50,529	18.6
Centrally Planned Economies (U.S.S.R., China and other Countries of Eastern Europe)	100,990	26.3	57,917	21.3
African Countries excluding those in Sterling Area	10,669	2.8	2,526	0.9
Japan	16,626	4.3	6,270	2.3
Other	20,933	5.4	14,537	5.3
Parcel Post	1,352	0.4	3	0.0
Total	384,061	100.0	272,259	100.0

Cl.00 = \$1.16 at contemporary valuation.

Nkrumah's determination to adhere to an economic policy which best suited Ghana, whether or not it conformed to various dogmas, is well illustrated by Nkrumah's attitude towards nationalization of industry. The President said, in an address to Parliament in 1961³⁰ that the Government had made an offer to the shareholders of five gold mines. The offer, if accepted, would mean that the state would own mines which, the previous year, had produced fifty-eight percent of Ghana's total output of gold.

It seems significant that the owners of the goldmines had the option of refusing. Whatever stood in the way of compulsory nationalisation - perhaps fear of alienating prospective overseas investors - it is clear that state ownership and control of industry, a veritable axiom of Marxism, was not a principle to which Nkrumah was fully committed.

On the domestic front, the foundation stones of socialism were laid by establishing several basic social services either on a heavily subsidized basis or free of charge to the community, even though this meant a heavy burden on the economy in the short run. Education was one such service. As a result of this measure, enrolment at secondary government - approved schools, for instance, leapt from ten thousand four hundred in 1958, to sixteen thousand in 1962.³¹ In 1966 there were 1,480,000 pupils at 10,388 primary and middle schools. Four hundred of these schools had been opened the previous year. By 1966, in addition, there were one hundred and one secondary schools, including eleven new ones opened in 1965,

30 Parlt. Debates, 21 Feb. 1961.

31 statistics quoted in H.L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah, p. 151.

with a total enrolment of 35,000 pupils. The forty-four teachers' training colleges existing in 1965 had increased to eighty at the beginning of 1966. They had an enrolment of 12,720 trainees. Enrolment at the University of Ghana tripled between 1962 and 1966 and a second university, the Kwame Nkrumah Institute of Technology, was also established.³²

Whether the introduction of, for the first time, "mass" education justified what has been described - admittedly, by someone³³ hostile to Nkrumah - as a "crippling lowering of educational standards" is not a particularly relevant question here.

Nor is the broader question of success or failure particularly relevant in a consideration of Nkrumah's economic policies. It is worth mentioning, however, that despite much publicity concerning Nkrumah's "disastrous failure" in the economic sphere, not all economists believe his policies to be misplaced. Schatz points out, for instance, that in any appraisal one must necessarily take into account the calamitous drop in cocoa prices. Despite this, and despite the extravagance, inefficiency and corruption,³⁴ Nkrumah's basic economic strategy was sound.³⁵

32 Geoffrey Bing, Reap the Whirlwind, (London, 1968), p. 368.

33 Afrifa, The Ghana Coup, p. 77.

34 Corruption was rife among the upper echelons of the C.P.P., see Daily Graphic, April 3, 1965 and April 19, 1965. The magnitude of the corruption was revealed by Krobo Edusei, a former C.P.P. Minister who was questioned during a commission of Inquiry about a gift of £2,000 he had received from the Timber Co-operative Union in December 1963. The Counsel for the Commission: "I am suggesting to you that the amount was a bribe". Krobo Edusei: "You can't bribe me with £2,000. It is too small" West Africa, Aug. 20, 1966, p. 944.

35 S.P. Schatz, op.cit., p. 53.

Other economists, too, consider that the failure of the Ghanaian economy was traceable more to invincible external conditions, rather than to Nkrumah's policies. They argue that

the essential need, was to maintain a fast rate of progress through a high level of capital investment. Of course that involved hardship, of course it created balance of payments deficits, but Ghana was a very poor country and the over-riding need was for economic growth. Perhaps ... the C.P.P. was trying to go a bit too fast, but that was surely better than to fail for lack of the will to do enough ..³⁶

The economic extravagances of the regime were not directly personal excesses of Nkrumah, but, rather, misplaced efforts to enhance Ghana's eminence (and thereby, no doubt, his own) in the eyes of the world. Such projects included the dazzling 10 million "Job 600", so nick named because it was the sixth hundredth project undertaken by the Department of Works. "Job 600" was the construction of a lavish twelve storey building to house African heads of state at a 1965 Organization of African Unity meeting. The project was undertaken regardless of adequate facilities already existing. Schatz describes the building as follows:

[It] contains sixty luxuriously furnished Presidential Suites. Flanking it are a handsome conference chamber seating up to 1,000 people, with two bars and countless telephones wherever one turns, and a grand banquet hall seating up to 2,000 people. Outside are 272 jet fountains which are bathed in coloured lights at night.³⁷

Ghana also spent heavily to support more than fifty well-staffed Embassies overseas, and to subsidize the Ghana Airways, which ran at a loss from the beginning. The latter's position became

36 Tony Killick, West Africa, Aug. 20, 1966, pp. 937, 8.

37 S.P. Schatz, op.cit., p. 49.

particularly acute in 1965, when it was due to repay £ 376,000 for its Britannias, and £ 298,000 for its Viscounts, as well as over £1,000,000 for the new VC-10s and £ 340,000 for the Russian Ilyushins.

Nevertheless, excesses such as the above may occur in any type of regime; their occurrence does not affect the basic nature of an economy, whether it be capitalist, socialist, or something else.

Apter³⁸ has described the "African variety" [of socialism] as preferring not to limit itself prematurely to particular economic forms. The essential pragmatism of African socialism as revealed in the economic sphere in Ghana lends credibility to Apter's description. Nkrumah's economic practice after 1960 may be seen as an attempt to realize certain socialist ideals within a non-rigid framework which allowed for a variety of methods and approaches. However, given that such glaringly non-socialist ends such as increased overseas investment were pursued by Nkrumah with just as much fervour as an enlarged public sector, one might well ask the question, how socialist was the Ghanaian economy? According to Marxist-Leninist principles it was hardly socialist at all. According to the principles of African socialism expressed in Nkrumah's own writings and speeches the Ghanaian economy was run entirely as it should be, namely, to serve first and foremost Ghana's own interests, which were perceived both in a national and a Pan-African context.

