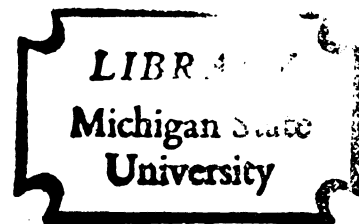






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EDITORIAL COMMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
IN GHANA 1960-1972

By

Cecilia J. Dumor

A THESIS

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

School of Journalism

1979

## ABSTRACT

### EDITORIAL COMMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA 1960-1972

By

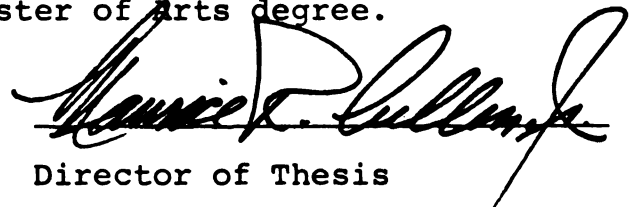
Cecilia J. Dumor

This study evaluates the part played by the press in Ghana in terms of the forum it provided for public information as well as raising questions about the direction of economic development. The critical and explicative functions of the editorials of two mass circulating dailies, the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, were evaluated on the basis of their relevance to stated economic policies of three political regimes in Ghana from 1960-1972. The Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times were further compared to evaluate the direction of their commentary and their changing emphases over the decade.

In most studies dealing with the press in Africa, there is a tendency for analysts to depend on paradigms which are rooted in Western theories of mass communication. The theories do not give recognition to the social, economic, political and cultural factors that interplay in shaping the role of the press in non-Western societies.

This study, therefore, emphasizes the indigenous values and traditions of Ghanaians, not merely as background for the impact of Western culture and press traditions, but as an integral part of the critical and explicative functions of the press in Ghana. This is particularly important since it is generally assumed in the prevalent literature that the press in Africa is not critical of official government policies because of the government control of the press.

Accepted by the faculty of the School of  
Journalism, College of Communication Arts and Sciences,  
Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maurice R. Cullen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'M' and 'C'.

Director of Thesis

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study derives from a concern with the contemporary African situation. The view here is that the local culture and traditions of Ghanaians must be taken into account, not merely as background for the impact of Western culture, but as an important and integral part of the historical and social development of all institutions in Ghanaian society.

Special thanks go to Ernest K. Dumor for many hours of discussion in a spirit of constructive criticism. My gratitude also goes to Drs. James Scotton and Maurice R. Cullen of the School of Journalism, Michigan State University, for helpful suggestions. My appreciation also goes to my three young children, Mawuena, Komla and Korshie for tolerating the conditions under which they lived while I worked on this thesis.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Focus of the Study

This study focuses on a content analysis of editorial comment by Ghana's two mass circulating dailies, the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, on economic issues in Ghana from 1960-1972. The study will evaluate the editorials in terms of their relevance to stated economic policies of three different political regimes in Ghana in the period under study. The Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times of Ghana will be compared in each political regime to evaluate the direction of their commentary on economic issues in Ghana.

#### Background

The origins of the economic problems that faced Ghana in the period under study are not hard to find. Within a historical context, the economic issues extant during that period may be explained, in part, by the pattern of political and economic relationship between Western industrial nations and the present third world nations, in this case Britain and Ghana. Implicit in

this explanation is the contention that it was the specific functional relationships established during the Colonial Period that led to underdevelopment.<sup>1</sup> The process of underdevelopment is here understood to mean the implantation of capitalist economic structures on pre-capitalist and nonindustrialized societies. The consequences of this imposition, according to Stavenhagen, is:

The destruction of traditional subsistence and social structures; the depletion of the natural resources of underdeveloped countries; net capital outflow from these countries to the highly developed ones; monetary and financial instability; inflationary processes, artificial growth of the commercial and service sectors; low levels of national savings, widespread poverty.<sup>2</sup>

A number of writers, including Genoud, accept the view that British colonial policy was not beneficial to Ghana to the extent that there was never any systematic approach to national development. Genoud argued, for example, that the (Gold Coast) Ghana of the 1950s was prosperous compared to other Third World countries but that prosperity was a colonial type prosperity. In other words, the economic structures remained colonial--a primary and exporting sector centered on cocoa and extractive industries plus an underdeveloped sector in which the mass of the population participated but reaped little of

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<sup>1</sup>Guder Frank, Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution? (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), pp. 21-94.

<sup>2</sup>Roldulfo Stavenhagen, Social Classes in Agrarian Societies (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1975), p. 8.



the profits.<sup>3</sup> Green and Seidman point out further that prior to independence in colonial territories in Africa:

Education and social services lagged and the African was limited to unskilled wage labour or to the traditional sector. The skilled, educated, highly productive labour force which is the single most important economic factor was neither sought nor attained.<sup>4</sup>

Genoud points out further that at the time of political independence the means at the disposal of the government to solve its economic problems were that of an under-developed country.<sup>5</sup>

Other writers, Cox-George among them, reject the historical explanation. Cox-George, for example, argued that the colonial period was a period of prosperity when continuous growth was experienced.<sup>6</sup> The developments that proceeded during the period were all consolidated so that:

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<sup>3</sup>Roger Genoud, Nationalism and Economic Development in Ghana (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p. 23.

<sup>4</sup>Reginald Green and Anne Seidman, Unity or Poverty: The Economics of Pan-Africanism (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 32.

<sup>5</sup>Genoud, Nationalism and Economic Development in Ghana, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup>Nathan Cox-George, Studies in Finance and Development: The Gold Coast Experience (London: Dennis Dobson, 1973), p. 13.

. . . by our limiting date, a money economy had been established, an educational system had been set up perhaps better than anywhere else in British West Africa; considerable improvement in the health and sanitary conditions of the people and the provision of civil amenities had been effected, so that the earlier pestilences of plagues and epidemics had been eliminated. Thus within the limits of overall colonial development policy, steps were supposedly taken for sound and systematic agricultural progress for the future.  
 . . .<sup>7</sup>

Yet, an assessment of the economy in 1952 stated that the Ghanaian economy in very simple terms was fragile, a situation that continued until political independence from Britain was achieved in 1957.<sup>8</sup> The colonial report dealing with the economy stated further that the economy had no institutional structures to check inflationary pressures and the heavy dependence on one export crop was dangerous both in terms of foreign exchange earnings and internal purchasing power. The West African Commission which examined the economy noted that the steps taken by the Colonial Government to encourage increased productivity were mainly misdirected.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>8</sup>Report of the Office of Government Statistician (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1952), p. 4.

<sup>9</sup>Geoffery Kay, "The Political Economy of Colonialism," in Ghana: Documents and Statistics 1900-1960 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 13.

In the case of agriculture, which was the mainstay of the Ghanaian economy, the colonial agricultural advisor said: "The Government has got to accept the position that they know very little concerning the inherent circumstances attendant upon agriculture, and have so far little to offer in the way of dependable advice for agricultural improvement."<sup>10</sup>

In summary, it should be pointed out that what occurred under colonialism was growth without development. At the time of Ghana's independence, the social, economic and political problems remained crucial and overwhelming.

The process of decolonization is understood to mean the removal of these obstacles preventing the autonomous development of the Ghanaian economy. It implies the laying of the basis of development in which all resources that can be harnessed are directed towards the creation of a national economy.

In the period under study, three successive governments in Ghana tried to tackle this crucial economic problem. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first Prime Minister and later President of Ghana, was keenly aware of the economic problems at the time of political independence. In the early years of his political office, he indicated

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<sup>10</sup>Ghana, Ministry of Information Bulletin, Gold Coast Farmer (Accra: Department of Agriculture, 1932), p. 25.

the direction in which Ghana should go. This was indicated in Ghana's development policy in 1962.

Imperialism and colonialism had left Ghana without the accumulation of capital in private hands which assisted the western world to make its industrial revolution. Only Government, therefore, can find the means to promote those basic services and industries which are essential prerequisites to intensive diversified agriculture and speedy industrialization and increased productivity.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, "the basic aim of our economic development is to free our economy from alien control and domination."<sup>12</sup>

In spite of these intentions, Nkrumah's government was overthrown in a military coup on February 28, 1966.

Lt. Gen. A. A. Ankrah, Chairperson of the National Liberation Council which overthrew the Nkrumah government, sought to provide a stronger basis for national development. "The major task facing the Government was to reverse these trends set by the Nkrumah regime and to lay the foundations for resumed economic growth."<sup>13</sup> This position was confirmed by A. A. Afrifa, a member of the N.L.C. He said, "Now our objective is to reactivate the economy,

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<sup>11</sup>Ghana, Government Economic Policy Statement, Work and Happiness Program (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1963), para. 6-8.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., para. 16.

<sup>13</sup>Nii Omaboe, Developments in the Ghanaian Economy (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1969), p. 2.

increase production and employment and lay the foundations for resumed economic growth."<sup>14</sup>

After general elections held on August 29, 1969, a civilian government headed by Dr. K. A. Busia, a political advisor to the N.L.C., took over the military regime. Busia's Minister of Finance, J. H. Mensah, and the Minister of Trade, R. A. Quarshie, were both economic advisors to the N.L.C. Thus, the Government of Dr. Busia, through its previous association with the N.L.C., in essence followed the same economic policies.

The major economic policies under the Nkrumah and the N.L.C. and later the Busia governments focused on two major sectors of the economy--agriculture and industry.

Under Nkrumah's government the strategy for agricultural development was essentially similar to the industrial development strategy. The *raison d'etre* was that the government did not want to see a vast structural gap exist between the two sectors.<sup>15</sup>

The National Liberation Council and the Busia Government recognized the importance of the two sectors

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<sup>14</sup>Akwasi A. Afrifa, New Deal for Ghana's Economy (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1967), p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Seven Year Development Plan (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1963), p. i.

of the economy too and proceeded to lay down clear economic guidelines for achieving increased national welfare and development. In the field of agriculture, the general objective was to increase agricultural output to meet Ghana's food consumption and to provide for export. Government industrial policy emphasized private enterprise with a view to achieving increased industrial output. This position was the direct opposite of the approach under Nkrumah which emphasized State participation in all sectors of the economy.<sup>16</sup>

Despite these differences in the approach that characterized the various regimes, the economic issues were equally overwhelming for all three governments and remained their primary concerns. Considering the magnitude of these economic problems, the two mass circulating dailies, Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, both government-controlled, would be expected to reflect concern with these issues. According to Dennis Wilcox, "Many observers feel that the primary role of the press in developing areas, including Africa, is to act as an arm of government policy. A random survey of African countries seems to document this contention."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Government Economic Policy 1967-68 (Accra: State Publishing Corporation, 1967), p. 8; Government Industrial Policy, 1968 (Accra: State Publishing Corporation, 1968), p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Dennis Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa: Philosophy and Control (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1975), p. 22.

It is the contention of this study that the editorials of the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times would reflect official government policy. Both papers are in the unique position of having come under the control of the three political regimes in Ghana in the period under study.

Hachten supports this view when he argues that in all Africa:

A mass media system is also a kind of mirror image of a nation's political and economic structure. Each is sensitive to the other. Newspapers . . . and other media do not operate in a vacuum: their reach, their freedom, and audiences are determined by the context of the nation in which they operate.<sup>18</sup>

#### Justification for the Study

This study seeks to indicate the part the press played in the economic development process in Ghana. The role of the press must be seen in the context of the forum that it provided for public education on the complexities of economic development.

A review of the literature on the role of mass communication in development in the 1960s emphasized a positive relationship between communication and development.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>William A. Hachten, Muffled Drums: The News Media in Africa (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1971), p. XV.

<sup>19</sup>Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 20; Lucian W. Pye, ed., Communications

However, a number of more recent studies conducted in the late 60s and 70s cast much doubt on the role that the mass media play in national development in the third world countries.<sup>20</sup> Several assumptions made about the mass media in Africa have been grounded in theories rooted in Western European countries. It is hoped that by re-evaluating the role of the press within the norms and sanctions of Ghanaian society, this study will provide a more realistic basis for criticism of the press in Ghana.

### The Methodology

Two major approaches were used in this study. The first was basically quantitative. A sample of twenty-one editorials was drawn from each of the three political regimes under study:

1. The Nkrumah regime--July 1, 1960-February 24, 1966

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and Political Development (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 8; F. W. Frey, "The Mass Media and Rural Development in Turkey," in Rural Development Research Report 3 (Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Institute for International Studies, 1966), p. 10.

<sup>20</sup>Herman Felstenhausen, "Conceptual Limits of Development Communication Theory," presented at the Association for Education in Journalism, Columbia, South Carolina (November 1967); Shawki Barghouti, "The Role of Communication in Jordan's Rural Development," Journalism Quarterly 40 (Summer 1965):418-24.



