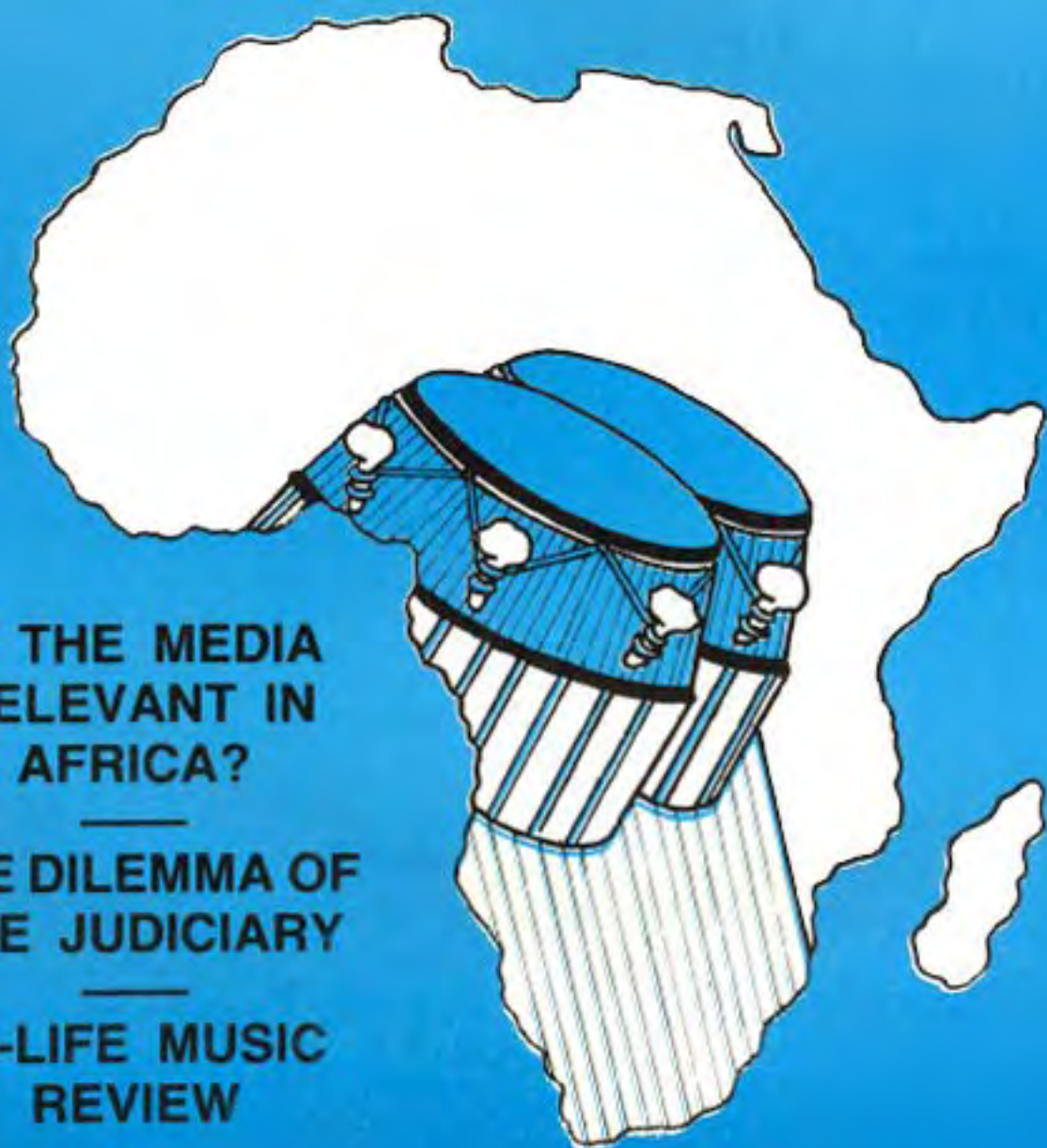


TALKING DRUMS

THE WEST AFRICAN NEWS MAGAZINE

Published Weekly

February 6th, 1984



IS THE MEDIA
RELEVANT IN
AFRICA?

—
THE DILEMMA OF
THE JUDICIARY

—
HI-LIFE MUSIC
REVIEW

"WE NEED LEADERS. WE NEED RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS SUFFICIENTLY DISSATISFIED WITH THINGS AS THEY ARE AND IMPATIENT ENOUGH TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, INTELLIGENTLY, QUIETLY, WISELY. WE NEED CRITICS TOO, FOR DISSENTING IS A SERIOUS, WORTHY AND HONEST PURSUIT."

VOL 1 NUMBER 19

FEBRUARY 6, 1984

CONTENTS

COMMENT	4
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	5
THE JUDICIAL ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH (Part 1) <i>Y.M.K. Yakpo in this two-part article discusses the role of the Judiciary in the Commonwealth in their "handling of political disputes dressed in legal context".</i>	6
GOOD AND BAD GOVERNMENTS — WHOSE DECISION? <i>It is the alienable right of the governed to decide which government is good or bad, argues Ben Mensah, in this piece where he attempts to examine factors leading to the collapse of democracy in West Africa countries.</i>	8
THE DILEMMA OF THE PRESS <i>"Might it be that the answer to the dilemma of the press in developing countries, particularly Nigeria and Ghana lies in the slogan "a public that reads — a root of democracy"?"</i>	10
WHO IS THE DE FACTO CHIEF EXECUTIVE? <i>Kehinde Onakunle, a post-graduate journalism student offers one more view on the ever changing political scene of West Africa.</i>	11
UMARI DIKKO IN A CRUSADE AGAINST MILIARY REGIMES <i>He was said to be the most powerful man in Nigeria these past four years. Now forced into exile, he talks to Talking Drums about his plans.</i>	13
DONOR NATIONS CONFERENCE ON GHANA <i>The debate on the recommendations of Donor Nations on Ghana's economic problems continues. The publication of this tape recording of the meeting gives further insight into the thinking of the Ghanaian representatives.</i>	14
WHAT THE PAPER SAY	16
AFRICAN RECORDS (HI-LIFE) REVIEW	17
TOUCH OF NOKOKO	18
SHORT STORY	19
PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS	22
SPORTS	26

COMMENT

Of anthems, flags, currencies and nationhood

ONE OF THE comic reliefs during the last electioneering campaign in Ghana in 1979 was the presidential aspirant and his campaign to bring back the pound sterling to Ghana.

The candidate who was offering himself to the Ghanaian electorate to be voted in as president for the republic based his entire claim on the proposition that the root of Ghana's problems could be traced to the day the 'pound' ceased to be legal tender in the country.

"I will bring back the pound" the gentlemen promised and in his television advertisements, he reminded Ghanaians of those days long gone when one could walk into any Post Office and place an order for anything anywhere in the world.

Many people smiled and those who were sophisticated in the ways of the world gave an indulgent chuckle and went about their ways.

The gentleman of course could have said that he intended to make the cedi (which is the currency of the country) into a convertible currency but he knew that even if that were possible by some magical manipulation, the people of Ghana would find it impossible to believe.

He knew that he could touch a very responsive cord in the people by taking their minds back to the days before independence without actually saying so.

It is an unmentionable fact that for the majority of the people in the West African region, independence from the colonial masters has meant worse living conditions than they endured when their countries were colonies. Unfortunately, this particular emperor is likely to walk along in his new clothes forever because the innocent children who might point out his nakedness have only the word of their elders to state what life was like and no brave person who knows will dare say that independence has meant disaster for our people. Such a person immediately becomes a neo-colonialist and being the worst insult that can be thrown at any true nationalist, the smear is not likely to be wiped off for generations to come and therefore everybody nods wisely still to the refrain that Africa's problems lie in imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

But then what has 'nationhood' meant to countries in the sub-region? The white governor with his funny helmet was sent packing, a new flag, a black person in Government House, a national anthem of our own, a national airline (which never runs on time and makes losses every day) a national shipping line (ditto) a national currency (most of the time not worth the paper it is printed on) and rapid promotion for those who happened to have been middle range officials before the big day. Of course it also means that Equatorial Guinea with its one million or so population had an equal vote at the United Nations and other world bodies and we all citizens felt as proud as any peacock seeing our Prime Ministers and presidents drinking champagne with other world leaders we used to hold in such awe. A

tremendous filip to our self-esteem.

Major development programmes were launched and often flopped as rapidly as they were dreamt up. We built roads, we imported cars at a rate that choked our towns — all became cities and even more important, we suddenly acquired more captains, majors, colonels, brigadiers, generals etc than we could count. No self-respecting African nation could do without a properly 'well-equipped and well trained standing army even if nobody clearly explained who our potential enemies were that we needed to be defended against.

Little decisions affecting the life of the villages which used to be taken by the inhabitants themselves had to be taken now in the capital. The structure of local government that existed — crude maybe and unsophisticated possibly but still existed and without which no democracy can ever exist, was rapidly dismantled. This centralisation of power is even more rapid when the military are in power as they have been for the greater number of years since independence, for soldiers can only survive on unchallenged authority.

As General Buhari kindly explained to a reporter recently, "in the military 'we' is mutinous" . . . and one might add trying to gather ideas from the people is treasonable — power comes from commanding officers and they are meant to be obeyed without question.

One of the saddest actions taken by the military authorities in Nigeria now is the cutting down on the number of local councils, which as said to be necessary as cost-cutting measures and have been hailed as such. Thus again the country's rural dwellers, the bulk of the nation that bear the brunt of every lunatic decision taken at the centre cannot even have any control over the state of hygiene in their villages and hamlets.

In the meantime, the hard work they do on the farms battling the elements yields even less and less profits because the 'independency currency' buys less and less.

Is it any wonder he tells his children that whatever they do they should not stay in the village with him, "go to the town, join the army, you might become president one day" and such exhortations have turned out to be worthwhile.

It is time to face the taboo subjects of African politics ourselves. It is difficult to deny the charge for example that African cannot rule themselves. A quarter of a century after we took charge of our own destinies, the unpleasant fact is that the majority of our people endure a worse fate than before independence.

Many people point to countless individuals in the sub-region who excel in their chosen professions by all acceptable standards, but how come that the existence of all this individual brilliance has not produced a workable formula?

The acceptance of military rule as the only alternative to instilling discipline in public life of many West African countries is an admission that we have not moved very far from primitive animal existence.

LETTERS



Restructuring Ghana's legal system

PLEASE allow me to comment on an article by Mr Frank Kwaw Codjoe published in the 23rd January 1984, issue of this magazine.

I certainly enjoyed reading the article, but the writer just looked at one side of the coin. One of the most memorable legal cases in recent Ghanaian history that he recalled was that of Ohene Djan versus the State. He could have compared some of the cases the PNDC tribunals have handled with those of old judicial system.

Ohene Djan committed the crime under military regime but he was brought before the law court. He was jailed 15 years. What else did he want the court to do in the circumstances?

Some months ago three prominent judges and a retired army officer were murdered and burnt. After investigations, it came to light that Capt. Kojo Tsikata, Amartey Kwei, Amedeka, Akatapere, Senya and Dzandu were responsible for the whole operation. The Attorney-General set the report aside and said that there was not enough evidence against Capt. Kojo Tsikata but it was quite clear even to a layman that Tsikata is guilty and should have been prosecuted. But as we all know he is walking around; a free man. Akatapere didn't appear before any tribunal to be tried and Amedeka was fortunate to have run for his life.

All these people are referred to as the bedrock of the revolution and therefore they cannot be eliminated. Amartey Kwei, Senya and Dzandu were held responsible for the killings. No law court will execute Senya because he was a soldier who obeyed the command of someone. If he had been ordered to kill, they should find out who gave the order.

After finding them guilty, the tribunal failed to ask them WHY the killings. They could have known the people behind the case if this question had been asked. When Arthur, Yeboa and Opoku Mensah killed Kotoka, they were brought before the law court and after finding them guilty Opoku

Mensah was jailed 6 years because he was ordered to do something against his will. Arthur and Yeboah faced the gun.

In the same way that they found no 'evidence' against Tsikata and Akatapere, Ohene Djan's case could not have come to light if he had a strong connection in the government.

In my point of view, the tribunal will be more corrupt if it is allowed to continue because it is only there to eliminate enemies of PNDC.

*Cosmos Odiawuo,
Hamburg, West Germany.*

Sympathy for Rawlings?