38 D.E. Apter, (ed.), Ideology and Discontent, (London, 1964), p.22.

CHAPTER SIX

Nkrumah Acts

The political-economic circumstances of Ghana which have been described enable the 1960 constitution and various Acts to be seen in perspective. A scrutiny of Nkrumah's actions will no doubt illuminate his hopes and intentions. The examination is confined within this chapter to the period from 1957 to 1963. These two dates mark the journey of the Ghanaian body politic from independence under Nkrumah's primeministership to the formal assumption of a one-party system.

The 1960 Republican Constitution expresses, much more than did the constitution of 1957, Nkrumah's own hopes and ambitions about the political future of Ghana. Nkrumah himself initiated the movement for a new constitution to replace that of 1957. As for opposition, or factors which could have caused Nkrumah to modify his proposals, there were almost none; the situation was totally different from that in which the 1957 constitution was drawn up.

On the domestic scene, the opposition Party was already in a reduced state. Although it was running formally against Nkrumah both by advocating a "No" vote to the question of a Republic and also by putting up as a candidate for the Presidency, Danquah, a long-time political opponent of Nkrumah's, it was, as has been seen, in no position whereby it could exert a modifying influence upon Nkrumah. As for the C.P.P., its constitutional dependence on Nkrumah meant that it, too, was unable to exert much influence on the Prime Minister; rather, the reverse situation applied.

The only factor -- and by no means an inconsiderable one -- which would have affected Nkrumah was his awareness of world opinion. Not only was Ghanaian prestige at stake, the more since Ghana was the first black African country to obtain independence, but during the years with which this chapter is concerned, 1957-1963, Ghana's economic involvements with various western countries made it inopportune to create antagonism due to political developments. It would engender hostility unnecessarily for Nkrumah to reveal his ambitions openly if these ambitions were other than the permissible one of leading the country within the framework of parliamentary democracy.

If this framework is borne in mind, it may be revealing to look at the Republican Constitution of 1960. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana did not have any particularly startling features. It is noteworthy that it was in no way a socialist constitution. In fact it was not until an amendment in 1964 that the words "socialist" or "socialism" were even mentioned within the constitution. The constitution in the period under discussion did not entail any condition, such as a one-party system, which may be considered specifically socialist. Under the 1960 Republican Constitution legislative power was vested in a Parliament consisting of the President and the National Assembly. The latter had a maximum life of five years and was to be elected according to the principles of popular sovereignty and one-man one-vote. The President was empowered to summon, prorogue and dissolve the Assembly, and a Bill passed by the Assembly had to receive presidential assent before it could become law. The only two features which attract particular interest, in that they gave considerable power to the President, were the following. Nkrumah, as first President,

was empowered, whenever he considered it in the national interest, to give directions by legislative instrument. Any enactment other than the constitution could thus be altered. Secondly, the Chief Justice and the Judges of the Supreme Court were appointed by the President.

The constitution was not a socialist one. Nor was it one in which Nkrumah's power, though considerable, could be described as extraordinary. An examination of the structure of the C.P.P., however, has revealed that in this area at least Nkrumah exercised much more power than is at first apparent. A look at the actual workings of Parliament, as distinct from the constitutional description of it, reveals that in this sphere, too, appearance and reality are opposed. It has become apparent that the activities of Parliament were, increasingly, only reflections of Nkrumah's will.

A widespread feeling of subservience within Parliament has already been noted. Nkrumah aimed not to eradicate this subservience but rather to rid Parliament of those Members who still clung to a vestige of independence.

One Act which very clearly illustrated Nkrumah's desire to suppress political opponents was the Avoidance of Discrimination Bill, which became law in 1957. The Bill was described as prohibiting

any organization using or engaging in tribal, regional, racial or religious propaganda to the detriment of any other community, or securing the election of persons on account of their tribal, regional or religious affiliations and for purposes connected therewith.¹

1 Ghana Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 8, 9th Dec. 1957, col. 484.

The Leader of the Opposition, Professor K.A. Busia, asserted that the Bill illustrated the Government's authoritarian, even dictatorial tendencies. He pointed out that no provision was made in the Bill for the organization concerned to be heard in its own defence. He concluded that no one could devise a more effective instrument for destroying his political opponents.²

The Minister of Local Government, Aaron Ofori Atta, in defence of the Bill, maintained³ that the Government would welcome the emergence of a Parliamentary Opposition with a national appeal. An Opposition Party which avoided fanning regional, tribal or religious animosities had nothing to fear from the Bill.

In reply, Mr J.A. Braimah, of the United Party, agreed that all the parties which would be affected by the Bill were associated with particular regions or localities. However, he pointed out that none of these parties was in any way discriminatory as to membership by reason only of race and religion. He took as an example the Member for Kumasi North (M.P. Cobina Kessie) who was a Christian and yet who was returned to Parliament on the Moslem Association Party ticket.

The following extract from the debate on the Bill gives some indication of the triumphant and determined spirit in which the C.P.P. passed the Bill.

2 Ghana Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 8, 10th Dec. 1957, Cols, 523, 524.

3 ibid, col. 531.

Mr J.A. Braimah, U.P.:

... we can see at once that the following political parties will be prohibited if this Bill is passed into Law -

The Northern People's Party.

Government members: Yes!

Mr Braimah: The National Liberation Movement

Government members: Yes!

Mr Braimah: The Moslem Association Party

Government members: Yes!

Mr Braimah: The Togoland Congress

Government members: Yes!

Mr Braimah: The Federation of Youth Organizations

Government members: Yes!

Mr Braimah: The Ga-Adangbe Shifimo kpee

Government members: Yes!⁴

A further threat to political freedom, in that it severely limited political discussion, a threat, moreover, that was not confined to members of the Opposition, was introduced in 1961 by the following amendment to the Criminal Code:

Any person who with intent to bring the President into hatred, ridicule or contempt publishes any defamatory or insulting matter whether by writing, print, word of mouth or in any other manner whatsoever concerning the President commits an offence and shall be liable to summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to both fine and imprisonment.⁵

The threat to the freedom of political discussion was clear enough: the way was now open for any criticism of Nkrumah to be interpreted or represented as an attempt to bring the President into hatred.

Further legislation of a repressive nature was introduced and became law. In November 1961, for instance, as part of the National Assembly Act, the following provision was passed.

4 Ghana Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 8, 10th Dec. 1957, cols. 530, 531.

5 Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 25, 13 October 1961, col. 24.