2. The N.L.C. regime--February 25, 1966-August 30, 1969
3. The Busia regime--August 31, 1969-January 13, 1972

A sample was taken from the two newspapers every  $3\frac{1}{2}$  months in the Nkrumah regime, every 2 months in the N.L.C. regime and every  $1\frac{1}{2}$  months in the Busia regime in order to yield equal size samples.

In each political period, the editorials were classified into two major categories according to their coverage of: (a) stated government policy in agricultural development and (b) stated government policy in industrial development. A panel was used to determine whether the selected editorials were for or against the stated government policy in agricultural and industrial development. The stated government policy was determined from the various economic bulletins that each regime released. From this was determined the direction of the coverage that the two papers gave to the national question of economic development in each regime.

Whether or not the editorials were explicative or not of the stated government policy was determined by a panel to eliminate personal biases. The panel made up of three persons--a visiting Ghanaian scholar to the African Studies Center, a Research Fellow and a Nursing

Sister all of Ghana--categorized the editorials on the basis of a scale drawn up.

The panel judged whether the editorials were critical, i.e., did they state government policy and were openly in disagreement without providing an alternative measure? Secondly, were the editorials somewhat critical, i.e., did they state government policy, disagreed with parts of it and provided alternative policies and/or implementation strategies? And thirdly, were they supportive, i.e., did they state government policy and fully support it?

The panel indicated that on the average, 70 percent of the editorials were somewhat critical; 20 percent were supportive and only 10 percent were critical. This pattern is also reflected when the editorials were categorized in terms of policy areas. There were not significant differences between the two papers either. Therefore, what this categorization indicates is that a predominant number of the editorials exercised their function of constructive criticism--a form of criticism which is a reflection of the basic values of Ghanaian society.

The second major approach to this study utilized documentary evidence. This approach was used to give an in-depth analysis of the editorials coded as explicative or nonexplicative. This approach sought to evaluate critically the insights that these editorials presented

into the stated government policy in economic development in the period under study. Studies and critiques of Ghanaian economic policy were used as a basis for this analysis.

### Review of Literature

This study focuses on the editorial comment on economic issues in Ghana. A critical question, therefore, relates to the role and function of the editorial. There is general agreement in the literature on the function of the editorial page. The editorial page is the designated place for the expression of the paper's opinions. In his essay on "Change and Continuity," Merlo J. Pussey argues that editorials should comment on the most significant events and trends of the time. "Today the task of the editorial writer is to run down facts, to analyse complex problems and to offer some light on murky situations; even when specific solutions are not at hand (the editor) has a unique opportunity to know how the world wags and to help it wag in the right direction."<sup>21</sup>

Though interpretative reporting of the news has increased in recent times, the analytical and explicative function of the news remains the preserve of the editorial pages. Stephen S. Rosenfeld's essay on "Research and

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<sup>21</sup>Merlo J. Pussey, "Change and Continuity," in The Editorial Page, ed. Laura Longley Babb (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), p. 98.

Writing" for the editorial underscores the point that "what a good editorial ought to do is assert a particular vision of the society in which the problem has arisen."<sup>22</sup> Many editorials present a case. They address specific complex problems. These problems consist of conditioning factors in the particular society. These conditioning factors may be political, economic or social factors.

In his book The Opinion Function, Hulteng points out further that most opinion writers are not totally free agents. The editor must fit within the policy context of the controlling interests in the newspaper. Editorials enunciate policy positions supported by the newspaper, or a chain of newspapers, not the editor's personal view alone.<sup>23</sup> In this respect the Ghanaian Times made its editorial policy clear at its inception, which is important to evaluating its performance. It states, "Our policy will be to support the government; of course whenever and wherever necessary we shall criticize it objectively."<sup>24</sup> The attitudes of the political leaders who control the mass media in Ghana, particularly their

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<sup>22</sup>Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Research and Writing," in The Editorial, ed. Laura Longley Babb (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), p. 197.

<sup>23</sup>John L. Hulteng, The Opinion Function: Editorial and Interpretative Writing for the News Media (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>24</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 4 March 1958, p. 2.

attitudes concerning the degree of press support, therefore become equally important.

There is a fairly general agreement in mass communication literature as to what attitudes political leaders in Africa have about the role and functions of the press in the development process. Wilcox distinguishes four major themes: (a) harnessing the press for nation building; (b) utilizing the press to achieve national unity; (c) serving as an instrument for constructive criticism; and (d) serving as an agency for mass communication.<sup>25</sup> Clearly, these themes are all interrelated. In the day-to-day functioning of the press, it is difficult to focus on one to the exclusion of the other.

The first major theme, i.e., the press as an instrument for nation building, is based on the rationale that in the prevailing social and economic circumstances, all segments of society have to be mobilized in order to realize the goals set out by governments for the achievement of public welfare and national development. Agyeman, editor of the Ghanaian Sunday Mirror (the Sunday edition of the Daily Graphic), puts it succinctly: "Africa needs all its resources and people for nation building and

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<sup>25</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 24.

therefore cannot afford dissident newspapers."<sup>26</sup> The role of the press as an agent for creating national unity is directly related to the role of the press in nation building. This concept of the press is partly grounded in the history of how modern African nations were created. The fact is that African nations were not created on any logical ethnic or linguistic basis. Colonialism brought together disparate peoples of different backgrounds and beliefs. The common basis for national unity was absent. Thus, at the time of political independence, African leaders faced not only the problem of limited economic resources and capabilities in overcoming underdevelopment, but also the problem of harnessing the opposing tendencies that were generated by bringing different peoples into a unified fold for national development.

Therefore, at independence the struggle was no longer one against colonial domination, but against disunity and underdevelopment. The press was again expected to act as a mobilizing force that would generate the atmosphere of consensus needed in the struggle, this time for national development. Thus the problem of national integration was as much the responsibility of the government as it was for the press and vice versa.

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<sup>26</sup>Eddie Agyeman, "Freedom of Expression in a Government Newspaper in Ghana," in Reporting Africa, ed. Olav Stokke (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Affairs, 1971), p. 50.

The mass media are also considered as a primary instrument of education. In an unpublished master's thesis, Guy M. Roppa argues that: "information and education become synonymous in a developing country."<sup>27</sup> Information and education of the public, about government policies meant to achieve national progress, become a core function of the press. A salient and fundamental outlet for information about economic policies that enlightens the citizen and informs the people about government policies is the mass circulating daily newspaper. It becomes, then, the responsibility of the newspaper to provide the channel through which the people can be informed about the perplexing issues of development.

The term constructive or responsible criticism is subject to varying interpretations. The important point of view here, however, was expressed in a pan-African resolution on the role of the press. This resolution emphasized the fact that constructive criticism should imply contributions to thought and discussion of matters of public policy.<sup>28</sup> It should also be noted that

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<sup>27</sup>Guy M. Roppa, "Communication for Modernization in a Nomadic Society: Conditions and Prospects in Somalia" (Master's thesis, Indiana University, 1970), p. 221.

<sup>28</sup>Albert Nwanko, "Utopia and Reality in African Mass Media: A Case Study" (paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Penn., November 9, 1972), p. 6.

the concept of constructive criticism could and did become a political expedient for some leaders who regarded unfavorable comment as disloyalty or subversion. Some students of the African press would argue that any attempt to stifle "constructive criticism" is an attempt to curtail the freedom of the press. Hachten sums up a basic problem of the conceptual arguments in delineating press philosophies in Africa. Hachten puts it this way: "Freedom of the press is a culture-bound concept of the West that does not travel well--as yet--to Africa."<sup>29</sup>

One important question in this respect relates to whether government control of the press in Ghana necessarily leads to an absence of freedom of the press as measured by editorial criticism. Siebert hypothesizes that the level of editorial support of government policies is inversely related to the amount of freedom the press has or perceived itself as having.<sup>30</sup> What is important here is that Siebert's theory is based on the press in England in the 18th century. The relevance of such a theory to the situation of the press in other countries

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<sup>29</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 50; Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 29.

<sup>30</sup>Fredrick S. Siebert, Freedom of the Press in England 1476-1776: The Rise and Decline of Government Controls (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), p. 30.



has been questioned by some writers.<sup>31</sup> Louis Ramiro Beltran argues that:

If a researcher, in attempting to study the social behavior of ants, denied the influence on them of their environment, he would be seriously criticized by his colleagues for his obvious blindness--the gross artificiality of his optics. Yet when a researcher studies the communication behavior of humans with an almost total disregard for the determinant influence of the organizational factors of their society, few of his colleagues condemn him. Is this way of conducting research realistic, logical and scientific?<sup>32</sup>

Other researchers like Felstehausen are more pointed in their arguments and maintain that: "Without a model which can account for the broad features of the social and economic system and the factors which govern it, such as norms, sanctions, roles (and) hierarchies . . . a theory of communication (the press) is meaningless."<sup>33</sup>

In the case of Ghana, it has to be recognized that a different set of assumptions governed the relationship between the government and the press. The relationship between the two modern institutions is largely influenced by traditional Ghanaian values. In the words of M. J.

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<sup>31</sup>Herman Felstehausen, "Conceptual Limits of Development Communications Theory"; Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 40.

<sup>32</sup>Louis Ramiro Beltran S., "Alien Premises, Objects, and Methods in Latin American Communication Research," in Communication Research (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications Inc., 1976), Vol. 3, p. 110.

<sup>33</sup>Felstehausen, "Conceptual Limits of Development Communications Theory," p. 40.

Herskovits "there are no fresh cultural slates on which a foreign way of life can be newly inscribed. What is taken over is projected against pre-existing patterns. . . ." <sup>34</sup> The linguist, the spokesperson of the chief, had and still has a role similar to the role that the modern press in Ghana performs today. The linguist monitored information from the chief to his people and vice versa. Without doubt, the linguist was under the control of the chief as a political head. But this did not exclude the fact that the linguist could and did in fact criticize the chief in representing the views of the representatives of the people.

This criticism was expected and was welcome as being important for the proper functioning of the office of chief. The importance of the office of the linguist in keeping information flowing--even when it involved criticism is recognized by the indigenous constitutions of the peoples of the Gold Coast. Since the authority of the chief did not preclude "destoolment" or removal from office, the linguist played a central role. A

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<sup>34</sup> M. J. Herskovits, "Some Contemporary Developments in Sub-Saharan Africa," in Africa in the Modern World, ed. C. W. Stillman (New York: Augenstein, 1955), p. 278.

chief's loss of popularity, and a habitual disregard of criticism from his people's representatives often meant loss of office.<sup>35</sup>

The institution of chieftaincy itself serves as a link between the ancestors and the people. It symbolizes the unity between the living members and the ancestors and the society's continuity through time.\* Thus, criticism addressed to the chief was often properly expressed in riddles, implied comments, proverbs, and literary devices in the indigenous oral literature. Even though criticism was welcome in the indigenous culture, and was seen as necessary, individuals who failed to observe the accepted norms of usage and therefore overstepped the bounds of appropriate decorum found themselves "attacked or perhaps routed."<sup>36</sup> The linguist, therefore, was to serve the interest of the chief as well as the people. His ability to integrate the high expectations

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<sup>35</sup> Joseph B. Danquah, Obligations in Akan Society (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 4; J. E. Casley Hayford, Gold Coast Native Institutions (London: Philips, 1904), p. 38.

\* The sanctity of the chief also has considerable relevance to modern political developments in Ghana. In the language of Apter, "the chieftaincy as a sanctional source, a symbolic referent, an integrational integer, and for sub-ethnic and ethnic definition, represents the orientational base out of which the charismatic authority of Nkrumah . . . developed." The Gold Coast in Transition (Princeton: University Press, 1955), p. 108.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Bohannan and Philip Curtin, Africa and Africans (New York: The Natural History Press, 1971), p. 139.

of the chief and elders on the one hand and the people on the other, marks the core value attached to the institution.

The colonial governments in Africa and elsewhere introduced new political institutions and agents of communication including the press. In their bid to institute their own values in Africa they were not able to eliminate the treasured and well-tried values of the indigenous people. The press in modern Ghana could not overlook these values in the performance of its functions. In the indigenous culture in Ghana, however much one disagreed with the chief, "you could not call him a fool in the face."<sup>37</sup> It is within this framework that the modern press in Ghana has had to function.

Thus, in evaluating the role of the press in terms of the degree of freedom vis-a-vis editorial criticism of government policy, recognition must be given to the values that Ghanaians hold as legitimate. The tradition of criticism is rooted in the language use of the linguist. This usage includes proverbs, idioms, etc., that serve to castigate the chief without demeaning him or reducing the effectiveness of the institution itself. If the press is likened to the position of a linguist, it follows that irrespective of Government control, with

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<sup>37</sup> David Kimble, A Political History of Ghana 1850-1928 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 127.

an acceptable standard of usage and decorum the press could still be critical. At the same time, the explicative function of explaining and informing the government on the one hand and the citizens on the other about issues concerning government policy remain fundamental.