I DISAGREE in toto with Mr A. A. Boateng's plea *Talking Drums*, 19th/26th December 1983, that we should 'encourage and understand' Rawlings. How, in the name of Ghana, can one seriously argue like that living in Ghana? They are totally responsible for that as well as the national disaster that manifests itself in all spheres of life.

Was it not because at a given point in time, Rawlings thought the Limann Administration was not doing well that he embarked on his expedition?

By the same token, at this given point in time, the overwhelmingly unanimous verdict of Ghanaians who care about their motherland is that Rawlings, aided by the Tsikatas, the Ahwois, P. V. Obeng, Ato Austin and the rest, has destroyed Ghana.

Or let me reduce this into a simple analogy. If you think one is in a situation of peril and you unsolicitedly bulldoze your way into 'saving' that person and through (your) acts of omission and commission, you further exacerbate the situation, you will be fully held responsible for all the foreseen and unforeseen consequences emanating from your conduct.

And Rawlings had no business injecting himself into our political scene. If Limann was ineffective, it was for the remainder of the 14 million Ghanaians to tell him off through the ballot box and not Rawlings to forcibly drive him out of office.

Mr Boateng should not, for example, exhort us to be patient. Why, I may ask Mr Boateng, did Rawlings not exercise patience since Limann was only in his second year!

The best thing for Rawlings to do to avoid the fate he prescribed for Afrifa, Amedeka, Akyeampong, Akuffo, Yaw Boakye, Felli, Kotei, Utuka — and the thousands of people who have been killed since he took over in December 1981 — is to leave the scene now!

Kwadwo Affram Asiedu., New York.

Human rights in the third world

PERMIT me to draw the attention of Amnesty International and the United Nations to the deteriorating human rights, economic and political situations which have led to mass exodus of people from some developing countries into the developed countries.

A country like Ghana is at present in a very sorry state and has been like that for the past ten years or so due to a combination of mismanagement by the military and civilian regimes.

Before independence, Ghanaians did not emigrate for economic reasons but mainly to pursue academic honours. Basic necessities of life were available for all at very reasonable prices.

Now thanks to pseudo-revolutionaries who believe they hold the destiny of the country in their hands and that they are the only people who know where the country and its 14 million inhabitants should go, Ghanaians are crawling all over the world seeking economic self improvement with its attendant humiliation.

Ghana, which was once the star of Africa, has been afflicted by poverty, hunger, disease and moral deprivation. Intimidation and persecution of people with opposing views are not making things any easier.

A large number of people are currently being held in custody for one reason or the other while a horrifying number have been murdered in cold-blood.

The foregoing are some of the compelling reasons for forcing many Ghanaians into exile in countries like West Germany. But I suppose lack of deeper understanding of the issues prevailing at home, Ghanaian refugees are being subjected to very degrading circumstances abroad. These days they are picked up indiscriminately on flimsy excuses and hauled before courts here in Germany.

I am saying here without any fear of contradiction that all Ghanaians are ready to go back home as soon as there is change in government. Rawlings and his people may have the best intention in the world but as things stand now they are just messing around.

*Joe Manu,
Hamburg, West Germany.*

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The judicial role in the Commonwealth

(Part 1)

One of the major criticisms of the judiciary in the Commonwealth is their handling of political disputes dressed in legal context. E.K.M. YAKPO examines some of these legal cases against the background of coup d'etats and constitutional upheavals in Commonwealth countries.

RECENTLY there has been much discussion about Law Reform, not only in Ghana but also in much of the Commonwealth. But before any meaningful reforms can be put forward, it is important to try to find out how judges in the Commonwealth approach their work, especially during a constitutional crisis. In this article, three situations will be examined, (i) the Courts' attitude to military or unconstitutional regimes, (ii) their views on constitutional breakdowns and (iii) how they exercise the power of judicial review of legislation.

One of the major criticisms of the judiciary in the commonwealth is their handling of political disputes dressed in legal context. Some of the coup d'etats have been brought to court. The judges were then faced with various alternatives:- (i) remain in office, asserting the pre-revolutionary constitution, thus deriving their jurisdiction from that constitution, thereby denying validity to any of the revolutionary actions,

(ii) to resign

(iii) to remain in office but apply the doctrine of state necessity, validating revolutionary actions which are aimed at the maintenance of law and order.

(iv) to remain in office and recognise the new 'government' as a *de facto* though not as a *de jure* regime.

(v) or to identify themselves with the new regime and sit as courts of the revolutions.

These choices were faced by courts in Pakistan, Cyprus, Uganda and UDI Rhodesia. In Pakistan in 1954 and in Cyprus in 1964, the courts chose to remain in office and with great ingenuity, discovered the doctrine of 'state necessity' which enabled them to apply the law consistently with the political reality. Rhodesia's judges also initially took this course after UDI was declared.

In all cases, the courts were called upon to determine whether clearly

unconstitutional acts, carried out by unconstitutional 'governments' had any legal validity. The doctrine of necessity was applied in the series of cases which went to court in Pakistan in 1955. In these so-called reference cases, the supreme court of Pakistan held that the Governor-General of Pakistan was right to dissolve the Legislative Assembly and unconstitutionally assume political power. All acts done by him therefore, were valid, for, the 'law of necessity' prompted him to act. However, it was in the *Mustapha Ibrahim Case, 1964*, that the Supreme Court of Cyprus clearly elaborated the doctrine. In that case, the Cyprian parliament created the new supreme court of Cyprus while the Turkish members had boycotted it.

This was in contravention of the constitution which clearly stipulated that the concurrence of the minority Turkish members was mandatory in all important matters of state.

The appeal before the court in the Ibrahim Case was challenged on the grounds that the court was unconstitutionally created therefore lacking jurisdiction. The Attorney-General pleaded the defence of 'state necessity' and the court accepted it.

In his judgement, Josephides J, outlined the conditions under which the defence would be accepted. Quoting a passage from Raymond Odent, he said that the defence would be accepted where: (i) an imperative and inevitable necessity of exceptional circumstances existed. (ii) No other remedy would apply (iii) The measure taken must be proportionate to the necessity and (iv) It must be of a temporary character limited to the duration of the exceptional circumstances.

It is difficult to see how the creation of a supreme court can be said to be such an 'inevitable necessity' of a 'temporary character' that the constitution had to be violated.

court, in its anxiety to please did just that. The Ibrahim case was followed recently in the *Begum Bhutto Case* and also in UDI Rhodesia in *Madzinbamuto v Larcher-Burkee*.

The doctrine of state necessity itself is an old one. It was discussed by Bracton who said "that which otherwise is not lawful, necessity makes lawful" and "the safety of the state is the supreme law." Dicey also deals with the subject and concludes that "for the sake of legality itself the rules of law must be broken." Chilty thought highly of it and so did Maitland:- "The only ground on which all that was illegal can be held to be legal was . . . the necessity of the situation."

But what these learned jurists had in mind was a constitutionally legitimate government having to do unconstitutional acts once a while in the interest of public good and the protection of the state. Unconstitutional usurpation of power remained treason in their eyes. Nor did these gentlemen have cases of constitutional breakdown, as in the Ibrahim case, in mind. Judges who applied the doctrine in these situations, were clearly misusing it.

The fourth alternative, that of remaining in office and recognising the new regime *de facto*, was the choice of the Rhodesian courts. The Chief Justice Sir Hugh Beadle claimed, the court derived its authority neither from the constitution of 1961 nor from that of 1965. He saw the courts authority arising from the *de facto* situation that the regime was allowing the court to operate. He was therefore willing to permit the 'government' to do anything its predecessor could lawfully have done. Clearly, the court here was disguising a political decision in legal terminology. The credibility of such a court sinks very quickly.

The last alternative, of identifying themselves with the new regime, but

explicitly but judges in Pakistan, Uganda and UDI Rhodesia virtually did so by hiding their political preferences behind Kelsen's 'Pure Theory of Law'. According to Kelsen, the validity of any legal act is authorised by a higher norm. So that when a judge sends a convicted criminal to prison, he derives his authority from an Act of parliament which prescribes the higher norm that anyone who steals ought to be punished.

Parliament itself derives its authority from the instrument which established it. So the hierarchy continues until one arrives at the original constitution which started the chain reaction. This he calls the 'Arundnorm' or the Basic Norm. Should there be a violent and far-reaching revolution which utterly changes the personality of the state (such as the Russian Revolution, or the Maoist and Cuban Revolutions), then a new Arundnorm is established and continuity with the past is severed, and a new role begins.

Here was a convenient ploy judges could use to justify their political biases for new regimes. The most famous of the 'Kelsen Cases' (as I shall call them) was the *Dosso Case 1958 in Pakistan*. The supreme court validated the abrogation of the 1956

constitution, the dismissal of the central and provincial governments and the national and provincial legislatures and the introduction of martial law, because this was a 'revolution'. Strange as it may sound, the decision was followed by the supreme court of Uganda in the *Matovu Case 1966*, and by the Rhodesian court in the *Madrimbamuto Case 1968*. In Ghana the attempt was made by the Attorney-General in the *Sallah Case 1970*, to introduce Kelsen into the courts. It was rejected happily, Apaloo F K, (now Chief Justice) was emphatic of his dismissal of the theory.

Anyone faintly acquainted with jurisprudence would be surprised that a court could even think of applying Kelsen's theory. He himself plainly indicated in his book that his theory was meant solely for the legal theorist and not for the judge, since what the judge does is motivated by political ideology therefore not open to analysis. Kelsen himself had been a judge of the Austrian Supreme Court, and ought to know. After the *Dosso Case* he wrote a bitter attack of the case in the *Stanford Law Review* (17) 1965. Perhaps because of it, the Pakistani Supreme Court overturned the *Dosso Case* and in the *Asura Jilani Case 1972*, finally laid the Kelsian adventure to rest.

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Good and bad governments — whose decision?

It is the inalienable right of the governed to decide which government is good and bad and therefore decide to choose between the two. But since this right is constantly usurped by the military it cannot be said that good governments provide the key to democracy in West Africa.

by Ben Mensah

DEMOCRACY based on multi-party politics cannot be afforded by Nigerians. Indeed, it cannot be afforded in any of the West African countries that are under either military rule or one party system.

It has not worked among the Arabs in North Africa or the Swahili speakers in East Africa, so how can it succeed with West Africans?

Even the military rulers who in the past realised the need to hand over power to democratically elected civilian administrations following sustained pressure from the people and also from their own recognition of their inadequacies in the art of government have now concluded that western styled democracy cannot work in West Africa.

One of such rulers is General Olusegun Obasanjo who handed over power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari in 1979. His reaction to General Buhari's coup which toppled Alhaji Shagari's government is "civilian rule was something I felt would be permanent and a lasting feature of our political interaction in this country; something I thought would be made to work because you can imagine that if you have given time and effort to something and that thing had to be shattered, you feel a sense of loss.

"I have come to the conclusion, painfully though that democracy as it is understood by the west is not what we can toy with now, it is something we cannot afford."

Why hasn't democracy succeeded in West Africa? Posing this question however, does not presuppose that the other systems — military and one party — have worked well. One party rule by Dr Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, Modibo Keita in Mali, Maurice Yameogo in Upper Volta were pronounced a failure by the military in

coups d'etat which brought them to power. That Presidents Houphouet Boigny and Sekou Toure sustained theirs in the Ivory Coast and Guinea respectively must be due to other factors such as the presence of French troops in the Ivory Coast and President Toure's ruthlessness in dealing with opponents real or imaginary.

That leaves us with military rule which is the order of the day in West Africa. And here too the records are full of counter-coups, palace coups and restoration of civilian rule as a result of public disenchantment, disappointment and disgust with the military leaders.

ASPIRATIONS

And so the question re-emerges, why has capitalist or socialist parliamentary democracy failed in West Africa when it has succeeded in other places?

To some people including former Head of State of Nigeria, General Obasanjo, the blunt answer is that West Africans cannot afford democracy.

Others simply dismiss it as a foreign ideology not suited to the African culture, tradition and beliefs. This group argues for the evolution of an indigenous system of government that will meet the aspirations of the African.

Regrettably the modalities of such a system have not yet been completed by African political scientists to enable the politicians to adopt it.

Yet another answer proffered is that democracy has failed because the civilian politicians have never produced good governments which alone can prevent military take-overs. In other words, parliamentary democracy can flourish in West Africa only if there are good civilian governments.

What then are the hallmarks of a good government? In return for the handing over of power in 1979 the Nigerian civilian politicians pledged not to probe the predecessor military rulers. Yet a public exposure of the activities of the military rulers which were usually transacted in secrecy without explanations and beyond the reach of a controlled press, was necessary to enable all Nigerians to pass a verdict on their military government. Certainly, there were widespread rumours of scandals and thereby provided General Buhari and his colleagues the needed moral leverage to seize political power again.