Where a Member has been found by the Assembly to have been guilty of conduct which, whether or not it amounts to contempt of Parliament, is so grossly improper as to indicate that he is unfit to remain a member he may be expelled by the Assembly.⁶

The Act provided for the expulsion of any parliamentarian on grounds as vague and unspecific as "improper conduct" if a simple majority of Members so decided. It may well be seen as a potential instrument of coercion against individual Members, whether within the C.P.P. or the U.P., who incurred the wrath of the majority. The presence of the National Assembly Act increased the possibility that dissent within parliament was liable to suppression, and that unity was coming to be seen as synonymous with uniformity.

In 1962 an amendment to the Preventive Detention Act was passed.⁷ The original Act of 1958 had provided for the detention of any citizen of Ghana if the Governor-General ~~Cafter~~ (after 1960, the President), was satisfied that the person was acting in a manner prejudicial to the defence of Ghana, the relations of Ghana with other countries, or the security of the State. The detainee had only the rights to be informed of the grounds of his detention and to make representation in writing to the Governor-General (later the President). This was a highly coercive measure directly aimed at the curtailing of individual freedom: by virtue of its provisions any citizen was subject to imprisonment without a trial and for an uncommitted crime (the mere presumption of intention to commit an offence was sufficient).

The 1958 Act, however, at least had an inbuilt limitation: by its own provisions it was to remain in force for

6 Parliamentary Debates, vol. 25, 23rd October, 1961, cols. 147, 148.

7 Parliamentary Debates, vol. 28, 6th June, 1962, cols. 547, 8, 9.

only five years. The amendment, however, entirely repealed this provision. Harvey⁸ notes that the 1958 Act had

limited the ground for issuance of a second detention order against a person to 'activities in which that person may have been concerned and which have been carried on at times subsequent to the date on which the first ... order was made'.

The 1962 amendment, however, read thus:

The President may, by executive instrument in the form of an order, if he is satisfied that any person who has been released after being detained under this Act has subsequently concerned himself with activities prejudicial to [the defence of Ghana, the relations of Ghana with other countries or the security of the State], in respect of each time he so concerns himself, detain such person for a period not exceeding five years.⁹

The provision that a detainee must be released before being re-detained quickly became farcical. Detainees were re-arrested as soon as they stepped outside the prison gates. Soon even this grim farce was abandoned. R.R. Amponsah, an Opposition M.P., having served five years in detention, was simply told on the last day of his detention that he was to serve another five years ...¹⁰

8 W.B. Harvey, Law and Social Change in Ghana, (New Jersey, 1966), p. 291.

9 quoted, ibid., p. 291.

10 According to Amponsah, arbitrary and petty restrictions rather than cruelty, malnourishment and ill health rather than brutality, made the lives of the detainees wretched. West Africa, Aug. 13, 1966, p. 912.

Under the 1958 Act placing someone under detention had to be justifiable, if necessary, to the President, and this provided at least some kind of check inhibiting misuse of the Detention Act for purely political, rather than security, reasons. The 1962 amendment, however, removed this check and placed the power to re-detain someone firmly in the hands of one person, the President. This narrowing of the base of power until it was contracted to the size of one man smacks more of the kind of power that socialists sought to overthrow, than the socialist ideal of eventual distribution of power as equally as possible through a socialist party.

The nature of Nkrumah's government is illuminated further by a scrutiny of several incidents which took place between 1960 and 1963, some of which resulted in legislation being passed. Nkrumah, defining the socialist nature of his government, claimed that the C.P.P. was representative of the whole Ghanaian society and was especially adamant about the unity of the workers with the government.

The workers understand that they are working for a state which is directed by a government of their own choosing, whose programmes they have helped to formulate through party membership, and which they actively endorse and support. Hence the aspirations of the people and the economic and social objectives of the government are synonymous.¹¹

The following incident, however, indicates that the C.P.P. was not as representative as Nkrumah claimed.

11 Kwame Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite, p. 126.

As part of the mid-1961 budget, a compulsory savings scheme was imposed whereby a levy of 5% was deducted from all salaried and wage incomes over £120 a year. Shortly afterwards, in September, a major strike took place among the railway and harbour workers in Sekondi-Takorandi. The strikers held out for two to three weeks but then returned to work. Nkrumah said of the strikers:

They object to the compulsory savings scheme, the monthly deduction of income tax and to the Government's taxation policy as a whole, in fact to the whole budget.¹²

In the light of the evidence concerning Parliament's lack of independence, one might well doubt whether much significance could be attached to such declarations of Nkrumah's as:

if the railway workers disagreed with the policies of their constitutionally-elected Government, they had every right to make their views known ... through their Members of Parliament .. or the TUC.¹³

Birmingham et al. claim¹⁴ that the unity of purpose between the union leaders and the C.P.P. was such that a major conflict of interests between the two groups was highly unlikely. The Sekondi-Takoradi strike, however, clearly indicated that there was felt to be a conflict of interests somewhere, if not between the union leaders and the C.P.P., then between the union leaders and the masses of unionists. Mohan, indeed, claims that during the strike "official union leaders were ignored"¹⁵ [by the strikers].

12 Kwame Nkrumah, quoted in Ghana Today, 27 Sept. 1961

13 Kwame Nkrumah, quoted in D. Austin, Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960, (London, 1964), p. 401.

14 Birmingham et al., op. cit., p. 142.

15 J. Mohan, 'Nkrumah and Nkrumaism', The Socialist Register, 1967, p. 215.

The political background to the strike was as follows. With the passage of the Industrial Relations Act in 1958, the whole of the trade union movement was formally brought under the control of the Trade Unions Congress. The Act provided for sixteen national unions, a supreme congress with elected representatives from each union and an executive board elected by the congress with a member from each union, and nine executive secretaries appointed by the executive board. John Tettegah, a loyal C.P.P. member, was appointed as the general secretary.

Drake and Lacy¹⁶ assert that the Railway Union of Sekondi-Takoradi was most reluctant from the beginning to join the T.U.C. and warned the latter not to interfere in the internal administration of its affairs. The T.U.C. had pledged loyal support to Nkrumah on the need for labour discipline, high man-hour productivity, and restraint in wage-increase demands. The Railway Union members felt that the autonomy of the unions was menaced; nor were they prepared to pledge that they would demand no wage increases.

The strike was accompanied by an attempt at secession from the T.U.C.

Whereas the T.U.C. has definitely failed to express the true feelings of the working class; thus putting the worker in an unbearable position; we hereby resolve and so solemnly resolve that the National Union of Railway and Harbour Workers do secede from the T.U.C. forthwith.¹⁷

16 St. Clair Drake and L.A. Lacy, 'Government versus the Unions. The Sekondi-Takoradi Strike, 1961', in Politics in Africa, (ed.) Gwendolen M. Carter, (New York, 1966), pp. 82-84.