Within this broad preview of Ghanaian traditional values, the perceived function and roles of the press, and the control exercised over it by government, one can hypothesize as follows:

Hypothesis I:

Government control of the press in Ghana is not directly related to the degree of freedom of the press in Ghana.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that throughout the period under study editorial criticism was evident.

Hypothesis II:

The explicative function of the editorials is directly related to the role that government expected the press to play in providing explanation of government policies.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that the economic policy issues which the editorials addressed were meant to provide information and explanation of Government policies. And by doing so provided a medium for channeling information from Government to the people and vice versa.

It has to be further recognized that the press itself is a modern and foreign phenomenon in Ghana. But in evaluating this agent of communication, one has to take into account the indigenous values as well as the traditions which the British colonial government sought to establish in relation to the press vis-a-vis economic and political domination. No doubt, the Ghanaian governments also had expectations of the press. All together these were the major influences which must be taken into account in determining the role of the press in Ghana in the period under study.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HISTORY AND CONTROL OF THE DAILY GRAPHIC AND GHANAIAAN TIMES IN GHANA

This chapter focuses on the impact of the political and economic environment, i.e., colonialism and post independence nationalism and how these shaped the history and control of the press in Ghana.

The Daily Graphic, whose editorial opinion will be analyzed in this study, was established in 1950 by the then London-based Daily Mirror group. This group, owned by Cecil King, operated similar daily papers in Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

As with other British colonial investments in West Africa, profit was a primary motive of the owners of the Daily Graphic. As Jones-Quartey wrote, "The predominant bias of the foreign owned press was economic."<sup>1</sup> Several factors combined to make Ghana economically

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<sup>1</sup>K. A. B. Jones-Quartey, Summary History of the Ghana Press (Accra: State Publishing Corporation, 1977), p. 27.

viable for this investment. The British dominated the economy of Ghana at this time and British colonial policy was geared toward the protection of British investment in the colonial territories.<sup>2</sup>

Rosalynde Ainslie notes that this was the period after the war when taxation was abnormally high, and many British companies were diversifying their interests overseas.<sup>3</sup> Cecil King was no exception. As Jones-Quartey points out, the shareholding in the company was strictly limited to British nationals. The capital sum put into the operation of the Daily Graphic illustrated the difference between the "haves" and the "have nots."<sup>4</sup> In this case the "haves" were the British investors. Although Quartey says that its original capitalization could never be easily given, he estimates from indirect evidence that "the total capitalization over the first two or three years must have ranged near the 300,000 pounds mark, plus or minus."<sup>5</sup> The Daily Graphic certainly had an economic advantage over the indigenously operated newspapers.

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<sup>2</sup>Elinor Burns, British Imperialism in West Africa (London: Labour Research Department Publications, 1927), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Rosalynde Ainslie, The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present (New York: Walker, 1967), p. 57.

<sup>4</sup>Jones-Quartey, History of the Ghana Press, pp. 23-24.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 30-31.



The indigenous investor in the newspaper business had to work against the absence of loans or shares and of any credit from the British-owned banks. The Ghanaian press had no reserves and no sinking fund. Credit, whenever it could be granted, was "no more than a 15-day grace period guaranteed against failure--or else legal proceedings would ensue."<sup>6</sup>

In comparison, the expenditure figures of the Daily Graphic operations give an idea of the economic advantage that the foreign-owned companies enjoyed in the colonial territory.

They spent, for instance, over 410,000 per annum on all operations, and paid to approximately 30 senior staff a salary of 600 upwards, each, per annum. The total annual salary bill run up to 120,000; and transport transactions alone cost more than 45,000 involving about 15 commercial vehicles and a large number of cars. On the income side it was possible to estimate that this company received approximately 4,300 gross taking per week from the net sales of their newspapers.  
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In keeping with British commercial interests, it was easy to transfer all these profits to England.<sup>8</sup> Thus the Daily Graphic was able to cope with the obstacles which inhibited the development of African dailies. Foreign

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<sup>6</sup>Jones-Quartey, History of the Ghana Press, p. 33.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 32; = British Pound Sterling.

<sup>8</sup>N. A. Cox-George, Studies in Finance and Development: The Gold Coast (Ghana) Experience 1914-1950 (London: Dennis Dobson, 1973), p. 26.

exchange earned by the Daily Graphic enabled it to meet the high cost of presses, typesetting equipment and newsprint imported into the Colony from Britain.<sup>9</sup>

British economic policy had also produced a sizable number of British companies operating in the Gold Coast at this time. These companies increased the income of the Daily Graphic by advertising in it. Hachten observed that the Daily Graphic was "the only paper with classified advertisement, it carried more advertisement than all the other papers put together."<sup>10</sup> A glance at the classified advertisement pages of the Daily Graphic reveals that it served primarily British colonial economic interests.

By operating in the safe economic environment provided by the British colonial government, the Daily Graphic became the widest circulating newspaper in the country. "Printed on excellent equipment and distributed by its own trucks, [the Daily Graphic] sold about 30,000 copies in Kumasi, 17,000 in Takoradi and 9,000 in the Volta Region."<sup>11</sup>

British colonial education policy in the Gold Coast by the 1950s had led to the development of urban cultures, urban elites and an increasing political

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<sup>9</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

awareness of British colonial domination.<sup>12</sup> With increases in the number of people receiving formal education it was reasonable to expect increases in newspaper readership and circulation. Hachten gives some insight into the educational situation in the Gold Coast. He noted that "the number of children attending primary schools in Ghana rose from 1500 in 1902 to 50,000 in 1924, to 65,000 in 1935; then more steeply to 185,000 in 1945, 301,000 in 1951 and 456,000 in 1957."<sup>13</sup> The Daily Graphic thus took advantage of this population that was anxious for news in a colony that was the first in Africa to seek and get political freedom from British colonial rule. Ekwelie adds that an unexplained admiration by the early African elites for a literary life provided a fertile soil for the Daily Graphic's investment.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in pursuing its business interest, the Daily Graphic had no problem transferring Fleet Street journalism to this African colony. The Daily Graphic's success was enhanced by

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<sup>12</sup>Francis K. Agbodeka, "Sir Gordon Guggisberg's Contribution to the Development of the Gold Coast 1919-27," in Transactions of Historical Association of Ghana (Accra: University of Ghana Press, 1970), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 150.

<sup>14</sup>Sylvanus Ajana Ekwelie, The Press in Gold Coast Nationalism, 1890-1957 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1971), p. 262.

the fact that the local elite and the urban middle class had already been exposed to this English literary form and had developed a taste for it.<sup>15</sup>

Wilcox provides some insight into the preponderance of European content in the African newspapers. He argues that, in the mind of the British, the press was a good media for furthering the acculturation of Africans in the style, dress, speech, tastes and social norms of Western society.<sup>16</sup>

The Daily Graphic was more oriented toward the maintenance of British colonial policy than toward African aspirations. Two examples from the Daily Graphic will illustrate the significant point here. In a Trade Union Congress conflict in Ghana, 50,000 members of the Union refused to attend the annual convention to be held in Ghana's capital city of Accra. In the Sept. 21, 1955 editorial, the Daily Graphic took the following stand: "It should be a matter to be left to men who understand these things." In the estimation of the Daily Graphic, such a man was one Hammerton, who had been appointed by the British colonial government. In the week that followed, the Daily Graphic devoted its editorial columns to eulogizing the rare qualities of Hammerton. He was

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<sup>15</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 25.

<sup>16</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 8.

described as competent to deal with the crisis in the Trade Union in Ghana because he was "an Oxford graduate with impeachable integrity. . . ." <sup>17</sup>

A similar stand was taken by the Daily Graphic in what was a near constitutional crisis in the colony in the 1950s. The Daily Graphic again admonished Ghanaians in its editorials to turn to the British colonial government to solve the problem. The rationale of the paper was that the mass of the Ghanaian people being "uneducated were very gullible" and could not be expected to take the right kinds of decisions against British colonialism. Again the Daily Graphic turned to the British government to appoint an Oxford graduate to resolve the constitutional crisis. <sup>18</sup>

Further evidence of British colonial interests being served by the Daily Graphic were in the economic area. The Daily Graphic's pages were full of advertisements of European and British-made goods. British interests found reflection in the amount of news coverage given to a booming export trade from the colony of primary agricultural products and minerals. The advertisements ranged from "the largest ever men's wear" catalogues from British companies in Natal, South Africa, to British-made

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<sup>17</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 28 September 1955.

<sup>18</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 27 September 1955.

Ostermilk guaranteed to give African natives "straight and sturdy backs."<sup>19</sup> Hachten's position that the Daily Graphic was staffed editorially by Africans and never identified with the colonial government is also untenable.<sup>20</sup> Granting that the paper was staffed editorially by Africans, editorial policy was established in London. In any case, the editor of the Daily Graphic, Mr. Bankole Timothy, was not a Ghanaian and although he was a West African, he was more at home with British interests than African interests. This is reflected in a feature article he wrote in 1957, "What Next Kwame," in which he was more concerned with the future of British Democratic practices after independence than the aspirations of Ghanaians.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, the people of the Gold Coast did not identify their national aspirations with the Daily Graphic. As Ekwelie points out, "The natives of the Gold Coast . . . regarded the Mirror newspapers as foreign publications and would be furious if the Daily Graphic dabbled into the affairs of the nation."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 25 September 1955.

<sup>20</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 147.

<sup>21</sup>"What Next Kwame?" Daily Graphic, 6 October 1957.

<sup>22</sup>Ekwelie, The Press in Gold Coast Nationalism, p. 262.

Furthermore, the Daily Graphic must have managed to please the British colonial government, for in the 1950s when it was founded the colonial government subjected the indigenous Accra Evening News to very severe control. In 1950, the colonial administration banned the Accra Evening News and arrested its editors for sedition. The paper was agitating for self-government for the people of the colony.<sup>23</sup>

According to Wilcox, the British never laid down any clear principles to guarantee the freedom of the press in the colonies. As a result the freedom or suppression of the press depended entirely on the inclination of the local governor.

Many of these colonial officials continually sought to control the newspapers by initiating prosecutions for seditious libel. They proposed or passed restrictive laws based on adaptations of obsolete eighteenth century laws in England.<sup>24</sup>

The clash between the Accra Evening News and the colonial governor, which culminated in the arrest of its editors, came when among the editors was Nkrumah, later the first Prime Minister of independent Ghana. The Evening News, whose editorial policy was to "titilate,

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<sup>23</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

scintillate and scandalize," was closely identified with the national aspirations of the people of the Gold Coast.<sup>25</sup>

Other controls of the press in Ghana came in the form of the criminal code. This legislative instrument of the British government "allowed the governor to prohibit importation into the Gold Coast of any newspaper, book or document he felt was contrary to the public interest."<sup>26</sup>

In summary, the history and functioning of the Daily Graphic was shaped by commercial interests. In its operation it had a decided advantage in terms of financial support from other British firms. At the same time it enjoyed the patronage of the British colonial administration to the extent that the types of control exercised over indigenous newspapers were minimally present if not altogether absent. The controls exercised over nationalist papers like the Accra Evening News were more stringent. The law books clearly spelled out the laws on sedition and the criminal code left no doubt as to the punitive measures that could be visited upon a publisher for not conforming to the demands of British colonialism.

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<sup>25</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 169.

<sup>26</sup>Walter Bunge, "Some Aspects of Press Law in Africa" (paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism Annual Meeting, Berkeley, California, August 1969).



The relationship between the colonial administration and the Daily Graphic was of the libertarian type, more so because they had common economic interests in Ghana. On the other hand the relationship between the colonial administration and the nationalist press was in the authoritarian tradition. This was the dominant and most pervasive mode of control during the colonial period. Following this ethic, a highly libertarian government would have been needed after Ghana's independence to depart from this entrenched path of press control. After independence, however, other issues seemed to be of more pragmatic import than questions of an independent press or press rights. Thus in examining the history and control of the press today, it is important to take account not only of the precedents set in the past, but political and economic forces of Ghana at the time of political independence.

In this respect, Wilcox suggests that control and operation of the press in many African nations today are not really "the result of philosophic guidelines or enunciated policy but a reaction to the problems of stability and survival."<sup>27</sup> This viewpoint holds only to a point. In the case of Ghana, nationalist governments, particularly the Nkrumah Government, had definite guidelines with regard to the control and operation of

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<sup>27</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 113.

the press in the country. Quartey is instructive in this respect. He notes that in 1959/60, the substantive law of the press in Ghana consisted of an ordinance whose short title was: The Book and Newspaper Registration Ordinance. It was established in 1857 by the British colonial government and amended in 1950, 1952 and 1958. The Ordinance laid down specific government policy for the operation of newspapers in the country. The Ordinance indicated that three copies of such publications should be placed with the government, including all essential descriptive facts about the paper itself. Information about the proprietors, editors and publisher of such books or newspapers was also required. Penalties for infringement of these involved mainly fines.<sup>28</sup>

As outlined in the introduction, at the time that Ghana became independent on March 6, 1957, pressing economic and social problems threatened the stability of the nation. The economy was fragile, plagued especially by balance-of-payment problems. Though the production and export of cocoa was booming, foreign exchange earnings were declining. In the face of these difficulties, the highest circulating newspaper was in the control of an English family. As the independent government in Ghana saw it, all agencies of the independent nation had to be harnessed to overcome the problems of the country.