In Ghana the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council of Flt-Lt Jerry Rawlings, which ruled the country from June 4th to September 19th, 1979, similarly entrenched in the Third Republican Constitution that under no circumstances should their 'gains' be 'negated' by the succeeding civilian administration.

Later in 1981 when Flt-Lt Rawlings had the courage to overthrow the civilian government of President Hilla Limann to whom he had handed over power, it was not only stated that certain AFRC decisions had been reversed but three High Court Judges had been murdered for daring to review cases brought before them by AFRC convicts.

On December 31st, 1981, when Flt-Lt Rawlings seized power for the second time, he promised a holy war to eradicate corruption in the society. He complained about the high cost of living, excess liquidity and lack of basic freedoms for Ghanaians. In pursuance of these objectives he set up a people's tribunal to by-pass the normal court procedure to administer revolutionary justice to corrupt officials.

He withdrew from circulation film cedi notes with the loss of the message...

conversant with the banking system, kept substantial part of their monies at home. Bank accounts of more than fifty thousand cedis were frozen. Dr Limann's government was condemned for selling the interest of the poor Ghanaian worker to the World Bank which was alleged to have advised Dr Limann to devalue the currency.

In effect Flt-Lt Rawlings had decided that Dr Limann's government was inadequate. And that being so democracy had failed the people of Ghana and should therefore be ended.

VERDICT

Two years of Rawlings rule and the score sheet reads more mismanagement in 1983 than 1981. The cost of living is not only higher, but that scarcity of foodstuffs and goods has become more widespread. The minimum wage has gone up from twelve cedis to twenty four, possibly 300 soon, and the highest currency denomination is not fifty, as was the case in 1981, but two hundred and fifty. Dr Limann never devalued but Flt-Lt Rawlings has devalued the cedi in levels described as the steepest devaluation ever.

Even water and hydro-electric power, which were sufficiently available to Ghanaians before he took power on December 31st, 1981, are

being rationed, with some cities being threatened with 'sentences of total darkness' for exceeding their consumption of power.

Do all these make Flt-Lt Rawlings' government worse than Dr Limann's which he overthrew? The people of Ghana never had the chance to give their verdict on Dr Limann's government, and have not had it yet to do so to Rawlings. They may never do that while Rawlings is around. But the question Ghanaians in their desperate plight of today must be allowed to answer freely is: is Rawlings' government better than Dr Limann's?

Rawlings represents the military which have ruled Ghana for thirteen out of the twenty-six years of independence. Dr Limann represents the parliamentary democracy which was practised from 1957-1960, 1969-1972 and 1979-1981. On two of these occasions it was the military who decided that democracy had failed Ghanaians and therefore staged coups.

But who decides which government is good and which one is bad? Obviously this is the inalienable right of the governed. And since that right is constantly being usurped by the military, it cannot be said that good governments provide the key to democracy in West Africa. In my view, for as long as the military are more powerful than the civilians and for as long as the

military is infested with over-ambitious, sometimes power-drunk elements, democracy has no future in West Africa. For might has been proved to be right in this coup-prone region.

MEETING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

A delegation of the UNITED FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF GHANA (U.S.A.), the New York-based Ghanaian Organisation that advocates the restoration of democracy in Ghana, has held a meeting with the New York Office of the Centre for Human Rights at the United Nations.

The delegation, made up of Michael O. Sackey, Chairman, Kwadwo Afram Asiedu, General Secretary and K. Amo-Agyepong, of the Public Relations Directorate, was invited to the U.N. pursuant to an earlier letter the group had addressed to the Secretary General of the U.N., Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar. In the Secretary General's letter, the UNITED FRONT complained about human rights violations by the government of Flt-Lt Jerry Rawlings.

At the meeting, the delegation was afforded an opportunity to substantiate the charges of human rights violations and furnished the Centre with supporting documents.

At the conclusion of the close-door meeting, a spokesman of the delegation thanked the Centre and expressed the hope that their complaint would be acted upon.

The UNITED FRONT is a member organisation of the GHANA CONGRESS OF U.S.A. AND CANADA, an umbrella group of several organisations in the U.S. and Canada that are opposed to the military junta in Ghana.

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Coping with the dilemma of the press

Might it be that the answer to the dilemma of the press in developing countries, particularly Nigeria and Ghana, lies in the slogan inscribed on some recent United States postage stamps: 'A public that reads, a root of democracy'?

by Elizabeth Ohene

It is generally agreed that a free, vigorous and critical press is important for a proper conduct of an open and democratic government. Accountability in government, it is reasoned, is well nigh impossible without the existence of a free and unbiased press.

In Ghana, feelings on the subject ran so deeply especially during the 1970s — the Acheampong years that part of the resolutions of the 'never-again' character during the struggle against Acheampong was that never again will one section of the society be unable to get its point of view across because the government of the day had total control over the media.

That was the explanation for the inclusion of the most radical clauses in the 1979 Ghana constitution which made it obligatory on an Editor of any state owned newspaper, or broadcasting station to accord the right of reply to any aggrieved person on any subject published in a medium under his/her control.

INDEPENDENCE

This was as revolutionary as its implications were far reaching. Journalists the world over have resisted such moves every time an attempt has been made in that direction.

It has been argued that such a rule constitutes the biggest infringement on the independence of journalists and they have and are still fighting famous battles to resist any encroachment on that 'independence'. "Where will it ever end, if the right to decide what goes into a newspaper is taken from the editor? We might all just as well pack up and go home if editorial content is going to be determined by some law supposedly aimed at giving the right of reply to readers or listeners",

generations of outraged journalists have argued.

So how come Ghanaian journalists did not utter a whimper of protest or express any unease at the real prospect of surrendering their editorial independence?

HINDSIGHT

It occurs to this writer with 20/20 vision hindsight that two main reasons can be found for the calm acceptance of the constitutional provision: Knowing themselves to have been guilty of denying any access to the media of any dissenting voices to whatever government was in power and their credibility with the public at a low ebb, they were well aware that they would not have had many sympathetic ears if they had started arguing in favour of 'editorial independence'. In other words that right appeared to have been forfeited because of a track record of never having allowed alternative voices to be heard. They had no choice therefore but to grin and bear it.

The other reason could well have been that the journalists knew very well that a vital right was being taken from them which they were powerless or it was imprudent to prevent and yet chose not to be unduly worried because they knew their countrymen and could take a calculated risk that such a devastating weapon in their hands would be left largely unused . . . and so indeed it turned out to be the case in the event.

Some cynics say that the journalists themselves were unaware of the serious nature of this provision in the constitution and that is why nothing was heard from them and they expended a lot of energy rather wanting indemnity clauses for themselves in the constitution.

So there was a situation whereby the population, to a large extent, could have determined what they read in the newspapers, heard on the radio or watched on television, and yet not even the official opposition parties ever demanded 'equal time' or 'equal space' from any editor, let alone identifiable pressure groups; not the lone irate reader.

It could be said of course, that the reason the editors got away with it, is that they were doing such a splendid job and ensuring that all shades of opinion were being given a hearing, that everybody was satisfied and the provision never needed to be invoked!

And yet consider the number of Ghanaians who still felt and said that the state-owned media represented the voice of the government of the day, and consider further that as soon as there was a change of government, loyalty oaths were quickly administered and those found wanting were purged.

Is the lesson possibly that constitutional provisions do not guarantee rights?

Then of course there is the current philosophy in Ghana, originally defined by Flight-Lieutenant Rawlings, screamed from the roof tops in hysterical decibels by his first Secretary for Information, Ato Austin and now expanded greatly into a crusade by the current information Secretary, Miss Joyce Agye about what she imagines the role of the journalist and the state owned press should be — firmly as part of the government or, to use the words, as "part of the process initiated on 31st December 1981."

POSITION

Whatever that might mean and in spite of the fact that she is unable or unwilling to see or draw a distinction between the government and the state of Ghana, the fact still remains that if the citizen did not have from the press the benefits guaranteed him under the constitution while it still held sway, the citizen's position is even worse today because that right does not even exist any longer for the yet-to-be-born brave one who might want to demand some space to disagree with the government. The Nigerian situation was some-

the Nigerian press appeared to have a more respectable one. There were no such constitutional provisions and the existence of so many different newspapers and broadcasting stations seemed to guarantee that as many divers opinions as possible can be heard. Rather than ask for a right of reply or demand a correction, an apology or the presentation of an alternative, people simply founded new radio stations or newspapers.

A rather expensive way of putting differing views across admittedly, but it appeared to be working even if it reached absurd proportions. Thus to get a fair view of any news item one often needed to buy as many as six different morning newspapers and then make up one's own mind about what really happened.

ENCOUNTER

Every newspaper had its own sectional allegiances, be they party or state government or individual and group business interests and indeed, defined its own truths. The famed vigorous and fighting press of Nigeria was thus very much a much fragmented and sectional creature which could only be defined by fabled story of the three blind men's encounter with and description of an elephant — depending on which side of the creature you touched, it was either a snake, or a big tree or a rubber sponge.

The average Nigerian citizen who did not care to identify himself with any of the sectional interests represented by the press could very well have been thoroughly mystified by what was happening around him. The good work that was undoubtedly being done by the press thus yielded no results, and the reasons for such a disaster are not too difficult to decipher.

Mr Average Nigerian takes a pro-United Party of Nigeria (UPN) newspaper and there is a banner headline about corruption in the rice allocation by the Government Task Force. He skims through the story, skeptical, his mind goes back to yesterday's non-story of virulent abuse of all things ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) government and he decides that this corruption story is most likely as not also in the same category.

This sectional character of the Press undermined the credibility of the Press in Nigeria more than anything else and laid at the heart of the inability of the Press in influencing serious matters in the country.

If that was indeed the situation then it was obvious that the ruling NPN government exploited the situation most shamefully to full advantage.

Under normal circumstances, the existence of the type of lively press that there was in Nigeria should have ensured accountability in the nation's public life. The oft-extolled exploits of Woodward and Bernstein of Watergate fame would have been enough only for the cocktail small talk circuit. Somehow or the other 'watergate — proportion' disclosures were routinely and regularly made in the Nigerian press without the slightest ripple being made in the political scene.

Alhaji Shehu Shagari and his ministers seemed totally untouched and unimpressed by whatever was said in the Press. Some of them were said to have been of the opinion that the NPN drew the bulk of its support from the part of the population that took no interest in newspapers, they could afford to ignore whatever was said in the press. The newspapers, it was argued, were written, patronised and read by a minority group and they have no effect whatsoever on the votes or support and the politicians therefore

felt able to adopt a cavalier attitude to whatever was written in the press.

With the press pandering to sectional interests and the politicians selecting to treat it with contempt, it is not surprising that the role of the press was subverted totally during Nigeria's second attempt at constitutional rule.

It is very tempting, of course, to conclude from these dismal performances that the constitutional guarantee of equal access to the media, as was in the case of Ghana, or the existence of a vigorous and critical press as was the case in Nigeria all make no difference to the working of democratic system in a developing country.

The truth, of course, being that however bad the performance of the press is when it is free and unfettered, at the end of the day, that is the last line of defence for the individual.

Might it be that the answer to the dilemma lies in the slogan inscribed on some recent United States postage stamps: "A public that reads, a root of Democracy."

Who is the de facto chief executive?

The major, pertinent issue in the academic community all over the world now is the often and prompt usurpation of democratic process in developing countries in Africa . . . but who tells the soldiers that it is only they who can save their countries from economic bankruptcy?

by Kehinde Onakunle

There is no iota of doubt about the popularity and overwhelming support Nigerians are giving the new military administration in Nigeria. That could be expected anyway.

The issue at stake is not that Nigerians abhor democracy but lack of able, dynamic and purposeful leadership, both at state and national levels.

The any-body-but-the-politicians attitude of many people in Nigeria was borne out of severe deprivations, apathy and the ravenousness of the so-called civilian leaders. They all came pleading and yearning in 1979 that the

then Khaki administration return the country to civilian regime. Their wish as well as that of 100 million Nigerians were granted. But immediately Obasanjo and his cohorts went back to the barrack where they should normally belong, the politicians started their plunder, and looted the nation's treasury bare.

Where are patriots of the mien, endowment and vision of Kwame Nkrumah, Steve Biko, Murtala Muhammed, Maitama Ghandi, Meir etc? These are certainly gods created by God Almighty in his own image. Their likes come once in one's life time.