17 quoted ibid., p. 84.

Nkrumah's insistence, contrary to a considerable amount of empirical evidence such as the existence of the National Assembly and Preventive Detention Acts, and the cowed atmosphere within Parliament, that every citizen of Ghana could participate in the formation of policy meant that Nkrumah could not publicly consider or acknowledge the possibility that there were, within Ghana, some people who dissented from aspects of his policy.

Nkrumah's own description of the strike reveals the need to attribute manifestations of discontent, at least in part, to external agencies.

... a dissident minority allowed itself to be used by our external enemies to foment a strike. Knowing that they could not achieve their aim by constitutional means, they employed coercion and intimidation to force unwilling workers to join in this shameful obstruction of the will of the people expressed through their own elected parliament.¹⁸

Following the 1961 strike, fifty members of the U.P. were detained, including several leading figures. They were Danquah, a long time opponent of Nkrumah and a leading figure in the U.P. after Busia's exile, Joe Appiah, S.G. Anton and Victor Owusu. In addition P.K.K. Quaidoo,¹⁹ a former C.P.P. Minister was detained.

18 Parl. Debates, vol. 29, 2 Oct., 1962, col. 2.
See also the Ghanaian Times editorial, Sept. 13, 1961:

We warn the foreign agents who think they can use this strike as a cover for their evil plot to sabotage Ghana's advance ...

19 Quaidoo was the Minister, already mentioned, who had indicated some dissatisfaction with Nkrumah's pre-eminence vis-a-vis the C.P.P.

The Sekondi-Takoradi strike was broken after three weeks, when its leaders were detained without trial. The strike is important in that it shows the existence of dissent among those workers who belonged to trade unions. The strike represented dissatisfaction with the government on two fronts. One concerned the government's economic policies as they affected the worker. The second had to do with the unrepresentative nature of government in Ghana, and is illustrated by the attempt of the National Union of Railway and Harbour Workers to secede from the T.U.C.

It can be argued with some force that Nkrumah could do little about the economic issue. Given the calamitous drop in the price of cocoa, Ghana's chief export, revenue had to be forthcoming from other sources, and increased taxes provided at least some of the much-needed finance. Nevertheless, the building of such extravagant and megalomaniac projects as 'Job 600' must have infuriated the workers as they faced the prospect of diminished net wages.

The second issue, that of political representation, was one which allowed for some flexibility. Nkrumah's handling of the strike, however, was far from flexible. Although the strikers had displayed remarkable tenacity in standing firm for almost three weeks, this factor did not cause Nkrumah to take the strike very seriously. He reacted strongly to it by imprisoning its leaders without trial, thereby breaking the strike. He did not, however, respond at all to the issue of mass representation or participation in the halls of power.

Another incident worth considering, because it reveals Nkrumah's attitude to any opposition, or even dissent, is the 1962 attempt on Nkrumah's life, and its repercussions. The attempt took place on the first of August when the President, on his way hom from Upper Volta, stopped at the small northern Ghanaian village of Kulungugu. A hand-grenade exploded as Nkrumah stepped out of his car; he was not hurt but more than one person near him was killed and several more wounded.

It would be too sweeping to assert that the assassination attempt must mean that some Ghanaians felt that there was no hope of effecting change or expressing opposition effectively through constitutional means. Resort, therefore, must be had to extra-constitutional methods. Assassination does not necessarily imply this sort of situation. It can indicate, rather, an impatience with constitutional means and an unwillingness to use them. Given, however, the very limited executive and legislative opportunities within the C.P.P. rank and file, and the limits on freedom and initiative within Parliament and without, it seems likely that the highly assassination attempt was, in fact, indicative of a desperate need to bring about change in the only way now possible.

Needless to say, Nkrumah was unlikely to represent the incident in these terms. He saw the incident as a further instance of intrigue to bring about Ghana's downfall. As far as Nkrumah was concerned, every Ghanaian had the opportunity, through the United Ghana Farmers' Council, the Trade Unions, the National Council of Ghana Women etc. to participate actively in the formation of government policy. As had been seen, however, this opportunity in practice was limited.

Nkrumah described the attempt on his life as a desperate attempt to arrest our progress and halt the fight against imperialism and its handmaidens, colonialism and neo-colonialism,²⁰

and concluded that

The lesson, therefore, is clear. We must tighten our ranks ever closer. We must work as an organic whole ... to hold our own against the onslaughts of those who desire our downfall ...

Nkrumah may have been right. The possibility cannot be dismissed that the attempt on his life and the Sekondi-Takoradi strike were inspired by neo-colonialist agents who rightly, saw Nkrumah as a threat. Indeed, the month prior to the assassination attempt a new Ghanaian opposition party had been launched in London.²¹ The People's Democratic Party of Ghana, led by two former Ghana Trades Union Congress officials, Hamah and Atitsogbui, was pledged to oust the Nkrumaist Government.

"Everybody is dissatisfied in Ghana", declared Hamah, adding that the party did not intend to organize opposition only from abroad, but would carry its activities into Ghana itself. Given the existence of at least one such organization, and the increasingly hostile criticism of Nkrumah in the British and American press the President's wish to "tighten our ranks ever closer" appears to be a reasonable reaction. It emerges, however, from the consequences of the assassination attempt, that what Nkrumah meant by "tightening ranks" was, in fact, increasing his own personal power.

20 Parlt. Debates, vol. 29, 20 Oct., 1962, col. 3.

21 The Times, July 3, 1962.

Following the assassination attempt, a trial was held of those arrested at Kulungugu. The court consisted of Sir Arku Korsah, the Chief Justice, and W.B. Van Lare and Akufo Addo, judges of the Supreme Court. Acting constitutionally, Nkrumah had appointed these men himself. In April 1963, five of the first seven to be tried were found guilty of treason and sentenced to death; the other two were imprisoned. Next to be tried were three party stalwarts, namely, Tawia Adamafio (general secretary of the C.P.P.), Ako Adjei (Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Coffie Crabbe (executive secretary to the C.P.P.). On December 9, these three men were acquitted. Ten days later Nkrumah, acting constitutionally, dismissed Sir Arku Korsah as Chief Justice. Shortly afterwards, on the twenty-third of December, the National Assembly passed the Law of Criminal Procedure (Amendment No. 2) Act, empowering the President to nullify any decisions of the Special Court. On the twenty-fifth of December Nkrumah declared the judgment null and void. The fate of Adjei, Adamafio and Coffie-Crabbe was to be the death sentence, later commuted to life imprisonment. Nkrumah's intervention in the process of justice indicates that Nkrumah was neither prepared to trust even his hand-picked judges with the exercise of power, nor to allow party stalwarts — such as Adjei, Adamafio and Coffie-Crabbe — to remain for too long in positions of authority.