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<sup>28</sup> Jones-Quartey, History of the Ghana Press, p. 38.

In the post independence period, therefore, several of the foreign-owned newspapers in Africa were taken over by national governments. The Daily Graphic was one of these.

Hachten misses the point about the takeover of the Daily Graphic when he argues that "as a privately owned paper, its success in both circulation and advertising was an embarrassment to the government's News and Times."<sup>29</sup> According to Hachten, Cecil King, "seeing the handwriting on the wall . . . sold the paper to the Nkrumah Government, which placed it under a government trust and appointed a new board of directors favorable to the government."<sup>30</sup> Hachten fails to give any recognition to the prevailing social, political and economic conditions of the time.

Observing the takeover of the expatriate press in post independent Africa, Wilcox and Coleman emphasize the political function of the press in relation to the takeover. Wilcox argues that "independence brought nationalism into full bloom and many of the symbols of the colonial era, including foreign-owned newspapers, found their days numbered."<sup>31</sup> Coleman reiterates the

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<sup>29</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 196.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 44.

same point when he says that the colonial press merely "kept reminding the African daily of his subordinate role and confirming in his mind the hopelessness of his political future."<sup>32</sup> But what is significant here is that neither Wilcox nor Coleman sees the economic question as equally important in the takeover of the press in post independent Africa.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, it is clear that Nkrumah did not perceive the press in Ghana in the same way as the adherents of the "free market place of ideas" perceived the functions of the press. This is the basis of considerable misunderstanding. Much of the criticism of the press under Nkrumah seems to misplace its emphasis by taking a cue from the commonly accepted Western theories of the freedom of the press. For example, Herbert Unegbu, editor of the West African Pilot, criticized Ghana's press under Nkrumah as "a highly sophisticated propaganda organ to disseminate the doctrines of Nkrumahism . . . the Ghanaian press being simply the mouthpiece of the government."<sup>34</sup> T. D. Baffoe, editor of the Ghanaian Times

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<sup>32</sup>James S. Coleman, "Nationalism in Tropical Africa," in Independent Black Africa: The Politics of Freedom, ed. William J. Hanna (Chicago: Rand McNally Press, 1964), p. 374.

<sup>33</sup>Jones-Quartey, History of the Ghana Press, p. 27.

<sup>34</sup>Tom Hopkinson, "A New Age of Newspapers in Africa," Gazette 14 (1968):81.

during Nkrumah's term of office declared that his paper was merely an extension of the government.<sup>35</sup>

As Wilcox points out, the commonly accepted theories of press freedom do not adequately explain the basis of the control and philosophy of the press in black Africa.<sup>36</sup> The most influential theories of press freedom are those in Siebert's Four Theories of the Press. As Wilcox points out, all its four categories--Authoritarian, Soviet Communist, Libertarian and Social Responsibility--seem to have little relevance to the African press.

The major force within the authoritarian concept is the overriding power of the State in controlling and manipulating individual liberties. One aspect is the suppression of dissenting views rather than the use of the press as a sounding board of opinions as a means of promoting national growth and development. The theory emphasizes the presence of a privately owned press which is heavily controlled. However, in Africa the prevalent pattern is for the government to own and operate the press.

The Soviet Communist theory is rooted in the ideology of Marx and Lenin and leaves out non-Communist

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<sup>35</sup> Rosalynde Ainslie, The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present (New York: Walker, 1968), p. 67.

<sup>36</sup> Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 102.

nations that utilize the press as an agent of national development. The Libertarian theory is also inapplicable.

As Wilcox points out, it is based on:

The historical evolution of western democratic concepts derived from universal literacy and the weakening of traditional monarchies. The social responsibility theory is difficult to operationalize in the society from which it takes its roots. Moreover, the Hutchins Commission on the Freedom of the Press was primarily concerned with the maintenance of the free market place of ideas in an age when prohibitive costs restricted media ownership to only a few individuals or giant corporations.<sup>37</sup>

Such a theory, which is grounded in the problems of a post industrial society, has little relevance for the nations of Africa.

Hachten notes the inherent weaknesses in Siebert's theories and suggests the following major categories: neo-Communist, authoritarian and libertarian.<sup>38</sup> In his view the Libertarian Theory hardly has any use in Africa. Like Siebert's four theories, Hachten is tied to press ownership in determining the difference between neo-Communist and authoritarian. As Wilcox says, the model is too simplistic. "It fails to recognize that wholly owned governmental press systems can be more authoritarian than neo-Communistic."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>38</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 20.

<sup>39</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 112.

Wilcox discusses Ralph Lowenstein's two-tier approach which classifies press systems by ownership on the one hand and by press philosophy on another. By the first classification, the three major categories are private, multi-party and government ownership. In the second tier, which categorizes press philosophies, he has the following: authoritarian, social centralist, libertarian and social-libertarian. The social centralist removes the Soviet Communist ingredient as a philosophical base and recognizes that many African nations harness the press for promotional goals on the basis of other considerations. While this category seems to describe best the philosophy of the press under Nkrumah, the definitions are not rigorous enough, and as Wilcox points out the various categories overlap in many ways.<sup>40</sup>

The inapplicability of the Western theory of freedom of the press which emphasizes the neutrality of the journalist and reporting of the news was forcefully discussed by Nkrumah. He argued that in the Western Nations themselves this theory was largely inapplicable.

The big news agencies, papers, radio and television reflect the bias and prejudices of their publishers and proprietors. This is shown in the choice of the stories which are published, the way the facts are arranged. . . .<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>41</sup>Daily Graphic, 20 September 1965, p. 1.

He argued that in reporting African events in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau, the freedom fighters are called rebels while those seeking to deny them freedom are referred to as freedom fighters.

We are emerging from colonialism and we are being stifled by imperialism and neo-colonialism. We face a long, hard life-and-death struggle in which all our people are engaged. How can the journalist be "neutral" in circumstances as these?<sup>42</sup>

Thus the journalist, as Nkrumah saw the issues, must write for the country's people, because their destinies depended on it. The journalist had to inform the people on what the governments were doing; what was happening to compatriots elsewhere in Africa; the attempts to corrupt and destroy their national development through the operation of intelligence agencies. Nkrumah asserted that:

The revolutionary journalist writes for the people. His audience is first and foremost Africa and then the rest of the world. Therefore, he bears in mind the interests, education and psychology of his audience in everything he writes.<sup>43</sup>

Thus the journalist, in Nkrumah's view, is clearly one geared toward the defeat of imperialism and neo-colonialism and the transformation of the economies of African nations.

Thus it is within this context that the control and operation of the press in Africa and in Ghana in particular should be examined. Furthermore, writers on the press in Ghana seem to suggest that because the press is owned by the government, it follows that freedom of the

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.



press, as measured by criticism of government policies, is necessarily absent. This relationship has been established by pointing mainly to the ineffectiveness of or disappearance of opposition newspapers. The question which seems to receive less consideration is whether the existing controlled press does exhibit criticisms of officials and policies of government. It would seem reasonable to evaluate the press in Ghana by focusing on the potential societal role that the African heads of State assign to the African press. Nkrumah and all his successors in Ghana sought to harness the press for national development.

Recognizing the critical function of the press prior to political independence, the government established the Guinea press which started the Ghanaian Times on March 3, 1958. The government and party-controlled Guinea press, established with public funds, thus produced its first mass circulating morning daily.<sup>44</sup>

In its first editorial, the paper outlined clearly how it visualized its functions. "Our policy will be to support the government in power. Of course, whenever and wherever necessary we shall criticize it

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<sup>44</sup>Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Guinea Press Ltd. (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1967), p. 8.

objectively."<sup>45</sup> The editorial went on to clarify what it meant. "We believe unalterably that the socialist policies of the government are wisely and soundly conceived. . . ."<sup>46</sup>

In his congratulatory message, the minister of information in the Nkrumah Government indicated what was in effect the government's conception of the functions of the press. He hoped the paper had come "to assist the government in its determination to exterminate violence, dishonesty, ignorance, poverty, illiteracy, disease and squalor from the social life of our country."<sup>47</sup>

Nkrumah was one of the few African heads of State who expounded a clear and consistent philosophy of the press. Wilcox says he was "the most explicit and consistent advocate of the press as a revolutionary instrument."<sup>48</sup> Nkrumah rejected the concept of private ownership of the press. At the Pan-African Union of Journalists Conference in 1963, he said: "It is part of our revolutionary credo that within the competitive system of capitalism the press cannot function in accordance with a

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<sup>45</sup>Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 168.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 25.

strict regard for the sacredness of facts and it, therefore, should not remain in private hands."<sup>49</sup> Nkrumah continued:

Our revolutionary press must present and carry forward our revolutionary purpose. This is to establish a progressive political and economic system upon our continent that will free men from want and every form of social injustice and enable them to work out their cultural and social destinies in peace and at ease.<sup>50</sup>

At the dedication of the Ghana News Agency building in 1965, he said:

The necessity for a clear ideology of the African revolution must be to view problems in the right perspective so that they [journalists] can write them with insight and understanding. The drum beat of the African revolution must throb in the pages of his newspapers and magazines; it must sound in the voices and feelings of our news readers. To this end, we need a new kind of journalist for the African revolution.<sup>51</sup>

As Nkrumah saw it, the journalist was to "work to serve a society moving in the direction of his own aspirations."<sup>52</sup>

From 1962 until the military coup in 1966, the Nkrumah government was in control of the press in Ghana. Rosalynde Ainslie observed toward the end of the Nkrumah era that:

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<sup>49</sup> International Press Institute (IPI) Report, December 12, 1963, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>51</sup> Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

The period since 1962 has been a revolutionary one for Ghana, in that it has been a period of concentrated national effort, which required the mobilization of the people to support a programme of development and change. The press was to be a principal means of effecting this mobilization, and the attitudes it was to foster were the simplest: loyalty and national pride, commitment to the ideals of national and continental unity, of liberation of the oppressed peoples of Africa, and socialism for Ghana. The figure of the president as the symbol of these ideals, the propagandist tone of the articles, were seen as instruments in fostering the attitudes that national policy required.<sup>53</sup>

Writers on the press in Africa have tended to categorize Nkrumah's successors--The National Liberation Council and Busia Government--as more liberal in the control exercised over the press.<sup>54</sup> However, the basic goals of these successor regimes, as has been pointed out earlier, were no different than those of Nkrumah. The view that the press after Nkrumah was more liberal needs further exploration.

The National Liberation Council, which overthrew Nkrumah, arrested the editors of the major newspapers in the country. The NLC replaced the arrested editors with those loyal to the new government. Clearly this government also sought to control the press for its own goals in national development.

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<sup>53</sup> Ainslie, The Press in Africa, p. 67.

<sup>54</sup> Ainslie, The Press in Africa, p. 246; Hachten, Muffled Drums, p. 179; Loyld Sommerland, "Problems in Developing a Free Enterprise Press in East Africa," Gazette 14 (1968):76.

The Chairman of the NLC, Lt. Gen. J. A. Ankrah, had said in Accra that the press in Ghana would be free to express its political opinions and criticize the government "provided it was constructive."<sup>55</sup> When the Ashanti Pioneer, which had been anti-Nkrumah, started publication again, Colonel Akwasi Afrifa, an NLC member, said:

Those of us who carried out the coup did so in the firm belief to create the needed atmosphere for freedom of expression, the bedrock of all democratic institutions. We fought so that our newspapers should be free to begin this process of democratization. . . . I am aware that the press is owned by the government. But that is no excuse for mediocrity and sycophantic adulation.<sup>56</sup>

What was stated by the NLC and what shortly occurred are difficult to reconcile. Within a few months the new editors of the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times were fired for criticizing the NLC government's award of a contract to an American pharmaceutical firm. The publication of a decree on "Prohibition of Rumor," under which journalists and editors were liable to arrest and fine, further showed the direction of government control of the press. Journalists could have action brought against them if they published anything likely to "cause

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<sup>55</sup>IPI Report, 15 (November 1967):9.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

alarm or despondency . . . disturb the peace . . . or cause disaffection against the NLC."<sup>57</sup>

The NLC was only a transitional government and following general elections in August 1966, the Busia government took control of the government-owned press. The dilemmas which had plagued the previous governments faced the Busia government as well. For example, the name of the editor of the Daily Graphic, Cameroun Dodou, disappeared quietly from the newspaper. No explanation was offered for his removal.<sup>58</sup> However, the fact was that he had written editorials very critical of Government foreign and economic policies. The board of Directors of all major newspapers, news agencies, radio and television were from the party of Dr. Busia. There were dismissals not only of civil servants who were alleged to be anti-government, but journalists who sought to deviate from policies of the Government.