Can it be true that Africans, and

only Africans cannot manage their own affairs successfully? It has been argued severally that democracy is a white mans idea. But what prevents the African — a man or a woman from formulating a systematic workable government — machinery based on African tradition; something like, civilian — military — police assemblage for the governance of the masses?

Now after wasting away a chink of tax payers hard earned money on an unworkable, clumsy and extravagant white elephant presidential system, Nigeria is back to zero one. During the civilian interregnum, hundreds of lives, properties and money were lost. The politicians have by now, I suppose, realised their folly in killing each other and burning one another's belongings for irrational, worldly things. However, the issues of the raider-politicians would be left for posterity to judge.

BANKRUPTCY

The major, pertinent issue in the academic community all over the world now is the often and prompt usurpation of democratic process in African developing nations with the usual excuse 'to clean the country of corruption and save it from economic bankruptcy'. That is a good and lofty objective, isn't it? But who tells the Khaki boys that it is only they that can save the nation? Are they not performing the exact opposite of their *raison d'être*?

When is Africa coming out of the wood? Nigeria the only hope of democracy in black Africa has again been forced into Khaki administration, where a whiz khaki boy can shoot his mouth loud and the noise becomes decrees — laws. No question. No debates. And no argument. Decree is Decree.

Economy of any nation, is such a delicacy that only seasoned economic wizards can adequately contain its low and ebbs. Its high and low, rise and fall. And no nation can claim monopoly of disaster-free economy. The recent recession affected both the highly industrialised nations as well as developing ones. Nigeria is no exception.

Nobody condones the nefarious activities of Nigerian politicians. And no one is holding brief for them or trying to absolve them. They are all raiders of the second Republic of Nigeria. And they have succeeded, to a large extent in wrecking it. Now Umaru Dikko is on the run. Screaming through all nations of the earth. He has not got a resting place again. He has murdered sleep.

The most important question now is, who is the *de facto* and *de jure* Chief Executive in a presidential system of government? **THE PRESIDENT OR THE ARMY GENERALS?**

Discussion of the rights and wrongs of the military coup of 31st December in Nigeria would certainly go on and on for a very long time. Even after these khaki boys are fed-up with administration of the country and civilian life is restored, would the new president be confident or should he be wary of his Army Generals who can check him out anytime and with flimsy excuse.

No wonder, the Alafin of Oyo, in the old Oyo Empire, decried his *Are Ona Kakanfo*, his Army General and soldiers from living within the city with civilians. The *Are Ona Kakanfo* and the entire army reside outside the fortress. That is where, of course, they belong. To ward away external aggression. Any internal disturbances can always be contained by the police. Perhaps its high time African nations adopted such a system.

Democracy does not come to any nation on a platter of gold. It only comes out of a sweat. And it should be guarded jealously.

The whole world is watching General Buhari with keen eyes. Economy of Nigeria is delicate to handle. Too hot to handle. The slightest blunder can plunge 100 million inhabitants into untold abject poverty.

The International Monetary Fund and the issue of the OPEC — raising of Nigeria's export quota — should be treated with care and urgency. The destiny of millions of people now rest squarely in General Mohammed Buhari's hand. While wishing him huge success, I'll also remind him that he holds the key to happiness and sadness of the generality of Nigerians, home or abroad. His policies/decrees certainly affect the destiny of millions of people.

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Umaru Dikko in crusade against military regimes

He was said to be the most powerful man in Nigeria these past four years. Now forced into exile by the December 31st, 1983 coup, an unrepentant UMARU DIKKO tells ELIZABETH OHENE of his battle plans in his war against military take-overs in Africa.

UMARU DIKKO in flesh and blood is not at all like his reputation makes him out to be.

He has no horns and certainly did not have the trappings of the sterling billionaire that the London Sunday Observer claims he is believed to be.

Not that I had met a billionaire before but in my imagination, they come in two groups, the eccentric recluses and the diamond and solid gold ostentatious ones. Umaru Dikko was none of these and he was soft spoken even if one could detect the steel in his voice.

It was obvious however that he had not recovered from the shock of the military take-over in Nigeria and the overthrow of Alhaji Shehu Shagari's government in which he served as Communications and Aviation Minister.

Will he accept that he has failed the people of Nigeria who would say that they had entrusted the destiny of their country in his and his colleagues' hands and they had allowed the military to take over by not having paid proper attention to the security of the State?

Yes he will, except of course that it ought to be recognised that 'there is no armour against treachery' and when people who have been placed in positions of trust and were being paid to defend the very constitution they had sworn on oath to defend, turn traitors, then you are helpless.

He was quite contemptuous of the soldiers currently in power. They are not only traitors, they are cowards as well. If they are such brave people and were so sure of the correctness of their cause, why did they move in the night?

"I would have been impressed if they had moved their tanks in the daylight, after all when we politicians were campaigning the people for a country to rule, we were not..."

It has been suggested in the Nigerian Press that considering his earlier posturings, many people would have expected him to try and at least mount a counter attack to the coup, and Alhaji Dikko was quite categorical that if there had been an alternative way of broadcasting to the people of Nigeria apart from the Broadcasting Houses that had been seized by the soldiers, he surely would have obliged those seeking to sneer at him today.

But far from having been cowed, Alhaji Dikko announced the declaration of a crusade/jihad against not just the military regime in Nigeria but all other military regimes in Africa.

"This is going to be a mass organisation in Africa and anybody who believes in the inalienable right of the people to choose a government of their choice without fear of intimidation from the military will be part of this movement."

The combatants in this crusade/Jihad will be civilians versus the military, and the fight will not end until African soldiers learn their proper role in our societies.

I suggested to him that it could be said that this was a newly discovered abhorrence of military regimes only because this time, it affected him personally. While serving in the Cabinet of President Shagari, the elected President of Liberia and then Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity was overthrown and brutally murdered with many of his ministers. The elected government of ex-President Hill Limann of Ghana was also overthrown by the military. Nigeria's attitude then appeared to be very much like the attitude of the western nations that he was condemning today — initial coolness followed by business as usual.

That stung him as unfair and one was led into the inner workings of the...

now is convinced that Nigeria did nothing at the time to demonstrate its abhorrence of the action because the soldiers who have staged the coup in Nigeria now, had their own plans and thus dissuaded President Shagari from any such actions.

The second stage of the liberation struggle in Africa, he said has now begun. We will show that we will not be ruled by guns.

Until that struggle is ended successfully no value can be put on any African political leader.

Alhaji Shehu Shagari is being toasted in the White House today, a guest of the Queen in Buckingham Palace the next day, being adulated by his own people and then one night tanks move into Lagos and the whole world is being told, he is nothing but a villain. The rest of the world must be wondering how long it will take for General Buhari also to become a villain.

As for the charges of corruption, Alhaji Dikko proclaimed himself ready to face any substantiated charge that is made against him in a proper court of law and feels quite justified in having made good his escape from Nigeria — the actions of the military since then have convinced him that he was right to have left Nigeria when he did.

"What does the junta mean by declaring me a wanted person, I have left Nigeria, I have made a statement saying where I am, and yet they claim I am wanted, it isn't as though I had disappeared into thin air, since they have nothing to substantiate the wild charges with, they have to resort to these gimmicks."

Unfortunate though the tragic events of 31st December 1983 are, Alhaji Dikko is convinced that something positive will come of it.

Up until now, we have always paid lip service to democracy in Africa without any real commitment. Now we will at last have to fight for our beliefs and in this war, the battle lines will be quite clearly defined. It was stupid to think of the military handing over power, they love power.

"People should not forget that the constitution of the second Republic stated quite clearly that anybody who takes up arms and overthrows the elected government of Nigeria is guilty of treason, no matter how long after the

Donor nation's conference on Ghana (Part 1)

Talking Drums has got tape recordings of the recent donor nations meeting on Ghana held in Paris on November 23rd-24th last year. As can be expected and is usual in these matters, the releases issued at the end of the meeting did not reveal much of what actually took place. Of particular interest are the answers given by members of the Ghana delegation to questions posed by the donor nations. Apart from their curiosity value, these answers shed a lot of light on the inner thinking and future plans of the self-proclaimed people's government of the Provisional National Defence Council. Below we publish some excerpts from the answers given by Kwesi Botchway, the Finance and Economic Planning Secretary and leader of Ghana's delegation.

"I WILL take a few of the questions and concerns that have been expressed and Dr Abbey will deal with others and I do hope that on one at least, World Bank staff will assist.

Let me take the easier one first, Mr Chairman.

I believe that the representatives of the donor countries that are in Accra, will admit that over the past year we have been in fairly regular consultations with them, we have tried not to cover up or hide anything, we have been extremely frank in our discussions of our problems with them and we like to maintain this tradition, because we believe that it is in our mutual interest to do so.

On the question of the general political climate in the country and the question of human rights in relation to the technical assistance problems which have been raised we are grateful that the matter has been raised and that some suggestion has been made. We will certainly take this into account. We have already, I am glad to say, made substantial progress on that front and in the sense that we have already set up a machinery to review the cases of all those Ghanaian nationals outside who wish to return to assist in the development of their own country, but for some reason are unwilling to do so now.

That a committee has been set up in the highest level to review these and in

fact some of these nationals have already started coming to the country to have their cases reviewed.

In fact, as at now there are hardly any persons detained that you would call political detainees as such.

I must say for the benefit of those who don't know the whole background to the problem, that many of the professionals who fled the country in the wake of the change of the government, did so in order to avoid investigation into their conduct in relation to already existing laws.

A committee was set up to investigate compliance to tax obligations, for instance. I think we made some reference in our presentation to the fact that as the economy deteriorated and as price distortions became uncontrollable, the revenue situation in the country got particularly precarious because past governments were unwilling to tax the increasingly lucrative business that flourished in the informal sector of the economy, although the tax laws existing in the country at the time required that this be done.

I do know that in many of the countries represented here today, these tax regulations are taken extremely seriously, and we have been trying to emulate the example of many of your countries, and to ensure that if tax laws are not satisfactory we change them. But as long as we are happy that

they are correct then they should be enforced without any discrimination, any fear or favour.

So, many of these professionals fled the country really because of laws to disgorge moneys which they have accumulated, again in contravention of these laws.

However, following consultations and discussions with some of our friends we tried to relax operations of these rules and to ensure that some of these persons would be attracted back into the country with assurances of safe conduct. And I think this is a step in the right direction, and I am happy to say that some of them have already started returning.

Now, to get back to Mr Russell's question.

I agree entirely that it is no use just talking about rehabilitation without maintenance. In fact, as I am sure Mr Russell himself is aware, this is one of the key things that we discussed with Commissioner Pisani when he was last in Accra. And we do have a vehicle and plant rehabilitation maintenance outfit already in the country which has been doing its best in the circumstances.

But it does need inputs which have not been forthcoming because of past foreign exchange constraints, and with the help of the EEC we are hoping that we can expand the work of this committee, both by providing further technical assistance, if need be, and also by providing the necessary material inputs that will make their work have the desired impact.

POLICY

Mr Russell also talked of what he perceived as a switch in our policy from large scale state farms to revival of peasant production. We want to improve the efficiency of peasant production.

You ask what institutional arrangements will be made to support the new emphasis, particularly in the area of marketing, what role will the new state structure play etc?

Now, in our new way of thinking we would like more and more to involve the private sector and cooperatives in the operations, particularly in the area of marketing, but these cooperatives have to be in place and that they function well before we assign them with any real additional responsibilities.

We have what we call farmers service centres that have shops. They have marketing facilities that I suppose operate on more or less a cooperative basis. It hasn't been easy to really mobilise the farmers to form these co-operatives. This is one area that again we hope, when the EEC agricultural experts that we discussed with Mr Pisani, do come to Accra we hope that this would be one aspect of the whole problem of agricultural production which we can look at in greater detail. It is something that needs to be investigated very closely.

When you look at the history of co-operative efforts in all countries, virtually all countries, I think that the lesson we draw from it is that it is of no use coercing people to form them. So it's a matter of finding a proper balance between some degree of volition and some degree of proper urging on the part of the state.

BALANCE

We are not sure that we find this balance yet and we welcome any views and advice from those of our distinguished delegates here who either have the expertise themselves or can tell us perhaps how we can acquire it. So as soon as these institutions have really crystallised and as they do so we propose to shed the burden of state involvement in the whole area of marketing and cooperatives. It is extremely burdensome financially on the budget. When they want to purchase grains, whatever, they come to the budget and we haven't been particularly generous with them even as we try to put the co-operative in place. So we do want to involve cooperatives in particular, but we want to be sure that they are efficient; if they don't operate efficiently I suspect that they probably very quickly turn into state enterprises and come back to the budget for budgetary support.