The attempt on Nkrumah's life had two significant consequences. One has already been discussed. The other took the shape of a motion²² passed by the National Assembly congratulating the President on his escape. The motion ended by associating Members of the Assembly with the "popular desire" that Nkrumah should continue in

22 Parlt. Debates, vol. 28, 17 Sept., 1962, col. 384.

office as President for the remainder of his life.

Nkrumah declined.

... we have adopted a People's Democracy in which the sovereign will of the people is exercised through Parliament, a President and a Party. We are guided by a unique Republican Constitution which states quite clearly that elections for the office of President shall be held once every five years. It is essential that the people shall freely exercise their sacred right and duty of self-expression through voting; that once every five years they shall have the opportunity to renew their faith and confidence in the Party and its leader.²³

The offer, and its rejection by Nkrumah, is significant in two respects. It indicates quite clearly that the National Assembly was prepared, for whatever reason, either to act unconstitutionally, or to amend the constitution, in order to empower further the President. In other words, Parliament was, by 1962, largely concurring in Nkrumah's aggrandisement at the expense of genuine political equality. It also suggests that either Nkrumah was not interested in increasing his personal power, or that he judged that the assumption of additional political strength would not compensate for the possible disadvantages brought about by such a blatant disregard for the provisions of the constitution. By 1962 articles in The Times frequently referred to Nkrumah as "dictator", and Nkrumah was generally subject to adverse Press criticism in America too. Since Ghana's economy was still largely intertwined with those of Britain and the U.S.A., it would be most unwise to alienate further public opinion in those countries by becoming President for life.

23 Parlt. Debates, vol. 29, 2 Oct., 1962, col. 8.

Criticism of Nkrumah by the Western press reached a height in 1962 when, in July and August alone, several reports and articles appeared in The Times. They criticized, among other things, Nkrumah's action in suppressing the Ashanti Pioneer, the only newspaper which dared criticize the President²⁴ and in deporting Bishop Roseveare.²⁵ Nkrumah had revoked the residence permit of the Bishop after he criticized the Ghana Young Pioneer Movement. The Bishop had expressed regret that the Movement "in its training and development of boys and girls should entirely ignore the existence and claims of Almighty God". He added that the Movement

confuses the work and example of a great man with Divine Acts which are unique in history. This incipient atheism is quite foreign to the traditional concept of the African Personality.²⁶

The Bishop was referring to the Young Pioneers' songs and slogans among which were "Nkrumah will never die", "Nkrumah is our Messiah".

The spate of criticism concerning the Bishop's deportation reached its height just before the National Assembly offered a lifelong Presidency to Nkrumah. Perhaps the timing of the two occurrences affected Nkrumah's decision to refuse the offer.

In 1963 another sphere of activity was placed under the control of the Government, thereby limiting the possibility of free speech including criticism of Nkrumah. This sphere was that

24 a leading article in The Times, Feb. 9., 1962, on the suppression of the Ashanti Pioneer and the detention of its editor and four members of staff, was followed by further reports on censorship, freedom of the Press in Ghana, etc.

25 The Times, Aug. 14, 1962.

26 quoted ibid.

of the mass media - newspapers and the radio. The publication of a newspaper, or its circulation, became illegal without a licence, according to the 1963 Newspaper Licencing Act. Licences were issued on an annual basis, and on the failure to comply with any condition included in the licence, the latter could be revoked or suspended by the Minister of Information. Standard conditions for inclusion in the licences were not specified, but the licence form contained blank spaces for those conditions as the Minister might fix at his discretion. No newspaper editor could allow criticism of Nkrumah without running the risk of the newspaper's licence being withdrawn. There was no doubt a connection between this and the fact that of the four national newspapers published in Ghana, the Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, the Evening News and The Spark, not one carried critical comments on Nkrumah's policy or action. The Ghanaian Times, indeed, was quite candid about this state of affairs.

Our socialist society cannot, and would not, tolerate the publication of any newspaper in Ghana which departs from the ideology and loyalties demanded from the press in socialist and Nkrumaist Ghana. Under these circumstances, there cannot be any real competition or difference in fundamental views between the Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, the Evening News ..²⁷

Since after 1962, when the Ashanti Pioneer was closed down, no newspaper carried any criticism of the President, or indeed, made any remark concerning Nkrumah that was less than adulatory in tone, the Newspaper Licencing Act was in fact unnecessary as a means of suppressing the freedom of the Press. It was, however, part of Nkrumah's legalization of his growing power.

27 The Ghanaian Times, Oct., 1, 1965.

The last thing to be noted in the period 1957-1963 is Nkrumah's announcement at the end of 1963 that he would hold a referendum in January of the following year. The referendum was to seek approval of two amendments to the constitution. One would "invest the President with power in his discretion to dismiss a Judge of the High Court at any time for reasons which appear to him sufficient". The centralization of power in the hands of one man, and the dangerous vagueness of "reasons which appear to him sufficient" here need no comment. The other amendment provided that "there will be one national party in Ghana [and] that the one national party shall be the Convention People's Party".

It remains to be seen whether the latter proposal was conceived of in accordance with the socialist principles Nkrumah professed, or whether it was designed to further increase the President's power by eliminating perhaps the only remaining dissent, namely, outside the Party. Since, between 1957 and 1963 the consistent effect of Ghanaian legislation was to empower Nkrumah, it will be surprising if a sudden break occurs in this pattern of events. Nkrumah's theory of African socialism does not, at this state, appear to have any relationship, other than a negative one, to his political practice. The elimination of all avenues for dissent meant that the masses, instead of forming the basis for political action, were denied the freedom to act politically, except within very narrow limits. At this point it seems hardly credible that Nkrumah could be sincere in his theorizing, since it appears that he made no attempt to put his ideas into practice. If the pattern of Nkrumah's self-aggrandizement continues until his fall, it will be necessary to ask why Nkrumah felt compelled to present, consistently and over a long period, a theory which had nothing to do with his practice. The answer to this puzzle must also explain why, in contrast to the political situation, there is a close connection between Nkrumah's economic theory and practice.