In summary, it is clear that the political and economic conditions in Ghana shaped the history of the press and the control exercised over it. Rather than analyze the press from the usual Western libertarian conception of the freedom of the press, the emphasis here

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<sup>57</sup>"Rumors Decree," Daily Graphic, 25 July 1967, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 8 September 1971.

has been on the potential function that African governments thought the press could perform.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN AGRICULTURAL AND  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA  
1960-1972

In this chapter the concern is to state briefly the agricultural and industrial policies pursued by nationalist governments in Ghana. This is important in so far as it provides a basis for a meaningful analysis of press issues during the period under consideration.

Agriculture is the largest and most important sector of the Ghanaian economy. It employs a large percentage of the labor force and also contributes about 50 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>1</sup> The dominant crop is cocoa, which is the main foreign exchange earner. This dependence on cocoa in this sector of the economy had its roots in British colonial agricultural policy. This set the pattern for the agricultural policy in post independence period of the Nkrumah, NLC, and Busia regimes.

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Birmingham and Neustalt and Omaboe, eds., A Study of Contemporary Ghana (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 8.



Colonial agricultural policy in Ghana focused mainly on cocoa and other cash crops for export to industrial Europe. The colonial government's concern was mainly to maximize the external trade of the colony.<sup>2</sup> This was considered by the colonial government as the surest way to raise revenue to finance colonial government. Thus, by the 1920s, cocoa export contributed to 50 70 percent of the total value of exports.<sup>3</sup>

This emphasis on one crop, cocoa, had a number of implications for the economy of Ghana. There is general agreement among students of the Ghanaian economy that cocoa exports and the revenue accrued from it stimulated the economy. They are apt to point out, however, that this over-emphasis on one crop introduced an imbalance in the economy. In other words, cocoa production was carried out at the expense of food production for home consumption. For example, Dickson suggests that food farming was related to cocoa production to the extent that its expansion was determined by the nature of the cocoa market. "If cocoa prices were favorable,

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<sup>2</sup>La Anyane, Ghana Agriculture (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 12; Kwabena B. Dickson, Historical Geography of Ghana (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Dickson, Historical Geography of Ghana, p. 300.

the tendency was to substitute more cocoa trees for food crops on the farms. . . ."4

Second, it is argued that the national economy had become greatly tied to the prosperity of the cocoa industry. The depression in the Ghanaian economy after the Second World War was indicative of the dangers of Ghana's dependence on one crop. Despite increases in the production of cocoa during the war years, the value of the crop showed considerable decline.<sup>5</sup>

The increases in cocoa production were achieved at the expense of food production. The result was that the country had to depend on imports to supplement domestic supplies. Thus, between 1900 and 1940 food imports constituted one-third of the total import bill.<sup>6</sup>

The tendency toward lagging domestic food production has been reported in the colonial Annual Reports of Agriculture.<sup>7</sup> Food production continued to lag and a recent study showed that food prices still rose sharply in the 1940s as a result of the increased demand and the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>5</sup>Geoffery B. Kay, The Political Economy of Colonialism in Ghana: Documents and Statistics (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>7</sup>Annual Report of the Gold Coast: 1938-39.

country's inability to meet internal food requirements.<sup>8</sup> In this respect, Poleman suggests that for an agricultural country such as Ghana to show food imports of such magnitude is a clear indication of the weakness in its economy.<sup>9</sup> There were efforts to diversify agricultural production by expanding production in copra, cotton, rice and groundnuts. However, this policy of diversification by the colonial government failed.<sup>10</sup>

This was, then, the background that provided the rationale for the policy orientations of the subsequent nationalist governments in Ghana. The nationalist government at independence felt the pace of the development of the Ghanaian economy was unsatisfactory. There was recurrent inflation in the economy and there were budgetary deficits and balance of trade problems. These problems, it was felt, had to be remedied.<sup>11</sup> That these

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<sup>8</sup>Bruce F. Johnston, Stable Food Economies in Western Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 5-6.

<sup>9</sup>Thomas T. Poleman, "The Food Economies of Urban Middle Africa: The Case of Ghana," Food Research Institute Publication 2 (California: University of Stanford, 1961):12.

<sup>10</sup>La Anyane, Ghana Agriculture, pp. 30-33.

<sup>11</sup>Nii Omaboe, "Introductory Survey: A Survey of Contemporary Ghana," in A Study of Contemporary Ghana, eds. Birmingham, Neustalt, and Omaboe (Cambridge, London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 20; Andrew Krassowski, Development and the Debt Trap: Economic Planning and External Borrowing (London: Overseas Development Institute, 1974), p. 30.

problems were fundamental was beyond debate for the three governments under consideration here--Nkrumah, NLC and Busia. What seemed to be at issue was the kind of policies to be pursued to arrest these problems.

The stated government policy in agricultural development under the transformationist approach of the Nkrumah government is given full expression in the Seven Year Development Plan. In a sessional address to Parliament, Nkrumah launched the Plan and stated what type of economy he envisaged for Ghana.

The main tasks of the Plan are: firstly to speed up the rate of growth of our national economy. Secondly, it is to enable us to embark upon the socialist transformation of our economy through the rapid development of the State and Cooperative sectors. Thirdly, it is our aim, by this plan, to eradicate the colonial structure of our economy.<sup>12</sup>

The Seven Year Plan, he argued, embodied a long-term plan which should lead to a self-sustaining economy based on socialist modes of production and distribution: "An economy balanced between industry and agriculture, providing a self-sufficiency of food and supporting secondary industries."<sup>13</sup> Since the economy was to follow a socialist philosophy, the State was expected to set the tone and pattern of the process. But more than anything else, the plan embodied the type of economy that would

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<sup>12</sup>Kwame Nkrumah, "Sessional Address to Parliament," in Government Hansard (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1964), p. 8.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

ensure "rapid economic progress and the enjoyment of modern standard of living."<sup>14</sup>

How was this to be achieved? The productive investments by the state were to be in the most critical sectors--agriculture and industry. In the agricultural sector, the Nkrumah government's policy was quite specific. "The colonial structure of production--based on primary commodities . . . must be completely altered."<sup>15</sup>

The Plan notes that the most readily available way of raising the national income is to concentrate efforts first and foremost on the modernization of agriculture.<sup>16</sup> The rationale the Plan offered for this approach was that, over the years, it had become apparent that the economy could not cope with the demands made on it through imports. Food importation was on the increase, while governmental revenue to support domestic investment remained adequate. The first policy directive of the Plan was, therefore, related to food production. The Plan emphasized that Ghanaian agriculture was unable to keep up with the increasing domestic demand for food.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>15</sup>The Seven Year Development Plan, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

Local food prices have risen steadily while part of the demand for food has been met by increased imports. By 1962 the burden of food imports had become a major factor in the worsening balance of payment situation.<sup>17</sup>

The food deficit was seen as being largely responsible for the general upward trend of the cost of living in Ghana and for increasing social problems.

In the periods when the imbalance between the supply and demand for food has been most acute and food prices have risen most sharply . . . the threat to the standard of living of the people had given rise to a great deal of social tension. It is a part of the social policy of government to keep the prices of food low and hence bring down the cost of living.<sup>18</sup>

The policy of increased food production, therefore, implied an attempt to curb inflation, to solve the balance of payment problem and to reduce importation of food.

The Nkrumah government saw agricultural development as a pre-condition to industrial development. It was felt in this respect that increased agricultural development would provide capital for investment in the industrial sector. The Plan also expected that agriculture would provide raw materials for industry. The plan observed that the farms in Ghana remained small. There was a scarcity of irrigation facilities and of good quality seeds to raise yields. Still, the Nkrumah government felt that the application of mechanical power

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

"wherever it is possible and economical to do so, holds great promise for the improvement of agricultural productivity."<sup>19</sup>

Thus, a second major aspect of agricultural policy had to do with mechanization. It was thought that this would increase food and raw material production while diversifying agriculture at the same time. To mechanize agriculture, however, the plan realized the need for importing capital goods. Since domestic savings remained inadequate, it meant that government had to rely on foreign aid. In this respect, even though investment policy was clearly meant to aid industrial development, some aspects of it were directly related to agriculture. Thus, there was the involvement of foreign investors and international agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Bank in the agricultural sector.

The Nkrumah agricultural policy also took a strong role in agricultural extension services. All extension services formerly under the Ministry of Agriculture were redirected by the new State Organizations. Although the agricultural policy of Nkrumah seemed to emphasize domestic self-sufficiency, the policy makers were also concerned with the export trade. It was the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

policy to maintain Ghana's lead in the international cocoa market since world consumption was expected to rise.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, the policy was to be geared toward broadening the agricultural export sector by concentrating on crops like sugar cane, rubber, citrus, palm oil and rice. Thus, the policy stated:

. . . the basic agricultural development . . . is to concentrate on a limited number of commodities and apply to them all the available technology and agricultural knowledge. These are the ones to satisfy basic nutritional requirements like cereals and fish or that will contribute to amelioration of balance of payments position like sugar, cocoa and rice.<sup>21</sup>

In summary, the agricultural policy during the Nkrumah period was meant to raise the nutritional levels of the population by eliminating the food deficit. Agricultural policy was also geared toward making Ghana less dependent on other countries and giving her a self-sustaining economy.

The National Liberation Council (NLC) which succeeded the Nkrumah government also emphasized the primacy of agricultural development. The policy directive of the government said that:

The immediate preoccupation of the National Liberation Council will be to establish in Ghana a strong progressive welfare society in which no one will have any anxiety about the basic needs of life,

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 73.



about work, food, health and shelter. It will be a society in which the individual Ghanaian will be able to enjoy a modern standard of living based on gainful employment.<sup>22</sup>

To achieve these goals, the government sought to lay a basis for expansion in the productive sectors--agriculture and industry.

The NLC moved first to increase available food to meet domestic needs. The NLC promised it would take urgent measures to ensure that supplies of essential imported commodities were restored to a reasonable minimum and their flow maintained. To do this the government entered into a series of agreements for the importation of food, particularly rice, maize and flour from the United States and Canada. This policy was seen as a major part of the government's efforts to reduce the effect of limited food supplies. At the same time, the NLC stated it would work strenuously to increase local food production so as to gradually reduce dependence on imports. As the NLC policy pointed out, "This will require a special effort because consumption will be rising year by year with the growth of population and rising living standards."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Ghana Economic Policy (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1966), p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>Ghana Economic Policy (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1967), p. 5.

The second policy was to increase agricultural raw material production for existing and prospective factories. Government was to increase the production of cash crops like tobacco, sugar, cotton, rubber, etc.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the NLC supported the agricultural export trade, which would enable the country to earn foreign exchange. The government said it would "provide growing surpluses for export of those commodities which it can't profitably sell on the world market, in either processed or unprocessed form."<sup>25</sup>

In summary, the NLC agricultural policy was aimed at increased food production. Significantly, however, it was "turned towards free enterprise with greater freedom for individuals to organize their production activities."<sup>26</sup> The policy was geared toward streamlining existing agricultural production agencies and improving their overall efficiency. Furthermore, encouragement was given to private participation in state-owned agricultural ventures. This implied the involvement of external capital in agricultural production.

Despite the efforts made during the NLC period, the economic difficulties persisted. Inflation and foreign exchange continued to be serious problems. Ghana

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

had become heavily indebted and not self-supporting. There was high unemployment as a result of the lay-offs following the reorganization in agricultural agencies. Food imports continued to rise, indicating continued unsatisfactory domestic food production.<sup>27</sup>

It was in this economic climate that the new civilian administration of Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia took over the country after general elections in August 1969. However, as was noted earlier, Busia and most of his advisors were involved in formation of the NLC agricultural policies. Therefore, there was no radical change in those policies. What was different, however, was the clarity with which the Busia government stated its policies.

Like the two previous governments, the Busia government argued strongly for agricultural and rural development. The government believed that this would reduce agriculture's need for foreign financing. It would help to save foreign exchange and it would also have a stabilizing effect on domestic food prices while employment opportunities and income are increased.<sup>28</sup>

The specific object of the Busia government in agriculture was, therefore, "to transform a predominantly

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<sup>27</sup>Nii Omaboe, "Ghana Economic Survey" (Accra: Ghana Ministry of Finance Report, 1970), p. 30.