Yes, counterpart funds will continue to be used to support local food production efforts as we have done in the past.

On the question of technical assistance, whether there would be any political problems that would stand in the way, no, I don't see any real political problems.

First of all I would like to say that this is something that we are going to discuss in detail tomorrow. It is in Item three. We have had lengthy discussions with the Bank and with the UNDP and I would be happy tomorrow to give you the full general outline of the direction of our thinking.

But I can say at this stage that I

don't see any political problem as such. What we want to do of course to make sure that given the real costs of foreign and technical expertise, we concentrate on strengthening our own local training capabilities even as we seek technical expertise in areas where we obviously do not have them and where it will take too long to train or retrain our own people.

Mr Johnson also, if I may disclose what we discussed privately, Mr Johnson, tagged on a second leg of his question, which he communicated to me during our recess and that is: will technical assistance be welcomed in areas that we consider sensitive like the Central Bank or the Ministry of Finance where obviously experts working at these areas would have access to information that we would consider confidential.

My reaction immediately is we do publish much of the information that the Central Bank sends out. In fact, very often I suspect that the Fund and the Bank do get this information even before we have published them. There is not that much that is confidential there.

EXPERTISE

Of course, I believe that every nation does try in these key areas to have his own people. As we quote Randeshell, if we decide that any of these 'sensitive' areas require technical expertise which is not immediately available, then of course I don't see that we have any problem getting people from outside provided that they are willing to work in accordance with the rules of these establishments.

We have in the past had people working in our Central Bank in the Ministry of Finance from outside, and it has not posed any problem in the past. I don't see that it will pose any problems in the future. As I said, obviously in such areas, we would like to ensure that our own people, our own potential is exhausted in the first instance.

I would like to just now address some aspects of the question that Mr Hoffman posed. Well, if I may just briefly comment on the analogy which we have before us in place of the old which we had this morning, I dare say that we are not really looking at a new baby. I don't think, if it is a baby, I would say perhaps it used to be a baby, and suddenly it was of age, it was ailing and I think it's been. It started recuperating sort of, and we want to make sure that this being recuperates fully and starts walking.

I think that it was a baby may be 25

years ago as I am sure Mr Hoffman will agree and we all want to make sure that through this collective effort this new born being begins to behave like an adult and walks vigorously.

But to get back to the substance of what Mr Hoffman had in mind, of some of the aspects of the question that he raised: Yes, it is true that no one can really say with any degree of certainty, how the economy will react in the course of the three year period.

We can make projections based on certain assumptions, and it is then our responsibility to ensure that these assumptions materialise to the extent that this lies within our power.

Some local manufacturers have expressed some worries about the impact of such a large devaluation on domestic prices. If they become too high, they are worried that they might be saddled with unsold stocks and we have been discussing this matter with them.

We believe that the fear at this stage at any rate, is exaggerated, we believe that they have been a little spoilt in the past because as the shortages persisted we had a sellers market, and in fact sometimes the stocks were bought before they were manufactured, and some people just made profit overnight.

They began to share profits of distributors with them and I think it would be a good thing if we began to see commodities and products sitting on the shelves for a while and I think it is a normal thing in most places that if cigarettes are produced it should sit there for a while. People will buy what they need instead of just buying too much of it and selling it on the foreign market.

Our manufacturers have been used to this kind of thing in the past, and I think that their worry is not so much that the prices will get so high that they cannot sell anything, but that the profits; the extra profit from participating in illegal trading would be curtailed. And I think that far from there being any real cause for concern it should be a heartening development if stocks sit there for a reasonable length of time, as I think happens in an economy that is operating normally.

But of course, you do have a point. Obviously, it can reach a point of diminishing returns and when we get there I am sure that given our commitment to flexibility, and with appropriate consultations with the Fund we will be able to find the real answers to them. But we have established a system of regular dialogue with the manufacturers and this will help us to determine when we are really getting there instead of just worrying about the problems which they have at this stage which I don't think are real.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Unearthing the loot

ON THURSDAY, January 19th, the Federal Military Government announced a list of detainees. In all, 402 persons including many former governors are currently behind bars, while 266 others who were also arrested in the aftermath of the December 31st coup, had been released.

Also announced was the recovery of more than 115 million and 148,000 pounds sterling cash from six of the detainees at the time of their arrests. Of this amount former Kano State Governor Sabo Bakin Zuwo and Imo State Governor Sam Mbakwe topped the list with N3.4 million and N1 million respectively.

The rather delayed timing of the announcement, had earlier given room for unnecessary speculations and rumour mongering concerning the number of those in detention and the amounts allegedly recovered from them. Such a situation was evidently not healthy for the country.

It may be necessary for the government to differentiate between those who, perhaps because they were businessmen had reasons to be in possession of the large quantity of naira notes found with them, and those who being public officials had no legitimate reasons for keeping the sums they had with them.

It is of course true that the attitude of keeping large sums of money at home is questionable, even for businessmen in more advanced countries. It does not only raise questions about why the banks cannot be trusted to keep the money at interest rates, but also poses an open invitation to men of the underworld. In any system, this attitude is treated as a case of financial indiscipline. And to say that a society like ours where 'big' people 'spray' money openly on the foreheads of dancers and musicians daily is financially indisciplined, is perhaps to make an understatement. Our concern in this regard is primarily over the levels of guilt among those arrested.

Although the military is yet to tell us how those people all came about the monies found on them, some question can yet be asked. What was Sabo Bakin Zuwo doing with N3.4 million cash at home? What was the like of Sam Mbakwe doing with N1 million cash at home? How did all six of them come about those large sums of money found with them? Were they fresh from the bank vaults or dirty old notes? Solutions to these questions may probably guide the government to the sources of the money, and the nature of financial indiscipline which our politicians generally exhibited between 1979 and December 31st, 1983.

As for those of them who were caught with foreign currencies, we can also say that their case on this score is clear enough. We do not know of any law in the statute books, under which they operated between 1979 and 1983, which permitted them to hold such vast sums of foreign money within Nigeria.

But let it not be misunderstood that N5 million and 148,000 pounds, together or respectively, bear any significant relevance to the mind-boggling level of graft and profligacy displayed by Nigerian politicians between October 1979 and December 1983. Most of those who ran the government did not believe in keeping vast sums like Bakin Zuwo's N3.4 million at home. They knew craftier ways of stowing such vast sums of money within Nigeria and overseas. Nigerians therefore, expect a much more far-reaching investigation into the financial conduct of the last civilian administration and its chief operatives.

National Concord of Nigeria

All things being equal

AT PARLIAMENT House last Tuesday, one of the participants at the debate on the 1984 Budget Estimates, an Executive Member of Osu PDC, made a very interesting contribution.

He said that Ghanaians should go back to the former SLAVE MASTER and learn from him. Only then will this country, which we all love so much, become the land flowing with milk and honey.

His contribution, needless to say, was received with disbelief by the greater part of the participants. But it was a belief by the greater part of the participants. But it was a People's Assembly and Mr P.V. Obeng, the Chairman for the function, allowed him to express his views, unpopular though many thought them to be.

At the end of the function, our reporters talked to some of the participants and invariably all of them, after expressing this and that view asked: "By the way, what is this man doing on an Executive Committee of a PDC?"

We are reminded of this man's contribution by a report we carried in our columns yesterday. F.A. Jantuah, Ashanti Regional Secretary, is reported to have said that price control would work only when supply exceeds demand, otherwise not.

It would appear that our Ashanti Regional Secretary is a believer in classical economic theory in which every proposition is prefaced with "CETERIS PARIBUS" (a Latin tag which translates as "all things being equal").

Classical Economics is founded on the PROFIT MOTIVE. It states that if prices of goods and services rise then, ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL, supply will increase since there are more incentives for production.

The *People's Daily Graphic* believes that we are led into the mess we are in because however logical and obvious classical economic theory may sound, ALL THINGS ARE NOT EQUAL.

Who among us is not a witness to the manipulation of the system by politicians and privileged classes? And who among us cannot see the oppression of those who are not free in a free market?

Is F.A. Jantuah suggesting that in a situation of scarcity, the well-off can buy at rocket-high prices and the poor must do without their basic needs until such distant future time that supply equals demand?

The *Graphic* would agree that rigid price control which takes no account of seasonal and regional differences can bring more hardship than those which it is meant to alleviate. But we are surprised to hear his outright support for a system which favours the already favoured and penalises the have-not.

We find it difficult to reconcile his view of economics with the report, also in yesterday's issue, that he has set up a committee of enquiry into charges levelled against medical officers of the Komfo Anokye Hospital.

The malpractices which he condemns so roundly amount to a scarcity of medical care. Demand exceeds supply. Therefore prices rise and those who can pay more get medical treatment, and those who cannot pay die.

Of course, we do not agree with this. But we are surprised that Mr Jantuah, like us, does not agree with this too because this is the logical extension of his views on price control.

We would like to see more consistency in his economic theory.

People's Daily Graphic, Ghana

MUSIC AND ARTS SCENE

African records review

by Kwabena Mensah

GEORGE DARKO & "BUS TOP": 'Hi-Life Time' (Okoman Records DA2) ('Kaakyire Nua' 'Odoyewu'/ Children's Song' 'Highlife Time'.

'Kaakyire Nua' which should have been the title track has the melodic expansiveness of a classic number — a good follow-up to 'Akoo Te Brofo'. It might frustrate you if you are a hi-life traditionalist but you could be subdued by the opening synthesizer of the ubiquitous Bob Fiscian which continues apace, otherwise wait for the keyboard or Lee Duodu's voice to give you the key to the track.

The chorus is harmony itself so is the German's alto saxophone phrases in the vein of 'Akoo Te Brofo'. You can be overwhelmed by George Darko's guitar if the heavy synthesizer and Keyboards fail you. The controversy is which is better: 'Kaakyire Nua' or 'Akoo Te Brofo'?

'Odoyewu' begins with drums calling for attention and putting you on synthesizer and Keyboard arrangements (reminding you of Rodney Franklin) beautiful enough to switch your mind to the track, even far away. It allows Lee to really stretch out vocally and sentimentally to give you goose pimples. Your soul is lifted to listen to guitar approaching George Benson on acoustic guitar. But the guitar has originality and uniqueness especially backed by full orchestra and of course Sommetimer's bass guitar, and dies off gradually and smoothly. The musician's track — a professional work.



'Children's Song' is funkish right from the beginning. The vocal work and the alto saxophone do equally well to enliven the tempo and to encourage you (if you are a parent) to let the children play and dance.

The alto saxophone is at its best to help you spread your love around indeed. Half way through the track Lee raps the audience and the beat gradually goes up-tempo (completely danceable) to the sympathy of Pagger's drums while the guitar is forthcoming. One big happy family dancing.

The ghost of 'Akoo Te Brofo' lingers on in Highlife Time' except that this is sung in English. You are invited to get on the beat after Bob Fiscian. The track punches into action and is irresistably itchy. If it does not turn you on you are a devil? Because it is sunshine music. Do not raise your hands when you are dancing, wait for the guitar, saxophone and all especially the drums which permeate the album. Lee raps the audience once again, teaching you singing. The favourite track of London Radio DJ's.

ARIC AGYEMANG; 'Wonko Menko?' Modern Highlife (Essiebons EBL5 7111)

'Wonko Menko?' 'Nya Abotare Ma Me'/'Odo Bra' 'Men Koaa'

'Wonko Menko?' forcefully begins with the horns section calling for attention and there goes the smooth hi-life always associated with Eric. His guitar sounds Zairean. The very rhythmic 'Mmatutu Mmrika' style creeps into it and half way through the track the organ is simply soothing.

The vocal delivery by Agyakku (formerly of Yamoah's Band) will invite you into listening but you cannot stop dancing. Why? Because the hi-life element is tempting especially when Eric gives you more Zairean guitar solos. Finally, you re-unite completely with the tune as Agyaku asks you 'Wonko Menko'.

'Nya Abotare Ma Me' begins with a organ orientated punch which could have come in from time to time to



complete the beauty of it. The good voice of Thomas Frempong does come in well, of course, don't forget the flavour of the horns section which allow the trumpet and alto sax room for solos familiar with the Kokroko Band. The beauty of organ and horns and it all.