CHAPTER SEVEN : THE PERIOD OF MONOLITHIC HEGEMONY

1964 formally ushered in the one-party state. The Ghana Gazette¹ disclosed the official results of the referendum.

Registered electorate	2,988,598
"Yes" votes	2,773,920
"No" votes	2,452
Percentage of electorate voting	92
Percentage of "yes" votes	99.9

As Harvey points out², although there was no organized opposition to the proposals, the nearly unanimous approval does not seem likely in a free election, and lends credence to widespread assertions that voter intimidation was rife. Harvey notes that each ballot was marked with the voter's serial number as recorded in the electoral register, and that in many polling places no box for "No" votes was available. While one cannot accept these assertions on hearsay, the 99.9% result is so extraordinary that it is reasonable to doubt its veracity. In Ashanti, for example, where opposition to the C.P.P. had been strongest, not a single "No" vote was reported.

Although with the introduction of the one-party state opposition parties ceased to exist at all, not all opposition to Nkrumah had been stilled. Two areas in which free speech - and hence some criticism of Nkrumah - might be expected to flourish, were the civil service and the university. Surprisingly, though, since the administration attracted Western-educated, ambitious men and women, it did not assert its autonomy in any respect until after

1 Ghana Gazette, Feb. 14, 1964, p. 109.

2 W.B. Harvey, op. cit., p. 325.

the fall of Nkrumah³. The university, however, was a different matter. And indeed, Nkrumah had been concerned for some time with what he described as the "anti-Government atmosphere" prevailing at the University of Ghana. He maintained that the University should be "loyally serving the interests of the nation and the well-being of our people"⁴. He went on to say that if

reforms do not come from within, we intend to impose them from outside, and no resort to the cry of academic freedom (for academic freedom does not mean irresponsibility) is going to restrain us from seeing that our University is a healthy University devoted to Ghanaian interests.⁵

The fact that The Ghanaian Times, which was virtually under government control following the Newspapers Licensing Act, constantly mounted attacks upon the University for its lack of active support for Nkrumah, is indicative of Nkrumah's basic perception of the University as a threat to the status quo.

Nor was Nkrumah's perception unrealistic. Indeed, it was shared by the Vice Chancellor of the University, Conor Cruise O'Brien⁶, who believed that a university or any place of intellectual activity was by its very nature an obstruction to the extension of governmental power.

... the nature of the intellectual's activity - in thinking and imagining and in saying and writing what he thinks and imagines - is inherently resistant to the pressures of power⁷.

3 Ruth First, The Barrel of a Gun : Political Power In Africa and the coup d'Etat, (London, 1970), p. 112.

4 Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom, p. 167.

5 ibid.

6 Significantly, when Conor Cruise O'Brien first became Vice-Chancellor he was an ardent supporter of Nkrumah's.

7 Conor Cruise O'Brien, 'Power and Consciousness', Power and Consciousness, (ed.) C.C. O'Brien, William D. Vanech, (London, 1969), p. 13.

Since Nkrumah had repeatedly shown himself intolerant of those who resisted the pressures of his power, one might expect legislation to be enacted that would curb certain campus activities, such as critical discussion etc. This was not the case, however. Moreover, the University still retained a certain legal autonomy. Although Nkrumah was Chancellor of the University, according to the University of Ghana Act of 1961 the "supreme governing body of the University [was to be] the University Council". Nevertheless, despite the legalities, the President in fact exercised significant control over the activities of members of the university, in so far as the latter were subject to preventive detention if Ghanaian, or deportation if they were aliens. No doubt, also, as Chancellor of the University, Nkrumah would play a significant role in such matters as promotion, scholarships etc.

Despite the absence of a specific law attempting to control or limit university activities, it is clear that Nkrumah's powers, both in his capacity as Chancellor and President, were such that a specific law was unnecessary. Bretton alleges that Nkrumah used intimidation tactics by sending "a mob ... to impress faculty and students with the power of the President"⁸. In the light of Bretton's bitter hostility towards Nkrumah, one might not be inclined to give too much weight to this allegation, were it not for the following claims made by The Ghanaian Times.

Need we remind our readers that at one stage we had to bundle out of Legon⁹ some thoroughly bad men employed as Senior Staff; need we describe again the day when the

8 H.L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah, p. 96.

9 the town where the University is situated.

Party visited Legon in strength and O'Brien and others cut a sorry figure with their false excuses before the Party Executive officers; need we refer to the day when the Party Organization was inaugurated in Legon and the audience was reminded that subversion in lectures was to be detected and exposed?¹⁰

Despite his extensive powers and influence within the University, Nkrumah's dissatisfaction with the state of affairs there did not abate, and matters came to a head in 1964. The Vice Chancellor, in his annual report to the University congregation, made several references to the diminution of academic freedom during the preceding year; he also referred to highly arbitrary interferences by the President in the affairs of the University. O'Brien listed three acts as evidence of the diminution of academic freedom. These were that the Chancellor had issued a number of directives to him which implied an interference with the freedom of the University, that the decision to transfer the Institute of Education from Legon to the University College of Science Education at Cape Coast was taken by the government without his prior approval, and thirdly, that a committee had been set up, headed by Professor William Abraham¹¹, to examine stocks and orders of books and other literature in bookshops and libraries, and to determine those that were in conflict with the ideology of the Party¹².

10 The Ghanaian Times, April 2, 1965, p. 7.

11 the same Abraham who said in London that there was no reason whatever to think that academic freedom was being threatened or reduced from any quarter in Ghana. Daily Graphic, April 6, 1965.

12 The Ghanaian Times, editorial, April 3, 1965.

Conor Cruise O'Brien's observations were followed by a statement indicating that he and the academic community were still committed to the cause of academic freedom.

... the safeguards of academic freedom here have suffered some diminution but ... the cause of academic freedom itself is not to be given up for lost.

It is my hope that the events of the past year and a quarter¹³, unhappy as they often were for the University, will lead to a better understanding of the need to respect the University's autonomy and constitutional processes, and all the essentials of academic freedom, not merely in theory but in practice.¹⁴

Following his remarks, O'Brien was immediately subjected to an intensive press campaign directed against him, largely consisting of vitriolic personal attacks upon him. Grouped with "unscrupulous lecturers" and "neo-colonialist deviationists"¹⁵, O'Brien was labelled "the spear-head of reaction" and "a victim of his own idiosyncracies".¹⁶

The Ghanaian Times maintained that

We are great believers in the necessity for a climate of tranquility in the pursuit of academic learning Conor Cruise O'Brien seeks to disturb this climate for what is no other reason than the satisfaction of an inherently rebellious nature.¹⁷

The newspaper soon made it clear how the necessary tranquil climate could be achieved. It required a responsiveness to the views of the Chancellor.