<sup>28</sup>Ghana One Year Development Plan 1970/71 (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1970), p. 3.

traditional low productivity agriculture into a market-oriented industry, in which farm inputs and production increasingly pass through commercial channels."<sup>29</sup>

As a matter of policy, it was the intention of the Busia government to invest in products and services purchased from abroad to supplement the traditional inputs. Like the NLC government before it, the Busia government was concerned with expanding domestic food supplies, increasing export production to earn exchange and enlarging domestic production of selected agricultural commodities to substitute for imports.<sup>30</sup>

In summary, therefore, it is important to note that the three successive governments faced very similar agricultural problems. What stands out clearly are the differences in the policies that were pursued to achieve the goals that had been set in this sector of the economy. In each case, however, the economic problems were equally pressing. What the two government-controlled dailies, the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, did in articulating these objectives constitutes the core of the next chapter.

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>30</sup>Annual Report, Ministry of Agriculture (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1969), p. 6.

Government Policy in Industrial  
Development in Ghana 1960-1970

Although agriculture remained the largest sector in the Ghanaian economy, the colonial administration as well as British financial and commercial interests engaged in some industrial activities such as mining, construction and manufacturing. However, it was not until the 1950s that an attempt was made to draw up a program for industrial development.<sup>31</sup>

The policies pursued in the Nkrumah, NLC and Busia periods are essentially products of this orientation although there were differences in emphasis. This difference was apparent in the Seven Year Development Plan of the Nkrumah government, the first major post-independence statement of Ghanaian industrial development policy.

The Seven Year Plan of the Nkrumah government, as was pointed out in Chapter II, embodied policies that were expected to lead to a self-sustaining socialist economy. The economy was to be balanced between industry and agriculture. The Nkrumah government proposed that state industrial enterprises be set up and serve as a basis for industrialization. The plan stated:

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<sup>31</sup>Alan McPhee, The Economic Revolution in British West Africa (London: Frank Cass and Company Ltd., 1976), pp. 30-32.

To make the greatest contribution to economic growth and solution of current economic problems the successive stages of industrial development in Ghana will consist first of the establishment of industries to supply the bulk of consumer demand, and to manufacture articles out of Ghanaian raw materials for export, second, of industries to produce metals, building materials and other basic requirements of the economy, and eventually of industries supplying machines and other products of the heavier and technologically more advanced industries.<sup>32</sup>

In this case, the state was to control the strategic areas including raw materials and heavy industries. In addition, the state was expected to participate in light consumer goods.<sup>33</sup>

This approach was significantly different from previous efforts during the Colonial period in so far as a full industrialization program and strategy were concerned. Secondly, it deviated from the previous experience to the extent that the state was to be directly involved in industrial production. The basic goals of Ghana's industrial policy under Nkrumah were to create avenues for employment, increase incomes and also reduce the imbalance in foreign trade. Thus, to make the needed contribution to economic development, the industrialization program had to follow in stages. First, efforts were to be made to establish industries to supply the bulk of consumer demands and to manufacture articles out

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<sup>32</sup>Seven Year Development Plan, p. 92.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-122.

of Ghanaian raw materials for export. Second, industries producing metals, building materials and other basic requirements of the economy were to be established. Finally, industries supplying heavy machines and technologically advanced products were to be established.<sup>34</sup>

The industrial policy was aimed at eventual production of domestic substitutes for imported manufactures. It was hoped that the industrialization program would help reduce Ghana's foreign exchange deficit and permit any foreign exchange earned to be used for development projects. It was also anticipated that agricultural and mining products exported in unprocessed form would become fully processed before export. And finally, the industrialization program was to support construction and small machine industries for rural development.

In summary, Nkrumah's program of industrialization was geared toward providing the foundation for a self-sustaining development. It involved state participation in production. It was aimed at creating employment for migrants who had moved into the cities. It was also to provide additional foreign exchange resources for supporting national development. However, Nkrumah's policy had implications for Ghana's foreign policy since Ghana had to depend on foreign capital for this program.

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

It meant it had to enter into international agreements with foreign industrial nations like the United States, Britain and Canada, and international agencies like the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The National Liberation Council which took over in February 1966 decided to reduce the industrial program significantly. A basic objective of the NLC industrial policy was to encourage private enterprise "with a view to achieving a steady increase in industrial output."<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, for enterprises in the state sector, efforts were made to secure efficient management. "In cases of difficulty, the government will either invite private participation with business experience and management capacity or sell the enterprise to private investors; in appropriate cases, preference will be given to Ghanaians."<sup>36</sup>

The government went on to state: "Infant industries will continue to enjoy tariff protection but the National Standards Board will see to it that they produce goods of satisfactory quality for home and export markets."<sup>37</sup> The government recognized the danger in

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<sup>35</sup>Outline of Government Economic Policy (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1966), p. 6.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.



pursuing such a policy and said "the government will institute measures to ensure that monopolies do not abuse their privileged positions."<sup>38</sup>

In the large industrial enterprises, government sought to sell enterprises outright or liquidate those which were not profitable. "Where the government thinks that a type of enterprise should be established which should be undertaken by private investors it will give favorable consideration to its establishment, either wholly in the state sector or as a joint state/private enterprise."<sup>39</sup> In the manufacturing sectors, however, government withdrew direct investment in new industrial ventures and undertook a realignment of its investments. This again included selling in whole or in part about eighteen state enterprises to private investors and seeking new management contracts where present contracts were not being efficiently run.

The industrial policy of the NLC was clearly geared more toward private effort while under Nkrumah the government felt that the state had to participate actively in industrial development. Although both governments believed that foreign capital was necessary for

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ghana's Economy and Aid Requirements, 1967  
(Accra: Ministry of Economic Planning, 1967), p. 15.

industrial development, the NLC more actively and openly pursued that capital. The NLC position was that:

Government is anxious that foreign private investment should make the maximum possible contribution to the economic development of Ghana. We value such investment not only for the capital but also for the technical knowhow and managerial skills which it brings.<sup>40</sup>

The Busia administration followed similar policies since it wanted to increase the capacity and efficiency of existing industries. The Busia government was clearly oriented toward import substitution, industrialization and encouraging indigenous enterprises to achieve high productivity. Thus it was its policy to promote export. This policy was meant to offer Ghanaian enterprises further opportunities and incentives for developing markets, particularly in Africa. The government not only fostered the growth of private industry but, on occasion, set up a few government-owned manufacturing industries.<sup>41</sup>

In summary, industrial policy under the Busia Government was guided by the following considerations: Those industries with potential for export and foreign exchange earnings were to be encouraged with foreign exchange bonuses. Industries geared toward intermediate goods were to be given needed facilities to expand. Import-substituting industries were to be encouraged

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> One Year Development Plan 1970-71, p. 3.

and small and medium scale industries were to be developed. Finally, there were to be joint state and private enterprises in which foreign firms provided management, technical know-how, etc.

It is clear that industrial development was a concern of all three governments with particular emphasis on economic development. The differences among these governments, however, were in the strategies for achieving industrial development. How Ghanaian dailies, the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, reflected these policies will now be considered.

CHAPTER IV  
EDITORIAL COMMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
IN GHANA 1960-1972

This chapter focuses specifically on editorial comment on agricultural and industrial development under the successive political regimes.

Editorial Comment on Agricultural  
Development

It has been noted in Chapter I that at the time of political independence in 1957 Ghana continued to face serious problems of agricultural development particularly in the area of food production. The country continued to import about 25,000 tons of food stuffs annually and this was a heavy drain on Ghana's foreign reserves.<sup>1</sup> For a country depending mainly on cocoa for foreign income, this expenditure was a heavy burden. Yet, the government had to find ways of feeding adequately the whole nation.

To do this the Nkrumah Government turned to state agricultural organizations, namely the United Ghana

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<sup>1</sup>Economic Survey (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1956).

Farmers' Council Cooperative (UGFCC), the State Farms Cooperation (SFC), the Workers Brigade and the Young Farmers League. The UGFCC was established to educate farmers as well as to introduce mechanized farming. The SFC, founded in 1962, aimed at large-scale farming and was in addition expected to serve as models for farmers. The State farms produced both food and commercial crops. The Workers Brigade embarked upon large-scale mechanized farming while the Young Farmers League dealt primarily with the training of young farmers.

One major issue that received extensive coverage, therefore, concerned the operation of these state organizations. It is important to note that there was a discernible difference in emphasis placed on agricultural issues throughout the period.

Under both Nkrumah and the NLC Administration, the sampled editorials focused predominantly on food production and the state organizations responsible for increasing food production. Though this remained a critical issue under the Busia administration, the predominant concern was for cash crops production. To begin with, despite the measures taken by government, the food situation did not seem to improve. Economic surveys indicated that inflation, particularly in the urban areas, had been largely the result of sharp

increases in food prices.<sup>2</sup> Government had sought to alleviate the food shortages through food imports. In spite of this, prices continued to rise and government spent a large part of its foreign exchange which otherwise could have been invested in production.

The Daily Graphic's editorial of January 12, 1963, charged that the food shortages and the increases in prices were artificial creations. It believed that there was food in the rural areas but because of poor marketing facilities it was difficult to bring the food to the urban areas where it was greatly needed. In fact, the paper suggested that government did not take food marketing and distribution seriously enough.<sup>3</sup> This was really an indictment of the government and the food Distribution Corporation which was responsible for the marketing of food.

The Daily Graphic focused on what it called an example of this lack of seriousness by government in dealing with the food problem in its editorial of October 12, 1963. Following a debate in parliament during which the members were urging government to step up food production, the Daily Graphic used the Minister of Trade's criticism and apprehension about increased

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<sup>2</sup>Economic Survey (Accra: Ghana State Publishing Corporation, 1963).

<sup>3</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 12 January 1963.

production as a point of departure for its editorial comment. At this point the focus was on the State Farms Corporation and its failure to dispose of food production on its own farms.

During the past year, the State Farmers Corporation produced 150 tons of potatoes. Unfortunately, about half this quantity got rotten because the firms would not sell the locally produced potatoes. The most surprising aspect of this pathetic situation was that even our national Trading Firm--The Ghana National Trading Corporation--would not sell the potatoes produced by the State Farms.<sup>4</sup>

The reason for this, as the Daily Graphic editorial noted, was that the trading corporation was committed to importation of potatoes from overseas. Such lack of interest in locally produced food stuffs was awkward, the Daily Graphic editorial said. This could easily be stopped if the Minister of Trade "will restrict the issue of licences for the importation of food items which are produced locally in reasonable quantities."<sup>5</sup> This was a serious criticism by the paper against the Minister of Trade. Implicit in the Daily Graphic's statement was the view that either the Minister did not understand how his own policies worsened the food problem, or he was simply a hypocrite, or perhaps both.

What is important to note in this example is that the Daily Graphic's editorial not only explained the

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<sup>4</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 12 October 1963.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

policy of the government but criticized aspects of the policy that it did not agree with. The criticisms were, however, indirect and tactful, at least in regard to specific government officials.

This emphasis on state participation in overall agricultural development did not imply that the small-scale private farmer was unimportant in agricultural development. In fact, food production was carried out mainly by small-scale farmers. The income of such farmers remained insufficient for their welfare let alone for investment in agricultural expansion. The government's policy to provide loans was a subject of the Daily Graphic editorial. The Ministry of Agriculture proposed to make over two million cedis available as loans to farmers that year. As the Daily Graphic explained, in the absence of these loans a significant number of farmers mortgaged their farms to private money lenders. This increased the indebtedness of farmers to the extent that their incomes had to be substantially reduced. Thus, government decided to pass a law that would allow the UGFCC--the state production unit--to redeem these farms. The Daily Graphic explained:

The redeemed farms would then be handed over to the chief farmers who would control them and use money obtained from the sale of crops in paying debts owed by their original owners. When the debt was paid, the farms would be returned to the owners.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 15 December 1964.



Granting loans to farmers was not the only measure needed, however. Agricultural expansion also depended upon effective advice from the Ministry of Agriculture. Most of the farmers were illiterate and their production techniques remained inefficient. Thus, when one Sir William Slater addressed the Ghana Academy of Sciences on the subject of expanding the knowledge base for agricultural production, the press suggested agriculturists responsible for organizing production provide farmers with simple rules and principles applicable to the Ghanaian condition.<sup>7</sup> Certainly, however, it was not enough to provide guidance in agricultural production. Agricultural expansion needed investment in import substitution cash crop production to meet the raw material needs of the country.

An editorial of January 18, 1965, pointed to the establishment of a sugar factory at Komenda which it thought marked a milestone in the program of industrial revolution. The paper explained that this was particularly so in terms of producing locally essential foods and commodities to replace those being imported. While noting the immense contribution by Ghanaian farmers, the editorial notes: "We need not emphasize that Ghana's

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<sup>7</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 3 December 1963.

industrial development projects must be supported by increasing productivity in agriculture."<sup>8</sup>

Thus, increasing agricultural production was seen by the paper as essential to accelerating the process of economic development. The editorial emphasized clearly the interconnection between agriculture and industry. This underscores the government's position that without the necessary increases in agricultural development it would be difficult to proceed with industrialization. What is important to note here is how the paper sought to explain government policy. While performing this explicative function, however, the paper did criticize those aspects of government policy.