Love is expressed in 'Odo Bra' but not at the expense of smoothness which abounds in the track especially when the horns take up the story again. Don't be put off by the sudden jump into higher pitch half way through by the singers because you are quickly invited to bear with the good hi-life. There is perhaps too much improvisation.

Traditional improvisation nearly takes us to Zairean soukous in 'Men Koaa'. The chorus is bearable. The African drums is powerful and the lyrics is pitiful.

The album is generally good and is indispensable if you want to have a collection.

POETS' CORNER

Spirits Colliding - Indelibly

To mother for her henpecked guidance
To father for his reluctant paternalism
To Sophia K - for arousing in me a pre-adolescent appreciation for the opposite sex
To Ako Ebenezer for Q.E.D. that genius and madness share a thin grey border.
To Salem Presbyterian Boys' School.
For instilling sadism and Spartanism
To "Maa Sobers" for expose-tory interpretation of *My Family and Other Animals*.
To Maggie for confessing that witches do love even as they fly a nocturnal horse.
To Modukpe, I wish you had died differently..
For Legon in harbouring the last remnant of illusion, innocence and happiness.
To Bonnie B - for bringing my romantic love to a climax!
And eternally to the students of 300 Jay Street for making my working life worth living.

PEACE AND LOVE

Kwabena M. Duodu

A TOUCH OF NOKOKO

by Kofi Akumanyi

YOU MAY be surprised to read your letter written to me published in this magazine. Of course, Kwame you didn't know that I would do such a thing and I know I should have consulted you and asked for your permission before doing this but I took the liberty to print it with the full knowledge that you wouldn't mind.

"...and now to matters affecting my very existence as a human being. I'm sure you have, of late, heard enough about food and fuel shortages, assault and battery, and — wait for it — suicides. Yes, that's what people are doing to themselves these days. I cannot for the life of me understand why anybody should take a rope or whatever and take his or her own life simply because some people who have constituted themselves into a government and supported by a few Ghanaians who have chips on their shoulders are making life unbearable for all. I tell you quite frankly that the day I feel I can't cope and want to leave this God forsaken place I am determined not to go alone. I shall definitely take a few people along with me to Kingdom come! I mean, what the hell, if I have to go then it stands to reason that I should go with somebody. If I know you right you're probably shaking your head with unadulterated mirth saying that I'm chicken; I can't hurt a fly. You're right and that's the pity of it all. But as they say desperate situations demand desperate solutions, n'est ce pas?

Talking about situations and solutions reminds me of Amponsah. You remember him — he was often so broke that he used to hang around us during lunch breaks. He borrowed your fifty cedis and never repaid it. Yes, that's the chap. Smart chap. He has managed to get himself installed as the secretary of the Workers Defence Committee (WDC) in his workplace.

As you may know already, these chaps, I mean the bosses of the WDC, have become very powerful, and our Kwame has grown wings all of a sudden and flying all over the place.

The other day I met him at 'Times Square' bar in Accra where I had gone

to drink a bottle of beer and there he was hosting a large party of friends — presumably — WDC functionaries and at the rate at which beer was flowing I couldn't help but conclude that our friend has gone up in life.

It didn't cross my mind that his sudden rise to power has anything to do with his apparent affluence until the party stepped outside to leave and Amponsah sat behind the driving wheel of a Peugeot 504 car.

Jokingly, I remarked that he hadn't been doing badly lately judging from the little I had seen that evening and he said to me: "There is nothing to this — this is an operation car and whatever goes with it are operational perks". What type of operation, he didn't say but your guess is as good as mine.

Yes, all it boils down to is that to survive in this hell-hole you must belong to the 'operation syndicate'. They are all over the place — selling commodities, seizing peoples goods and generally behaving as if they are holding the country by the balls! — which of course, they are doing).

ANOLOGY

Talking about balls and ball-like things also brings to mind an analogy that a member of the PNDC, apparently reacting to a comment on the frequent reshuffle in the government made. Wonder whether you read about it. He compared the revolutionary mechanism to the operations of a commuter train. Take note that he used a train and not bus or any other means of transport. He made the profound observation that like a train on a journey, the revolution every once and again stops for passengers to get off and new people get on.

"Very interesting analogy", I told a revolutionary friend. "But why a train? Knowing that Ghana has no reputation for efficient train service. It's slow, rickety, never on schedule and forever being derailed with heavy casualties."

"The PNDC member didn't discuss this analogy at the cadres-meeting but I suppose he used that because trains are long vehicles and like a revolution moves in mysterious ways," he answered.

"That's fine, except that unlike buses, trains have class seating arrangements".

"You're overstressing the point". "I didn't intend to until I realised that while the first class passengers in the revolutionary train may get on and

off when the driver and crew feel like it, the poor passengers in the over-crowded and foul smelling second and third class seats would have a hell of a time to make themselves heard about food shortages and prices in the catering department."

"There is only one general seating arrangement on the revolution train," he said clearly annoyed.

"Just as you say. But I think there is a better analogy the comrade could have used to describe the situation."

"Like what?"

"Could have compared Ghana's situation to the making of bread?"

"What bread? It isn't appropriate . . . it's so expensive and scarce..."

"Ordinary white bread made of flour, sugar and yeast. The process, as you know is simple enough but by the time the final product comes out from the mixing stages to the baked stages, all sorts of metamorphoses take place."

"What are you driving at?" he asked rather impatiently.

"Simply this, that at the end of the day, or the revolution, if you like, the ingredient for the bread would be moulded and baked in different shapes and colours, some would be bigger than others, some burnt and others under weight" I explained.

"That's life."

"It is except that even revolutionary bread had to be baked and with electricity consumption cuts in the country at the moment it may take a long time to see the end product . . . and who wants to eat half-baked bread?"

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We first met in Lagos. I was at the airport awaiting the departure of my flight. In between futile attempts at Soyinka I watched as aeroplanes cut their invisible paths through the air. There was little noise and they seemed to climb and float eerily as if by a magical and alien process.

I had been the first to check-in and had become unaware of the arrival of others. That is, until the seat next to mine started to fill with an assortment of bags, rugs, sandals and hats. These appeared to belong to a girl who was herself festooned with more of the same. I saw that she needed some help. I got up and relieved her of two heavily laden shoulder bags and what I took to be a Masai blanket. We arranged her things on the chair and on the floor.

"Thanks . . . I am Denise" she stretched out a hand. I took it and received a vigorous and rattling shake. Both of her arms were encumbered with more bangles, rings and chains than can be found on a Benin bust and they clashed as she moved. She seemed to be out of breath. I offered her my seat.

"C'mon . . . sit down". She motioned me to reoccupy my seat while she set about removing her things from the chair. She sat down and took a short rest. She then started to rearrange her goods in her lap and in mine and on the floor. She stopped and looked at me and smiled. Perhaps she had been conscious that I had been observing her all the while. She touched my knee with her hand and said slowly and deliberately "you . . . think . . . I am . . . nuts . . . right?"

I waited a little before I replied. I was not sure of what to say. "No, not really" I replied. Strange perhaps but not nuts in any certifiable sense. After all, it took all types to make the world and Murtala Mohamed airport terminal was as good a place as any to savour a different variety.

"I've been watching you . . . from over there . . ." I turned to look. She was pointing to a door on the other side of where we were sitting through which more people were arriving ". . . and I think you are a nerd". Having made this statement she seemed to hesitate, give me another smile and then laugh. "But don't sweat . . ." she continued, "I like nerds". I did not know what she meant. Was it a compliment or an insult or both. Did I in fact want to be liked by this girl. What was the meaning of all this. There was to be no respite.

"Where are you heading?" I did not appear to have heard it so she repeated herself "where are you heading?"

I am going to Freetown . . . to Sierra Leone". I had more than enough of my own problems and I needed that

The Guide

By Hassan Ali Ganda

A Short Story

rest in Freetown. I felt a little irritated by the persistence of this girl. But she seemed determined to talk so I closed Soyinka and finally put him away.

I sank lower in my seat. I took a deep breath and exhaled. I turned again to my neighbour. For the first time I gave the girl a proper look over. She was older than I had at first thought and better looking too. There was a certain harmony about her. Her smile, speech, her manner of dressing, her body . . . they all complemented each other. I must admit that the thought did flash through my mind that had I met her at a different time and a different place I may have had more interest in her.

"I know you ain't from Town," town being the diminutive for Freetown, "so I got great news for you . . . you got yourself a guide . . . and it's free . . . right?" My own plans apparently counted for nothing. I did not commit myself.

PERSISTENCE

It appeared that Aisa, for that is what she preferred to call herself, was a member of the Peace Corps. For some reason I had thought that the Corps had not survived Dallas. I had been mistaken. It had, and it had grown from strength to greater strength. Aisa was an instructor at a school in Kenema. She was involved in an intermediate technology project. She was a specialist in weaving mechanics. The project was appropriate and it was relevant. It was also fun. Her enthusiasm for African weaving practices and her desire to infect me with its beauty knew no bounds.

It was limited only by my complete and overt ignorance of any of its finer points. She was disappointed. But before long, she said, she would be back with her looms, cocks and shuttles. The blanket I had thought came from Kenya had been bought in Mopti. She had just finished a gruelling six-weeks trek through Mali, Upper Volta and Niger. These were the best years of her life.

I told her that I was going to Freetown, to Aberdeen to be precise, for a holiday. She doubted that. "We all know that Africans don't do that . . . they don't go to other African countries for their vacation", she

continued, "they don't even travel in their own countries . . . right?" She stopped and looked at me. Of course she was wrong. The vast majority of Africans took no holidays and those that did could not afford to go anywhere. I said nothing. My silence encouraged her. "They go to Europe, to the States, to Bangkok . . . you name it . . . they go any and everywhere but!" I did not want to get embroiled in a debate over this issue. I did not like this categorisation of Africans by this girl and her friends. In any event I was going to Sierra Leone and that was that.

She seemed to notice that I was not particularly forthcoming. She changed the topic. "Did you know that they have absolutely the most beautiful sunsets in Freetown?". It was a question but it required no answer. She looked at me and put on a pair of very large sunglasses. She appeared to be thinking, to be recollecting.

"Do you know that the most beautiful people in the world are in Africa?" By this time I was becoming used to her superlatives. Many an African would have said that the most beautiful people inhabited the covers of Ebony. But I don't think she meant that kind of easily accessible beauty. She seemed quiet. She had slipped lower in her seat. She was holding her hands clasped together between her legs with her face tilted back looking towards the ceiling. I could see tears down her cheek. She seemed to be locked into an experience of which I was not a part. I gave her a tissue. I always keep tissues with me. She took it, removed the glasses and wiped her face. She smiled and at that moment she too was beautiful.

We spoke of her trek, of Ouagadougou, of Bobo-Diollaso and of their rugged beauty. It appeared that in those bleak and deserted parts as the sahel she had come to understand the strength and beauty of her people. She had come away with her Juffure.

RESCUE

Part II

I believed that a seat number on a boarding pass indicated a particular seat on which one was required to sit and so I made my way to mine after I had entered the plane. This was an error. A large Agbada-clad man reeking of some brutish scent had installed himself where I should have been. I informed him that he had made a mistake and that seat no 24C was mine. He snorted, gesticulated, removed his handsome hat and commenced a monologue in some

vernacular tongue. It must have contained some wit for in no time at all half the passengers and all the stewardesses I could see were shrieking with laughter. I was rescued by Aisa. She dragged me down the aisle and on to a seat next to her.

"The US Cavalry rides again . . . thanks". She did not appreciate my wit. But I had not been rescued for nothing. I was again lumbered with bags and other paraphernalia. I set about securing them as best and as safely as I could.

"Man . . . you are something!" she said after I had finished, " . . . you gotta know how to handle these guys". Since I did not particularly want to know how to handle these guys I was in no mood for a lesson. I settled down, loosened my tie, undid my shoe-laces and watched as she arranged her braids and dabbed her neck and cheeks with cologne. When she finished she closed the bottle and put it in one of her bags.

"You still ain't told me your name. I gotta know who I am with". I was not sure that I was with her but I told her my name all the same. "Sam, short for Samson". It thrilled her.

"Where are you from . . . no, let me take a guess . . . I'd say it's gotta be Ghana . . . right?" She was right first time although I was a little perplexed as to why it had to be Ghana. We talked and we laughed. I took the opportunity

to ask for the meaning of nerd. "A nerd is a jerk . . . with class . . . dummy!" For some reason I was relieved. I had feared that it may have had something to do with a natural product usually associated with ruminants and open fields. She found out that I was an Accountant. "That figures" was her wry comment.