13 a period in which six foreign staff of the University of Ghana, four American, one French and one British, were deported for "indulging in subversive activities prejudicial to the security of the State".

14 letter from Conor Cruise O'Brien, The Ghanaian Times, April 1, 1965
15 The Ghanaian Times, April 2, 1965.

16 ibid.

17 ibid.

Any Vice-Chancellor who cannot be responsive to the views of the Chancellor does not create the atmosphere for genuine academic pursuit. O'Brien is not there to peddle his own ideas but to seek to relate the national goals to instruction at Legon by obeying the behest of the Chancellor without question but in co-operation and humility.¹⁸

The upshot of the furore was that O'Brien left Ghana shortly afterwards, when his contract had expired, and Professor William Abraham, a vigorous exponent of Nkrumaism and head of the academic censorship committee, became Vice-Chancellor in his stead.

A glance at the years 1964 to 1966 inevitably creates the impression of déjà vu. Another assassination attempt introduced the year 1964; it was followed by another purge. On January 2 Seth Ametewee, wearing his police constable's uniform, fired several shots at Nkrumah, missing him but killing one of his bodyguard. Following Ametewee's capture, Nkrumah detained E.R.T. Madjitey, the Commissioner of Police, and S.D. Amaning, the Assistant Commissioner, and dismissed seven other senior members of staff. In addition, Nkrumah ordered that the Special Branch of the Ghana Police be "disintegrated" and its security function transferred to the President's Security Service.¹⁹

In March 1964 the President made the first use of his new powers and dismissed three judges of the Supreme Court²⁰. In May 1964, all previous Preventive Detention legislation was consolidated

18 ibid.

19 H.L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah, p. 61.

20 W.B. Harvey, Law and Social Change in Ghana, p. 341.

in the Preventive Detention Act of 1964. As Bretton suggests²¹, this feature of Nkrumaist rule had now become part of Ghana's living constitution.

In 1965 the President created a "people's militia", separate from the army. He justified the move on the ground that such a force would be used against Prime Minister Ian Smith's white minority regime. To some in the army, however, it seemed a direct threat to their authority²². Since the repercussions from this move were not felt until the following year, 1965 must have seemed a relatively uneventful year. The seemingly endless purges and the personalization of power seemed to have come to an end, probably because there was no one else to purge and no more power to acquire. Nkrumah's attention, always absorbed by a Pan-African vision, increasingly turned to Ghana's role in international affairs.

Nkrumah himself had by this time become increasingly isolated and suspicious. He divided his time between his official headquarters, Flagstaff House, which was protected by means of triple walls, a helicopter and armed guards, and Christianbourg Castle, which boasted a high protecting wall, police guards, tanks, and even a gunboat cruising offshore²³.

1966 was marked by the Inauguration of the Volta River Project in January, and by Nkrumah's departure for Hanoi via Peking on February 21. On February 24 a military coup brought Nkrumah's regime to an end.

21 Bretton, op. cit., p. 61.

22 Major-General A.K. Ocran, A Myth Is Broken, (Essex, 1968), chapters 1 and 5.

23 The New York Times, Feb. 25, 1966.

Ghanaians heard the news a few minutes before six a.m. on Radio Ghana. Colonel Kotoka, a leading figure in the coup, announced,

Fellow citizens, I have come to inform you that the military, with the co-operation of the police, have taken over the Government. The myth surrounding Kwame Nkrumah has been broken²⁴.

Parliament and the C.P.P. were dissolved, and the President and his ministers dismissed. Major General J.A. Ankrah was named chairman of a seven-man National Liberation Council made up of police and army officers.

The coup d'état was unresisted except by the guards at Flagstaff House. Several thousand jubilant Ghanaians surged outside Usher Fort Prison after the radio announced that all political prisoners jailed by Nkrumah would be released. According to press correspondents, there was a general air of jubilation²⁵. Thousands of sheep²⁶ crackled over roasting spits in Accra as Ghanaians celebrated the coup. A life size statue of Nkrumah lay in ruins near Parliament House, hacked to pieces by a crowd of more than one thousand who chanted, "No more Kwame!" Students revelling in their new freedom roamed the street shouting anti-Nkrumah slogans.

To Nkrumah, writing in exile from Guinea, and to Geoffrey Bing, his loyal Attorney-General, the coup was a "neo-colonialist invasion", executed by Ghanaian "traitors and quislings" but

24 A.A. Afrifa, "The Genesis of the Ghana Coup", West Africa, Oct. 22, 1966, p. 1205.

25 The New York Times, Feb. 26, 1966.

26 Sheep are prescribed by traditionalists for auspicious celebrations.

masterminded by the CIA and the governments of Britain and West Germany²⁷.

Nkrumah's charges were predictable but not proven. It was true that the United States Government rushed with indecent haste to grant diplomatic recognition to the new regime²⁸. This, however, did not necessarily signify anything other than relief at the fall of America's most vociferous critic.

Worth mentioning, however, is the part played in the coup by the London-based Ghana Revolutionary Council. The chief strategist and director of the council was Khw Amihya, former chief of Ghana's intelligence service, and once described by Nkrumah as "my most dangerous enemy". Amihya, declaring that he was trained by the United States Central Intelligence Agency, claimed credit for the coup on behalf of the Ghana Revolutionary Council. His claim was neither disputed nor confirmed by the executors of the coup or the members of the N.L.C.

Speaking to the Press before jubilantly flying back to Ghana, Amihya said the Revolutionary Council had been planning the coup for months, that instructions had been smuggled into Accra by couriers and that cable messages had been sent in code through friendly white businessmen in Accra²⁹.

27 Nkrumah, Dark Days In Ghana, p. 49. See also Geoffrey Bing's Reap the Whirlwind.

28 The New York Times, February 26, 1966.

29 The New York Times, Feb. 25, 1966.

At the present, lack of evidence makes it impossible to say anything definite about Amihyia's relations with the CIA and his part, if any, in the coup. Certainly Afrifa, who was deeply involved in the military takeover, describes the coup as though it were both initiated and planned entirely within Ghana³⁰. However, whether or not the CIA was involved is irrelevant to the indisputable fact that Ghanaians welcomed the coup.