The Ghanaian Times also discussed extensively the question of agricultural development. The Ghanaian Times' view of the extent of the government's success in agricultural development was quite clearly stated in its editorial of April 17, 1965:

There are obvious indications that something has gone wrong with our agricultural programme. . . . We must state clearly though that what has gone wrong cannot be fundamental agricultural policy nor the nature of the programme for carrying out the policy. It is in the implementation of the programme that flaws will be found.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 18 January 1965.

<sup>9</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 17 April 1965.

Thus, the emphasis of the Ghanaian Times was on failures in implementing the basically sound agricultural program of the Nkrumah government.

Under the Nkrumah government, the focus was essentially on the state agricultural organizations. The performance of these organizations in terms of the goals set for them in the national development plan constituted one of the core concerns of the Ghanaian Times. The goals of these organizations included food production, raw materials required for industrial expansion and cash crop export production. Thus, when the UGFCC was organized to give a prominent place to food production the Ghanaian Times believed this was the right arrangement, noting also: "We have had occasion to be critical of the Council in the past for placing all their eggs in the cocoa basket, to the virtual neglect of the basic consumer food items on which normal life depends."<sup>10</sup>

The Ghanaian Times' editorial posed the fundamental question as to why Ghana was experiencing lapses in agricultural production. It stated:

Everything points to an unsatisfactory direction on the farms. It is not that the farms are not large themselves. Nor does it help to make less economical use of the traditional farmers. Instead of each agricultural unit planning mass production of particular types of food stuffs, all of them are producing almost invariably the same crop. . . .

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<sup>10</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 9 October 1964.

Far too many speeches are also being made at a time when the hoe must be tilling the soil. This is explained by the absence of foresight among our farm managers who in most cases have very little knowledge about agriculture, always excusing their inefficiency with climatic conditions.<sup>11</sup>

Another editorial of the Ghanaian Times pointed out that while the economy was becoming overburdened by expenditures, the state organizations in agriculture were showing little progress.

The budget proposals certainly account for a good deal. But such encouragement, as the overall revenue for the last year indicate, has sadly been marred by the obstinately high expenditure of the United Ghana Farmers Council Cooperatives.  
 . . .<sup>12</sup>

It further asked why agriculture failed to hit the expected production target at several points in the previous year. Clearly the state organizations were not living up to expectation. And one editorial put the case: "It cannot be denied that while the achievements of some state enterprises have been commensurate with the national investment that gave birth to them others have woefully lacked public confidence."<sup>13</sup> Hence, the paper suggested closer supervision and requested that "an eagle eye is to be kept on every pesewa voted for

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<sup>11</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 4 February 1966.

<sup>12</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 23 February 1966.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

any undertaking. And it should be the bounden duty of all agencies that the pesewa is properly accounted for."<sup>14</sup>

What is important to recognize is that these state organizations were headed primarily by government-appointed officials. As the Ghanaian Times editorial noted, while the real situation of food in the country was bad, the government and its officials were making speeches instead of dealing with the problem. Implicit in these criticisms is the fact that the government was painting a far different picture in its budget statements from what was the real situation in food production in the country. The Ghanaian Times argued that part of what was wrong was the lack of hard work, drive and initiative of the national organizers of the state agricultural organizations.<sup>15</sup>

The paper was particularly critical of the implementation of the extension program of the State Farms Corporation. The extension officials had not been able to reach the farmers with improved methods of farming. The Ghanaian Times suggested why: "One weakness of the Council has been the ostentation of some of its officials,

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<sup>14</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 4 February 1966.

<sup>15</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 9 October 1964.

their disrespect, insolence and over-bearing attitude in the midst of the very farmers they are to serve."<sup>16</sup>

The editorial went on further to state that:

These traits, the flashy cars, and high tastes, have not united them with the poor farmers in the village. They have in fact set them apart and imposed a false picture of a gulf between a so-called bureaucratic officialdom and an impoverished masses. This picture is unreal and harmful. . . .<sup>17</sup>

In the following years more organizations were set up to carry out the food and nutrition plans of the state through the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The Ghanaian Times supported the idea of food cooperatives associations in the different regions of the country. This was to enhance an effective organization of small farmers to help in marketing their products. "What is lacking is due attention and effective organization of the peasant farmers,"<sup>18</sup> stated the Ghanaian Times. The Ghanaian Times further justified its support by explaining that a catalogue of excuses had always been available from Council Sources. The Ghanaian Times believed that the food producers cooperatives would help solve the problem. In the Ghanaian Times' view, an effective organization such as the food Cooperatives Association would also help the government "to cut down drastically

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 11 June 1965.

on the importation of food and utilize the foreign exchange thus saved for the purchase of capital goods for development."<sup>19</sup>

By 1965 food prices were still spiralling, especially in the big towns. The Food Cooperatives Associations had failed to reach the goal set for them. Most of the cooperatives that were formed were more concerned about cash crops than with food production. Indeed, the numerous small-scale peasant farmers who were expected to form these cooperatives did not get into the program. Again the Ghanaian Times was critical while seeking to answer what was wrong. The Ghanaian Times criticized the cooperatives, saying: ". . . so preoccupied have they been with cash crops that the large multitude of peasant farmers who produce the energy-giving nutrients required for raising the productivity of labour have been left barely taken care of."<sup>20</sup> The same editorial said:

A similar stalemate exists with the State farms. Production costs are spiralling out of all reality with farm productivity. Besides, distribution is inefficient and large stocks of food and eggs rot and perish without reaching the people.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 9 December 1964.

<sup>20</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 22 October 1965.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

The Ghanaian Times argued that such errors needed to be rectified if the food problem was going to be solved. Meanwhile, the paper suggested Regional and District Commissioners should study the food situation in their regions and districts, determine what is being produced and the transportation facilities available in order to initiate measures against "middlemen" who make profits at the expense of both the farmer and the workers in the urban areas. They further recommended that an emergency measure should be instituted whereby the military and the para military organizations like the Workers Brigade will be mobilized for effective transportation of food from the hinterland.<sup>22</sup>

The issue of cash crops and export was discussed by the Ghanaian Times. In this respect, although Ghana had increased cocoa production over the years, the declining price paid at the world market had lowered the revenue that the country received. As was pointed out earlier, the main source of foreign income for Ghana is cocoa. The cocoa industry continued to suffer from swollen shoot disease and attempts were made to provide spraying machines and insecticides to control this disease.

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<sup>22</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 11 December 1965.



The world price of cocoa depends on the interaction between supply and demand for cocoa. However, Nkrumah believed that the supplier of cocoa was in a difficult position: "Our experience has been that where questions of supply and demand are concerned, the developing countries are always at the mercy of the wealthier developed countries."<sup>23</sup> It follows that if an artificial scarcity could not be created prices are likely to go down. This could have very adverse effects on the Ghanaian economy. In this respect the Ghanaian Times supported Nkrumah's viewpoint: "In the throes of the juggernaut of capitalist commercialism the merciless laws of supply and demand . . . have operated almost to our undoing. . . ."<sup>24</sup> In the view of the Ghanaian Times, therefore:

It is painfully unfortunate that the prices for most of Africa's primary commodities have been at the mercy of the capitalists and monopolists. In their determined efforts to strangle our independence, they have constantly been manipulating the world price for such crops as cocoa and coffee, the main prop of the economy of many developing countries.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Kwame Nkrumah, "Address to Representatives of Ghana Farmers," Ghanaian Times, 23 September 1965.

<sup>24</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 23 September 1965.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

In effect, the Ghanaian Times was explaining the dependence of the Ghanaian economy on the world market over which the government had no control.

In summary, it should be obvious that the editorial opinions were not only reflecting government policy in agriculture. They also criticized policy and the implementation of policy, and suggested remedies for the situation. The criticisms are manifested in the editorials dealing with the role and performance of state agricultural units.

Doubtlessly, the problems of agricultural development continued after the overthrow of the Nkrumah government. And the press continued to be government controlled. Yet there was criticism of government policy.

In 1968 the NLC introduced a two-year Stabilization Development Plan. Within the plan, agriculture continued to receive attention. With the introduction of this plan, the Daily Graphic continued to explain, criticize and make suggestions for solving the problems of agricultural development. One editorial expressed disgust about what the plan said about irrigation. In the plan it was proposed that:

A number of dams, in suitable areas for irrigation, have been completed. The policy of the government will be to provide irrigation for farmlands near those dams if the additional revenue from the crops resulting from irrigation will warrant the expenditure required to provide the irrigation system and

land development. No further construction of dams . . . is contemplated until the presently developed water storage capacity is fully utilized.<sup>26</sup>

It was the view of the paper that such a policy was the result of an "unfortunate oversight."<sup>27</sup> The planners should have considered the potential that expanded irrigation would have had on crop expansion and increased food production. This was particularly important in view of the unsuitability of some of the lands that government planned to continue irrigating for food production. Although most of the staple foods like yams, cassava, legumes and cereals grow almost everywhere in Ghana, without irrigation the output of such crops would be negligible. It is from this background that the Daily Graphic's commentary should be viewed. The paper advocated the exploration of vast stretches of relatively flat land along the Volta basin and in the North of Ghana.

We think the break we want in agriculture and the inducement we want to provide to make rural folk stay in the rural areas lie in this particular type of agriculture (i.e., food crops) for it is suitable for rural settlement schemes . . . that is why we consider the silence or rather "negative" attitude to irrigation in the development plan as most unfortunate.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Two Year Stabilization Plan 1968-70 (Accra: Government Printer).

<sup>27</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 3 August 1968.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

The clear inference is that the government had misplaced its priorities.

Other aspects of the government's agricultural policy that the paper considered as unrealistic were discussed extensively. The government in support of the Ministry of Agriculture released an amount of 250,000 cedis for the purchase of fertilizers, chemicals and agricultural equipment for the extensive cultivation of staple foods. The Daily Graphic argued that such a policy was short sighted since it failed to consider some very important variables. "It is one thing to persuade the farmers to produce more cereal than they consume in their own families and quite another thing to produce cereals in abundance for marketing throughout the country."<sup>29</sup>

In this case the Daily Graphic felt that fluctuations in prices of food, lack of marketing and transportation facilities were hardly given any consideration by government planners. Implicit in the Daily Graphic's point of view is again the fact that the government had misplaced its priorities and had ignored marketing and transportation which were critical elements in any meaningful agricultural program. "There are instances on record where farmers refused to heed the expert advice

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<sup>29</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 14 June 1967.

of agricultural extension officers on increased productivity not because they do not want increased incomes from their farms but because of frustration due to unmarketable produce and low prices for what has already been produced."<sup>30</sup>

It is interesting to note that with criticism of the way government had set its priorities, the Daily Graphic provided alternative ways of dealing with the problem. The paper called for the establishment of producer cooperatives in the various regions for cereal growers. Simultaneously, government policy was to include the building of feeder roads, the provision of granaries for storage and a price stabilization policy to ensure a minimum price for the farmer's efforts.<sup>31</sup>

In 1968, the government introduced a program to train farmers in mechanized agriculture. The farm institutions in the country at Asuansi, Wenchi, Ejura and Navrongo at the time had a total intake of only 240 students. At the beginning of that year, the Chief Agricultural Training Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture noted that 5,000 Ghanaians had applied for admission to the four farming institutions.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 19 January 1968.

Despite the fact that it was a worthwhile approach to send farmers to these three-year agricultural training schools, the number of people trained each year had remained small. Moreover, the total number of people involved in educating farmers in the field was negligible. Thus the Daily Graphic wondered whether it was not better to adopt a new approach to farmer education. It proposed a crash training program with short-term intensive training offered to would-be farmers. The existing farm institutes were too expensive to establish and manage, the paper argued.

In summary, the Daily Graphic during the NLC period performed the basic functions of explaining government policy and criticizing policy when it differed from the stated government's position. But more importantly it provided suggestions and alternative lines of action to solve the agricultural problem. The editorial of June 4, 1968, best sums up the Daily Graphic's opinion on agricultural development. It stated: "We call on the Ministry of Agriculture to give the country a new policy--a policy that will 'feed mouths' and our factories."<sup>33</sup> In essence, therefore, the paper was at variance with a number of policy measures which the government sought to pursue. The paper took this position despite the control over it by government.

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<sup>33</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 4 June 1968.