We settled down. For a while we did not speak. I looked for my Soyinka. It was *The Interpreters*. A difficult book. Just as I was about to open it she held my arm. Her pent up fatigue seemed gradually to be overtaking her and she needed a prop. "Tell me more about yourself Samson". I paused. Before I could even begin to think of what I could usefully say her head rolled on to my shoulder and she was asleep. Her breathing was very gentle. She had a soft fragrance about her. I unbuckled her belt.

RAINBOW

Part III

I saw Denise Collete Forster, for that was Aisa's full name, again, a few days later. It was at the junction of Wilkinson Road and Carlton Carew Road. It was drizzling for it was August and we were in the rainy season. There was a rainbow in the sky. She had stopped a poda-poda. She

was in shorts and track-shoes. Her t-shirt was drenched. I offered her a ride in my friend's Mercedes. It was brand new and it looked it. It even smelt it. She came up to my side of the car and leaned down in order to speak.

"I dig the wheels . . ." she said "but you ain't gonna see Freetown this way". She smiled. She always smiled. This time it had a mischievous and superior edge to it. I looked at my friend. I turned to Aisa and said goodbye. We sped off. I think she waved.

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NIGERIA

Ojukwu in detention

The Federal government has given reasons for detaining the former secessionist leader, Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu. The Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Maj-Gen Mamoun Vatsa, told newsmen in Bida that Chief Ojukwu was being held for his political activities.

He stated that the former rebel leader would have to account for his stewardship as the national vice-chairman of the proscribed NPN (National Party of Nigeria).

Soldiers patrol border

Soldiers at Seme border post between Nigeria and the Republic of Benin have taken over patrol duties from immigration officials. A correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) who visited the border said that following the development, immigration and customs officials were left with the task of processing travel documents. Normal activities have resumed at the border and the officials interviewed said that the soldiers had assisted them in tightening security.

Missions to be reduced

The Federal Military Government is determined to prune down the country's missions abroad, the External Affairs Minister, Dr Ibrahim Gambari has said in Lagos. Dr Gambari told a correspondent of the News Agency in Nigeria (NAN) that the exercise, which was in line with the country's new foreign policy review, was aimed at saving costs. He also said that the review involved some contraction which would be done in a 'very careful manner' to ensure that the right calibre of diplomats were appointed.

The Minister disclosed that already the Ministry had completed its report on the review exercise, adding that as soon as the Supreme Military Council approved it, the implementation would begin in earnest.

On the directive that all non-career diplomats should return home, Dr Gambari said that the former ambassadors had started to return. He said that their return would not be sudden to enable them to take leave of their host governments and 'tidy' up their missions. According to the Minister, only three ambassadors had

returned so far. They are those posted to the United Nations, Washington and the Soviet Union.

Those who "patronize" the BBC

Lagos radio has broadcast a commentary criticizing those Nigerians who ran to foreign countries and made comments to the media which contained "unsubstantiated charges which sometimes border on treason". In the past few weeks, some Nigerians, including wanted politicians who had run away after the military coup, had declared war on Nigeria through their use of the foreign media.

They are retired

Seventeen Federal government secretaries have been retired as part of the re-organisation exercise now going on in the civil service.

The retirements were said to be the military administration's response to recent calls that most of the permanent secretaries who featured in the last civilian administration be purged from the civil service.

PRP exists in UK

The Peoples Redemption Party has called on the military to adopt its principles as an interim programme for a broad national government to lay a foundation for a return to civilian rule.

In a press statement the PRP noted that even though coups have followed one after the other since Nigeria's independence in 1960 they have never been a solution to the country's many problems nor a step forward.

It stated that even though political parties had been proscribed the UK branch will continue to exist and maintain regular contacts with their members in Nigeria.

Saraki arrested

Dr Olusola Saraki, the former Senate leader was arrested last week at his house in Ilorin by security men and taken to Lagos.

His arrest followed a three-hour search conducted by security men. It was not immediately known whether any incriminating discoveries were made. During an earlier search conducted by a team of NSO and military personnel on January 10th, a number of files were taken away.

Reorganise the police

Mass Communication Students have told Head of State, Major-General Muhammed Buhari to re-organise the Nigeria Police Force without further delay.

As a first measure in the suggested re-organisation drive, General Buhari should as a matter of urgency send all the present 19 Police Commissioners in the country on compulsory retirement.

Making the appeal in a statement issued in Abeokuta the Association of Mass Communications Students of Ogun State Polytechnic failed to understand the rationale behind involving the politicised police force in the trial of corrupt politicians.

Press guidelines

Media organisations operating in Anambra State have been given guidelines on how to function in the state.

The guidelines were contained in a Government House statement issued in Enugu and signed by Mr E.J. Okoli for the Principal Secretary to the military government.

According to the statement, all materials for publication or broadcast must avoid forthwith "all attempts to make political insinuations and aspirations of the past as if there has not been any change of government.

"You must always be conscious of the fact that a new military government headed by Major-General Muhammadu Buhari is in full control of the government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and not with formal politicians that have been ousted because of their ineptitude.

"All your programmes for public or private consumption must be neatly edited to remove sinister motives.

"All programmes and articles must be such that would help our people to forget things of the past and make them look forward to a brighter future."

The statement which was circulated to all media houses in Enugu, was, however, silent on penalties for defaulters.

Unauthorised statements

The Military Governor of Lagos, Group Capt Gbolahan Mudashiru has ordered the arrest of some members of staff in the State publicity department in connection with an "unauthorized press statement on the review of teachers salary".

The statement had claimed that the

EVENTS . . . PEOPLE . . . PLACES . . . EVENTS . . . PEOPLE . . .

Governor had authorized the approval of a new income policy for teachers in the State to enable them to rise to salary grade level 17.

More aliens deported

More than 500 illegal aliens were deported in the last three weeks by immigration officials at the Ajilete checkpoint near the Idiroko border. Sources at the checkpoint told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the illegal aliens entered the country through bush paths with the aid of Nigerian drivers who charged between 30 and 40 naira per alien.

The sources said that despite the official closure of the Nigeria-Benin Republic border at Idiroko the illegal aliens still entered the country through bush paths, most of which were not manned by security men. In another development, a group of people in an unregistered car attacked immigration officials at the Ajilete checkpoint with iron rods, bottles and knives. The attackers were believed to be the transporters of illegal aliens.

Looting at ports

Soldiers have been drafted to the Apapa and Tin Can Island ports in Lagos to help contain the looting that has been going on at the ports since the change of government. A News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) correspondent who visited the ports premises said that port users were subjected to a thorough search by the soldiers.

The commandant of the Apapa port, Capt Kunle Fashola, told NAN that the soldiers and policemen had succeeded in reducing looting at the ports. He, however, said that pilfering by port touts was still going on, adding that the ports security agents had introduced temporary measures to reduce the activities of the touts. Goods stolen by looters are estimated at more than 3,000,000 naira.

Plead our cause with IMF

The Head of State, Major General Mohammed Buhari, has appealed to The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Perez De Cuellar, to help plead Nigeria's cause with the International Monetary Fund, (IMF).

This is with a view to prevailing on the Fund to ensure a review of its present terms and conditions for granting a loan to the country.

General Buhari made the plea when the visiting UN chief scribe called on him at Dodan Barracks, Lagos.

The Nigerian leader said that it was unrealistic for the fund to offer the same formula to every country without consideration for differences in their circumstances and local realities.

General Buhari briefed the Secretary-General of the efforts being made by his administration to resuscitate the country's economy and restore the confidence of international financial institutions in Nigeria.

Earlier, the Nigerian leader and the UN Secretary-General had agreed on the need for the IMF to be more realistic and flexible in its services and to help bail Nigeria out of her economic predicament.

Replying, Mr. Perez De Cuellar praised the efforts of the present administration to revamp Nigeria's economy.

He also expressed deep appreciation for the warm reception accorded him.

At another meeting with the Secretary-General, Major-General Buhari, reiterated that Nigeria would continue to stand by the principle of self determination on the Namibian and Western Saharan issues.

Nigeria, he added, will continue to use her influence within the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to encourage peace talks between the various warring factions in the Chadian conflict.

General Buhari called on the world body to ensure immediate withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia and work out procedures for the territory's independence.

IPI chairman's warning on the press

The chairman of the International Press Association, Mr. Max Sniijders, has said that the press in Nigeria is free.

He said in Lagos that there is hardly any country in Africa and Asia which allows as much press freedom as Nigeria.

The I.P.A. Chief who was on an official visit to Nigeria, was speaking in Lagos when he called on the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon.

He told the Chief of Staff that the organisation's major objective is to ensure freedom for the press in all countries of the world.

Replying, the Chief of Staff reaffirmed that the federal military government will continue to ensure that freedom of the press prevails in Nigeria.

He said the Nigerian press had per-

formed well so far but warned against some members of the press who tended to create a negative impression about the Nigerian press as a whole.

Both Brigadier Idiagbon and his guest shared the view that there was need for press responsibility in Nigeria's present circumstances.

GHANA

Release the detainees

The Ghana Bar Association has called on the PNDC to release all detainees and others against whom no charges had been preferred. In a resolution at the end of its annual general meeting in Accra it said that persons against whom charges had been preferred should go for speedy trial before the ordinary courts.

It called on the PNDC to re-affirm its commitment to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as enshrined in the United Nations Charter by disavowing the policy of detention of persons without trial.

It declared its preparedness to enter into a dialogue with the PNDC and other well meaning groups, bodies or organisations, if called upon to do so, with a view to finding acceptable solutions to problems and matters of national interest, including the early return of the country to a democratically elected government in which all the citizens of Ghana would be entitled to participate.

The association elected Mr J.K. Agyeman, as national president, Mr Ebow Bentsil-Enchil, national vice-president, Mr S.K. Boafo, secretary, Mr Y. Awuku-Yeboah, assistant secretary and Mr E. Bamfo, treasurer.

Role of tribunal

The Ghana Bar Association has called for a review of the role of Public Tribunals in line with the demands made by the association for such a review in 1982.

Among other demands, the association said cases going before the tribunals should rather go to the normal courts because, according to it, judges of the ordinary courts were "far more legally eminent and experienced in criminal trials than members of the public Tribunals".

The association, which re-affirmed its stand to boycott the Public Tribunals until its demands were met by the PNDC, said the establishment of the Tribunals represented "a mis-

EVENTS . . . PEOPLE . . . PLACES . . . EVENTS . . . PEOPLE

guided attempt to supplant the ordinary criminal courts".

It said it was prejudicial for the Tribunals to decide in advance that technicalities would not be tolerated.

It felt that there was no right to invoke the supervisory jurisdiction of the High Court of Justice in order to protect accused persons from breaches of the rules of natural justice or to correct errors of law or excess of jurisdiction on the part of the Tribunals.

Control of the press

Ghana's lawyers have noted that the continued official control of the press and other media houses by the PNDC which prevents the free dissemination of information, views and opinions different from those of the government, should be removed to facilitate free expression of opinion, exchange of views and information between citizens and government.

They urged the government to lift the curfew and that the universities should be re-opened without preconditions.

They also called on the Government to take bold and prompt steps to improve the general economic situation in the country by embarking upon a national economic recovery programme using all legitimate resources both local and international and further take appropriate steps to reduce the cost of living.

Cuba's experience

The Special Adviser to the PNDC, Captain Kojo Tsikata (rtd) has observed that Ghanaians have a lot to learn from the Cuban experience.

The history, achievements and level of development of Cuba's revolution, he said, provided aspiration and manly lessons for a young revolutionary country like Ghana.

Capt Tsikata made this observation at a symposium organized by the Ghana-Cuba Friendship Association in Accra to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.

"We in Ghana have a young revolution — only two years old. There is much for us to learn" he said.

Income tax on kenkey producers

Kenkey producers in the Greater Accra Region have been warned that unless they paid their Income Tax, they would not be supplied with maize.

The Under Secretary for Greater Accra, Mr George Quaynor-Mettle,

gave this warning when he met members of the Kenkey Producers Association in Accra.

He said the Regional Administration would mount an exercise in which every kenkey producer would be required to produce tax clearance certificate before being supplied with maize.

Arrests in Bawku

Muslim communities in Bawku have donated over 17,000 cedis' worth of food items and a quantity of second-hand clothing for the resettlement of 600 people whose houses were burned during the recent Mamprusi-Kusasi clash. This is in response to an appeal by the Bawku district administration to the public to assist in rehabilitating the victims of the clash.