The coup marked Nkrumah's passing from the scene as Africa's most flamboyant and visionary statesman. It marked his joining that world-wide band of exiles in political Limbo, whose silence is broken only by an occasional forlorn threat, or misplaced hope. And indeed, nothing could be more forlorn than Nkrumah's incredulous reaction to the news of the coup : "I know that the Ghanaian people are always loyal to me"³¹ Nkrumah's excesses, however, had permanently alienated the loyalty of his people. But even those journalists who had witnessed the joyous reaction to Nkrumah's fall could not describe the ex-President merely in terms of his excesses. The New York Times claimed that

Nkrumah may be out of power, but "Nkrumahism" - meaning his doctrine of socialism and social revolution, his obsession with "neo-colonialism", his ambitious ideas for a unified Africa - will survive³².

That Nkrumah was a visionary statesman is undeniable. His concern with Pan-Africanism at a time when most African leaders were preoccupied with immediate socio-economic problems is impressive.

30 Afrifa, The Ghana Coup, chapter one.

31 The New York Times, Feb. 26, 1966.

32 ibid, Feb. 25, 1966.

His extension of Marxism-Leninism, and his adaptation and combination of it with traditionally African ideas and assumptions to form an explanation of African conditions, is both original and a major contribution to Third World thought.

A curious point about Nkrumah's writings, however, is that although they present and develop a consistent point of view, there is no clear-cut course of action which derives from this ideology.³³ The exception to this statement is the economic sphere, which is carefully described in some detail, and its direction carefully mapped. It was, no doubt, for this reason that the economy, though hindered by inefficiency and corruption, as well as by factors outside Nkrumah's control, was basically set upon a sound course. By contrast, the political sphere described by Nkrumah was curiously lacking in detail. Nyerere's constant passion³⁴ to explore and examine the workings of TANU³⁵ is not matched by similar concerns in Nkrumah. Of course, one might well say, with truth, that Nkrumah could hardly describe the actual workings of the C.P.P., for that would amount to describing himself as a dictator. However, even Nkrumah's very early writings and speeches while the C.P.P.'s nature was still undetermined, are

33 see Immanuel Wallerstein, "Implicit Ideology in Africa : a review of books by Kwame Nkrumah", The Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. XI, no. 4, Dec. 1967.

34 see Henry Bienen, Tanzania : party transformation and economic development, (Princeton, 1967).

35 Tanganyika African National Union.

curiously vague concerning the domestic political scene. This lack of precision may help to explain the glaring chasm between Nkrumah's theory and practice.

One view has it that the vagueness of Nkrumah's writings was deliberate, preplanned, and served to mask the Osagyefo's intentions. Amponsah, for instance, an opponent of Nkrumah and an ex-detainee, has declared that as early as 1955 he knew of Nkrumah's plans to stifle opposition after independence.³⁶ Amponsah did not reveal the basis of his belief, however, and to assume without evidence that Nkrumah intended to acquire absolute control even before the granting of independence, is to take too static a view. What is, perhaps, more likely is that the vagueness of Nkrumah's writings in the early stage reflected a genuine confusion and indecision on his part about the nature of the one-party state, the role of the President, etc. Such a huge gap in his thoughts on the workings of domestic politics meant that Nkrumah could not do other than react to each circumstance as it arose, rather than seeing it within the context of an overall, explicit perception. From 1960 onwards, however, the lack of detail about the domestic political scene may well be seen as part of Nkrumah's careful assumption of power and wealth³⁷ over the

36 R.R. Amponsah, West Africa, Aug. 13, 1966, p. 912.

37 See the Report of the Commission to enquire into the Kwame Nkrumah Properties which fully documents the extent of Nkrumah's financial corruption. The value of property alone which was dishonestly acquired by Nkrumah amounted to over £ 2 million.

greater part of a decade. A wealth of detail would soon have made it all too apparent that theory and practice stood in the relation of appearance and reality.

It would, however, be an over-simplification to think of Nkrumah's writings as deliberate misrepresentation. The greater part of most of his books was concerned with matters other than African Socialism, and on these issues - such as African Unity - there was no misrepresentation involved. Indeed, it is only one part of Nkrumah's African Socialism that can thus be described, namely, the domestic political arena. Nkrumah's economic theory, and his analysis of neo-colonialism, can be criticized, but not on the ground of deliberate misrepresentation. Indeed, where Nkrumah's books touch upon the economic sphere, they manifest his genuine concern and interest in such matters, as well as his ability to put theory into practice.

Both Nkrumah's theory and action have been studied in detail, and it would be heavy-handed to summarize again the conclusions reached in each sphere. The question still remains, however, of whether Nkrumah was an African socialist. As in so many matters one is tempted to answer yes and no. Nkrumah clearly was a socialist in his understanding both theoretical and practical of economic matters. However, there does seem to be an important respect in which Nkrumah was not a socialist, and this, of course, is in the sphere of domestic politics. Nkrumah does not appear to have understood the way in which socialism requires a certain kind of organic political growth which may be authoritarian³⁸

38 One could hardly deny that most socialist regimes have tended to be authoritarian.

but which nevertheless does not degenerate into mere personal dictatorship.³⁹ It could be argued, on the other hand, that Nkrumah understood this point perfectly well, and appreciated the distinction between authoritarianism and dictatorship, but, corrupted by his desire for power, deliberately ignored it. In the end, Nkrumah remains enigmatic. The evidence is ambiguous; Nkrumah's political writings, from the beginning, were unclear on the nature and function of political activity.

The real function of Nkrumah's political writings was to provide a mask, so as not to alienate those countries on whose economic co-operation Ghana depended,⁴⁰ and also to retain popular support at home. In the end, however, it was Nkrumah himself who was deceived as to the Ghanaian reality. Indeed, the President's physical isolation at Flagstaff House and Christianbourg Castle, coupled with a complete absence of criticism of him, meant that Nkrumah could not help but be out of touch with reality. His sense of unreality is manifested in his leaving for Peking and Hanoi, for an intended stay of some weeks, quite oblivious to his approaching nemesis. Surrounded by sycophants, it was easy for Nkrumah to believe in his own personality cult and to feel that the absolute power he had striven for was now his for ever. Far from others being deceived as to the Ghanaian reality, it was His Messianic Dedication Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah who was caught up in a myth of his own creation.

39 Stalin, of course, is the glaring exception.

40 An increasingly forlorn hope.

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