Making the donation on behalf of the community, Alhaji Saami Hafiedougou, an elder of the community, said the money was realized during a prayer meeting at the Bawku central mosque. The Bawku district branch of the Red Cross society has also made a similar donation to the victims. Meanwhile, sources close to the police say 79 people have been arrested in connection with the clash.

Farmers forced out

Following the fall in the level of water in the Volta Lake, farmers in the Afram Plains who depend on it for domestic and farming purposes have started migrating from the area.

Dr Ababio Appah the Kwahu District Secretary, disclosed this to the Secretary for Roads and Highways Mr E.O. Donkor, and a team of newsmen who called on him at his office.

He explained that the low level of water in the lake had adversely affected the area's farming activities, while the problem of water had also led to the closing down of health centres in the area for several days.

Expect lasting glory

Professor Mawuse Dake, Secretary to the National Defence Committee (NDC), has stated that even though the budget proposals are unpalatable they constitute the best alternatives for the country's economic survival.

He was opening a one-day seminar on the budget organized by the NDC for representatives of PDCs and WDCs in Accra and Tema.

Professor Dake was hopeful that "if we are able to understand the proposals and go through the difficult times, we can be sure to see the light at the end of the tunnel in a few years."

Defence commission meeting ends

The eighth session of the OAU Defence Commission has ended in Accra with the adoption of a military protocol establishing an African defence organ. The protocol will be submitted to the various heads of state for adoption and will be ratified by member states of the OAU after the summit of heads have endorsed it. Observers believe the setting up of the African defence organ will go a long way to guarantee the security of African states against aggression by their enemies.

Briefing newsmen at the end of the session, the chief of information at the OAU Secretariat, Dr Ibrahim Dagash, said the meeting also adopted an Accra Declaration on liberation and African security. The declaration said in view of the precarious state of the insecurity of African states, material assistance and support for the liberation movements and frontline states will be maximized.

Individual Africans should be encouraged to volunteer their services to the liberation effort when requested by the liberation movement and the frontline states.

The declaration also said that henceforth South Africa's aggression and destabilizing manoeuvres will be met by reciprocal force, and actions will be taken to introduce common curricula in existing military training schools in Africa.

Addressing the closing session Ghana's Secretary for Defence and chairman for the Commission, Rear Adml C. D. Dzang, said the adoption of the protocol on the African defence organ is a great step forward. He said African governments are duty-bound to accept and ratify the protocol because the people of Africa want it.

West German food aid

About 10,000 metric tonnes of wheat are expected at the Tema Harbour in the next few weeks as a West German food aid through the World Food Programme (WFP) to Ghana.

A statement from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Accra explained that besides the West German government's direct food aid to Ghana, it regularly pledges food aid for delivery through WFP.

In 1983, the FRG and non-governmental organisations provided food aid to Ghana amounting to 4,900 metric tonnes of wheat, 500 metric tonnes of maize and 150 tonnes of dried fish.

EVENTS . . . PEOPLE . . . PLACES . . . EVENTS . . . PEOPLE . . .

Threat of total blackout

All towns that "failed to achieve the 45 per cent reduction in electricity will face a total blackout for a number of days". The penalties for excessive consumption of power range from 18 days for Kumasi to five days for Tema for Accra would "face a total blackout of 14 days". Meanwhile, the energy consumers' committee has appealed to all consumers to save energy and said that "if the advice is taken seriously there will be no need for total blackout".

UPPER VOLTA

Common currency with Ghana

A suggestion has been made for a common currency for Ghana and Upper Volta. This, it is believed, will help speed up the success of their revolutions. The suggestion was made by the Commissioner for Upper Volta's Mahure province, Mr Yacouba, at a joint rally between the people of his province and those of the Upper Eastern Region of Ghana at Takoma, a border village in Upper Volta.

The aim of the rally was to educate the people of the two countries about immigration and customs regulations to eliminate currency trafficking, black marketing, corruption and the maltreatment of travellers by border officials.

Mr Yacouba emphasized that Ghana and Upper Volta must look at all those who want to use the revolution to enrich themselves. He complained about the alleged maltreatment of travellers from Upper Volta by Ghanaian border personnel and said: All such cases should be reported to the authorities of both countries for redress. Mr Yacouba, however, made it clear that smugglers have no right to complain when they are caught.

The Secretary for Upper East, Mr John Ndebugre, was not happy about the rate at which cedis are being smuggled out of Ghana and he hinted that steps are being taken to enable the Bolga rural bank to handle foreign exchange transactions. This, the Secretary hoped, will help eliminate currency trafficking. He said traders from Upper Volta are free to attend Ghanaian markets to sell their wares and in turn buy small quantities of Ghanaian goods.

Mr Ndebugre however warned them against dealing in any of the 15

specified commodities. They should also not exchange the CFA on the black market. The Secretary also urged Ghanaian border officials to stop collecting bribes from travellers. He appealed to the people of the two countries to be vigilant and be prepared to fight any external aggression.

Co-operation with Benin

The first session of the Benin-Upper Volta joint commission for co-operation was held in Ouagadougou from 27th to 29th January 1984. Benin's delegation was led by Mr Tiamiu Adjibade, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation; Upper Volta's delegation was led by Mr Arba Diallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The holding of this first session opens a new perspective in co-operative relations between the two countries who are engaged in the same revolutionary process. At the opening session, the leaders of the two delegations stressed the need to give effect to the strong political will expressed by the two Heads of State to do everything to strengthen and consolidate the relations existing between Upper Volta and Benin in a new spirit inspired by a revolutionary militancy. They stressed that the setting up of the joint commission for co-operation marked a new turn in the relations between the two countries.

LIBERIA

Doe's concern over Lebanon

Head of State, Dr. Samuel K. Doe has said Liberia's resumption of diplomatic relations with the State of Israel was based on the hope that other African countries would join in 'our' efforts to find a lasting solution to the Middle East problem.

He said, against this background, "Liberia shares the aspiration that all states in the Middle East would co-exist peacefully within secured and internationally recognized boundaries."

Dr. Doe said the Liberian Government views the present situation in Lebanon with grave concern, and hoped that all parties to the conflict in the war-torn country will understand the necessity to end hostilities through dialogue at the conference table.

On the African continent, the Liberian Head of State noted that civil and liberation wars were continuing,

adding, "most of these conflicts, including political subversion, and inspired by foreign powers."

He said Liberia was aware that certain African states allow themselves to be used as surrogates to stir up strife and disunity among ourselves, and called for an end to this unfortunate state of affairs to ensure the progress and development of Africa.

On the situation in Southern Africa, Head of State Doe stressed that Namibia must be free with no "trade-offs or preconditions," adding "we remain convinced that UN resolution 435 provided the only acceptable basis for the settlement of the Namibian question."

Coup plotter collapses

The Chairman of the Special Military Tribunal, Maj-Gen Alfred Gayflor, has described reports following the collapse of one of the alleged coup plotters before the tribunal — that there has not been food at the prison compound — as misleading and false. Maj-Gen Gayflor described the reporters as unprofessional journalists and said the report itself was not true.

He said the allegation against the Government that the alleged plotters have not been eating are all false. He said the aim of those who spread such reports is to sensationalize issues. All these publications, Maj-Gen Gayflor said, have been forged, exaggerated, distorted and mainly intended to tarnish the good reputation of the Government.

O.A.U.

Support Angola

OAU acting Secretary General, Peter Onu has made an insistent appeal to all African states to give active support to the People's Republic of Angola to enable it to fight back the racist occupation forces. The appeal was made in Libreville, Gabon prior to the Secretaries General's visit to Accra, Ghana to attend the OAU Defence Committee meeting. The meeting called, at a critical time in the history of Africa in view of the increasing aggressive attitude of Apartheid South Africa against Angola heard a message from OAU Chairman, Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Dr Onu was also in Angola for a 48 hour visit during which he handed to President Jose Eduardo dos Santos a message from OAU Chairman.



Africa Cup contest in March

The 22nd round of Africa's most prestigious soccer competition takes off in March in the Ivory Coast. Ghana's Black Stars, the current champions, will defend the cup they won two years ago in Libya.

Countries that have qualified from preliminary matches to participate alongside Ghana include Nigeria, Egypt, Malawi, Algeria, Togo, Zambia and host nation, the Ivory Coast.

Preparations towards this soccer bonanza have begun in earnest in all the participating countries. In both Ghana and Nigeria the national teams, Black Stars and Green Eagles have been called to camp. They are also engaged in a series of trial matches with local teams.

Billy retains Commonwealth title

Nigeria's Commonwealth super lightweight title holder Billy Famous has ended Ghana's Armstrong Aziz's impressive chain of victories. At the National Stadium Indoor Hall last Saturday, Billy Famous outpointed the Ghanaian to enhance his chances for a world title bid.

Billy won the Commonwealth title early last year from fellow Nigerian Obisia Nwankpa at the same venue.

Participation in Olympic Games

Ghana's participation in the next July Olympic Games in Los Angeles, United States, will depend largely on the National Olympic Committee's ability to raise funds outside government circles.

Mr Markai Amarteifio, Secretary for Youth and Sports, announced this at the annual awards ceremony of the Sports Writers Association of Ghana (SWAG) at the Continental Hotel.

But the Sports Secretary said every assistance would be given to the Interim Ghana Football Association (GFA) to prepare the Black Stars adequately for the defence of their African championship title in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, next March.

Nine join Green Eagles

The Nigerian Football Association has invited nine more players for the preparation towards the Olympic qualifying matching against Morocco.

On the new roll-call are five players of the New Nigerian Bank, two from Rangers International of Enugu and one each from Water Corporation and IICC Shooting Stars, both of Ibadan.

The newly invited players include Edema Benson (midfielder), Augustine Popo (right winger), Samson Ozogular (striker), Bright Omokaro and Amos Edosogie (both defenders) from NNB, Benin.

Others are Patrick Okala (goal), Sunday Ikeagwu (defender) both of Rangers International, Taiwo Ogunjobi, Tony Edwards (both defenders) from IICC and Water Corporation F.C. respectively.

Flash qualifies as coach

Sergeant Flash Emma Ankuddey has returned home to Ghana from an eight month coaching course in Leipzig having qualified as a boxing coach.

Emma, a former Commonwealth medalist, was among 64 foreign students at the Leipzig College for Physical Culture and Sports during the eight month period from April to November 1983.

Sports biology, scientific methodic training for muscular development (ATMT), boxing theory and practice, first aid and massage were some of the subjects taught.

Emma who now holds an international recognized diploma as a boxing trainer-coach, was adjudged the most physically conditioned foreign student ever to attend the institute.

Nigeria turns down offer

Nigeria will not take part in the Rothman's soccer competition scheduled for Kenyan capital, Nairobi in June a senior official of the Nigerian National Sports Commission (NSC) has said.

NSC spokesman Ajibade Fashina-Thomas told newsmen that Nigeria's participation in the competition was out of the question because of the organizers links with South Africa.

"We know that Rothmans has very strong links with the South African company, Rothmans International and our Government's policy is that we do not have anything to do with racist South Africa," he said.

Mr Fashina-Thomas said advertisement in newspapers naming Nigeria as one of the participants were "false and misleading".

Nigerian club Bendel Insurance was fined 1,000 naira for participating in a similar competition in Abidjan last year, he said.

Mr Fashina-Thomas said the Nigerian Foreign Ministry has raised a strong protest after last year's incident adding, "we are trying to make sure we do not repeat the blunder of last year."

Kumasi Asante Kotoko have been selected from Ghana to take part in the tournament.

from page 13

event, and that means that it does not matter how long it takes, these soldiers will pay for their treason and any civilian that joins them is aiding and abetting treason".

But how does he intend to fight the soldiers, and how will his civilian continental mass movement fight the military?

"Military skills are not inborn, every soldier started as a civilian, and they learnt these skills, what is more, if you have a cause for which you are fighting, the civilians will make even better military men".

He is convinced that enough people are fed up with military interventions in Africa to make this mass movement a success.

Alhaji Dikko threw a challenge to General Muhamadu Buhari and the members of the Supreme Military Council to not only declare their assets but to do so publicly to show the Nigerian public that they are indeed as honest as they claim to be.

They might then want to make a statement of account of their period in government between 1975 to 1979, then the whole world will know that most of the problems faced by the Shagari Administration were inherited from the same military people".

One got the distinct impression that Nigeria definitely had not heard the last from Umaru Dikko and that all future coup plotters in Africa better look out for the man the SMC has declared the number one wanted man in Nigeria.



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