During the immediate post coup period, a number of criticisms were leveled against agricultural policy under the Nkrumah government. The Ghanaian Times, like the Daily Graphic, was bluntly critical. Of course, the NLC Government was also hostile to almost anything that Nkrumah did. Thus, it was not because the press was operating under a liberterian government that its freedom to criticize increased. The circumstances dictated it. Criticisms of Nkrumah and his policies were rudely blunt in keeping with the fact that he no longer was protected by his office. This is important to note because when the papers attempted to extend this style of criticism to the NLC government itself, editors were summarily dismissed.

To begin with, the problem as the Ghanaian Times saw it, was one of leadership in agriculture. Thus: "This ministry can argue our opinion does not command the respect and authority in our national affairs, which it should, by virtue of its importance."<sup>34</sup> The editorial also blamed the failure of agricultural development on an over-emphasis on industrialization. The Ghanaian Times said: "Although we need to industrialize,

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<sup>34</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 26 February 1969.

experience in certain European countries has shown that a nation which industrializes at the expense of its stomach, does so at its own risk."<sup>35</sup>

The state agricultural organization continued to be the subject of editorial comment, particularly as the food situation worsened and government had to increase food imports.<sup>36</sup> It appeared that the call for a return to the land had become a "boring" slogan. Thus it was necessary to begin a systematic approach to the agricultural problem.<sup>37</sup> The Ghanaian Times argued that in the absence of any irrigation system, farm machinery and repair workshops and basic social amenities the agricultural problem would remain impenetrable.<sup>38</sup> For one thing the problem was complicated by the encouragement government had given to large-scale commercial farming. The paper felt this was bound to create difficulties including litigation over land. Put in perspective, it brought to the fore the problem faced by the State Farms under Nkrumah when lands were forcibly taken from farmers.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 29 January 1967.

<sup>37</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 8 August 1968.

<sup>38</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 17 July 1969.



In this respect the paper cautioned the government on acquiring land for State organizations and private individuals.<sup>39</sup>

What the paper did essentially was to shift its orientation from what went wrong to what can be done and to the alternatives available. In essence, the paper was monitoring the general feelings of the population and thereby allowing government to take into account other factors and concerns about agricultural development.

The question of diversifying agricultural export was a major issue discussed by the Ghanaian Times. In the face of financial crisis it was inappropriate to depend solely on the cocoa industry, it argued. Thus, it was necessary to give crops like tobacco, cotton and sisal a boost. And in this respect the Ghanaian Times called for government protection for these crops. For example, it was felt that if a ban were placed on imported tobacco and guaranteed prices provided, it could stimulate domestic production and help diversify agriculture. In addition, it was necessary for the banks to provide the necessary financial support. However, the major criticisms of government had to do with the cocoa industry.

The Ghanaian Times noted that the cocoa industry was saddled with numerous problems and discussed some of

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<sup>39</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 30 July 1966.

them in its editorials. In its January 7, 1969, editorial, the Ghanaian Times blamed some of the industry's problems on the "lack of foresight" of the cocoa marketing board.<sup>40</sup> The editorial reported that more than 10,000 bags of cocoa stored in eight villages in the region remained uncartered to the marketing center because of transport problems. Owing to the bad conditions of the roads in the area the local drivers were unwilling to cart cocoa from these villages. The paper noted that cocoa had been left in sheds in eight villages for one whole year: "This is a classic example of shortsightedness since the cooperative societies--the buying agents--should have made proper arrangements before the beginning of the season to have their cocoa purchase transported promptly."<sup>41</sup>

The government planned new feeder roads but a Ghanaian Times editorial said that there was no need to start new plans from scratch: "Some timber contractors in the forest areas of the country have built many miles of feeder roads to cart logs from their concessions and if these roads could be repaired and maintained, the

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<sup>40</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 7 January 1969.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

question of constructing more feeder roads in these areas won't arise, thus saving the taxpayers a lot of money."<sup>42</sup>

The Ghanaian Times noted as well that some of the feeder roads could not be utilized because of lack of bridges. It was felt the State Cocoa Marketing Board should concentrate on "improving feeder roads" to make the cocoa crops easily accessible and still inexpensive to tax-payers."<sup>43</sup> These examples show clearly that the papers took issue against the government when it was clear that certain considerations were ignored. Food continued to be a major problem. And the increased food imports had had their own peculiar problems. The Ghanaian Times noted that "very often imported food competes with the locally produced food."<sup>44</sup>

The paper believed,

. . . the incessant cry of go back to the land was all too familiar. . . . It would seem that much paper work, explanations and resolutions about our agricultural aims have already been done and what remains is how and when we are going to give hands and feet to these ideas to make them work.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 29 January 1969.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 8 August 1968.

Implicit in this editorial is the view that the NLC was not doing much to provide for the food needs of the country. But the most serious setback for the prospective farmer in the Ghanaian Times' view included the absence of any irrigation system, modern farming machines and repair shops for them, lack of electricity in the greater part of the country, few veterinary posts and the problem of acquiring land and how to clear out thick and impenetrable forests. The Ghanaian Times said, "Most of these problems are never anticipated when programmes for agricultural development are drawn up."<sup>46</sup> The acquisition of farm land remained a thorny problem. Related to the food problems, also, is the role of agricultural cooperatives.

Agricultural cooperatives had been set up to increase productivity. But the Ghanaian Times claimed the leaders of these cooperatives had so far not shown any of the initiative required of cooperative leaders. The Ghanaian Times' editorial said:

The fields in which the cooperative movement can invest should include food crops. Their function should go beyond making stereotyped announcements with obvious glee on the profits made from cocoa sales and distribution of huge bonuses to members.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 30 July 1966.

One cannot overlook the functions the press performed under Nkrumah and the NLC. The newspapers were informative to the extent that they discussed the policies, and they were critical although criticism tended to be veiled or implied. The editorials also suggested alternatives to the solution of the economic problems.

There is no doubt that the economic problem that the National Liberation Council (NLC) inherited and sought to tackle persisted during the Busia era. These problems with reference to agriculture were reflected in government policy and equally and forcefully discussed by the press in its editorials.

One area of concern in agricultural development remained the food shortage. To meet this problem the Busia government took a number of steps similar to those of its predecessor. It wanted to streamline and reorganize public institutions in agricultural production in order to provide efficient management and thereby accelerate agricultural production. The government also wanted to encourage private effort. In this respect the Workers Brigade established by the Nkrumah government in 1957 to encourage the young and the unemployed to participate in both agricultural and industrial development was reorganized and renamed the Food Production Corporation. Its function was no longer to train youth in industrial occupations--carpentry, masonry, construction and cash crop production--but instead to

concentrate on food production. In addition, a Task Force was established to help in transporting and distributing food. Although the Daily Graphic shared the government's view on the usefulness of such an enterprise, it felt that the problems of food production were far more complex than the government's program recognized.

In the first place, the paper pointed out that since these institutions and private individuals were being encouraged to be in agricultural production, large-scale farming was likely to increase. To the Daily Graphic, this raised some pertinent questions on land and land acquisition. As the editorial put it:

It has been noted that if the government's effort to make the youth and civil servants interested in farming is successful, some of our food problems would be solved. There would probably be more food for the people, and with the increase in commercial agriculture, foreign importation of food would be reduced and as a result we can export and earn more foreign exchange.<sup>48</sup>

Despite this, the paper noted that only a few people had taken to farming. "One reason for the apparent failure is the shortage or rather inaccessibility of economically productive land for profitable agricultural undertaking,"<sup>49</sup> the Daily Graphic said.

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<sup>48</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 7 August 1971.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

The land issue remained a major issue because of a pronouncement by the Asanteman Council--a council of Chiefs. The council stated that all lands in Ashanti, whether leased or sold, remained the property of Asante stool. This also meant that people who were not of Ashanti origin could not invest in land for agricultural development. This decision was met with press and public criticism. The prominent legal practitioners among the Ga ethnic group--a group whose land had been sold out to other ethnic groups living in the Capital of Accra--also complained. They argued that the policy of the Ashanti should apply with equal force in the Ga area as well. This meant that rich Ashanti farmers and others who had invested in land elsewhere stood in the same danger of losing their property. All these point to the problem of land tenure and land ownership to which the Daily Graphic felt the government had not given enough attention.

In view of these problems, the Minister of Agriculture proposed that government should acquire lands for farmers in order to facilitate agriculture--particularly for food production. In this respect government was to acquire and demarcate all available lands in the country and lease them out to farmers on reasonable terms.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 26 August 1970.

This was partly to provide a basis for absorbing the large number of unemployed youth. Thus the then Minister of Finance, Mr. J. H. Mensah, noted:

Everybody agrees that more of the unemployed persons should settle down to farm. But many of these unemployed people are young boys and girls who cannot set up as independent farmers. If they are to go into farming then somebody must be available to employ them. And the level of wages that they have come to demand is such that the potential employer must be a modern farmer able to pay relatively high wages . . . from his modern methods of farming.<sup>51</sup>

The Ghanaian Times believed that while this was a worthwhile idea, the minister had failed to recognize that not only the bigger and better educated farmer (who had not yet emerged) needed the support of government. The Ghanaian Times felt there were scores of little communities scattered all over trying to eke what livelihood they could from a parched but easily tilled land.

Thus, contrary to what the government proposed through its Minister of Finance, the Ghanaian Times felt that the small-scale farmers already offered great promise for agricultural development if they were given active government support. What is important to note is the way in which the government-controlled daily was able to take a stand contrary to the government's position. In effect, the editorial of the Ghanaian Times said the government's resources did not justify its ambitions

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.



to support a new kind of farmer to cultivate crops that had not been tried in those areas before.<sup>52</sup>

The Ghanaian Times also took up the question of the "reckless waste of public property" in its discussion of the damage done to fifteen rice mills valued at NC950,000. The Ghanaian Times said,

. . . the reason given for not putting the rice mills . . . to any use are that there were no buildings in which to install them and that their sitings were done in a very unjustifiable manner . . . for these reasons alone, machines of such precious value to our farmers were left to the vagaries of the weather till now when they have become useless.<sup>53</sup>

The Ghanaian Times was of the opinion that such ridiculous situations had to account for a large measure of the country's economic plight. But perhaps more importantly, it felt that the government had to provide the kind of leadership that would avoid such wastages. Though it also had to admit that "the problem of nation building cannot be shouldered by the government alone."<sup>54</sup>

Related to these issues was the question of agricultural credit. Implicit in the lending policies of agricultural credit institutions was the focus upon only those who appeared to be credit worthy. The Daily Graphic

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<sup>52</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 28 August 1970.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

in its editorial column argued that the call to the youth to go back to the land, to help reduce unemployment and to increase food production could not be achieved without agricultural credit. The editorial was pointed in its view of the matter. It stated:

Our quarrel, and a very serious one, is with the managers of the agencies established by the government to make it easy and practical for Ghanaians to really go back to the land. . . . Many a time we are persuaded to believe that executive officers do deliberately obstruct the execution of government policies. . . .<sup>55</sup>

The paper illustrated its point about the nonavailability of credit by citing the example of a potential farmer who had spent a year learning mechanized farming after which he established a 2,000 acre farm. He then approached the Agricultural Development Bank for a loan. The Daily Graphic said he was made to travel "over 50 times" from Attebubu in Ashanti to Accra (some 350 miles). On each occasion he was told to go and start the farm on his own. The paper noted that this was hardly the way to persuade Ghanaians to go back to the land.<sup>56</sup> The editorial maintained that this was not just the first time that this had happened to a farmer but that many more applicants and would-be farmers had been frustrated in the same way.

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<sup>55</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 21 July 1971.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

Despite the focus given to the food shortage as well as the related issues of land tenure, land ownership and agricultural credit, the predominant concern during the Busia period remained the cocoa industry. The problems of the cocoa industry ranged over the cutting of diseased trees, increasing production, price, government financing of the industry and the extreme dependence of the national economy on this crop and the implications for economic growth and stability.

Under the Busia administration, loans were provided in the hope that infected cocoa trees would be replaced with healthier ones in order to increase production and improve the quality of the cocoa beans. In addition the government created agencies to check the smuggling of the produce into neighboring countries where the prices were much higher. This approach entailed a major reorganization of the Cocoa Marketing Board. The board had apparently been operating internally through middle men and other organizations. In the first place, because income from cocoa is seasonal, there was a tendency for the farmers to borrow money to pay such costs as children's school fees and hope that whatever debts were incurred during the off season would be made up during the cocoa season. Thus, it has been said that a high level of indebtedness exists among some cocoa

farmers who pledge their crops to money lenders or private organizations in the cocoa trade.<sup>57</sup>

But what was of concern to the press, particularly the editorial columns of the Daily Graphic, was the way in which the private organizations paid the cocoa farmers. These organizations had introduced a "chit system"--a promisory note representing cocoa income which the company paid back to farmers when the chit was presented. These buying agencies were financed through loans from the government banks particularly the Ghana Commercial Bank. In a number of cases the system was abused to the extent that some farmers never got paid either because the company had no money or that the chit was fraudulent. Thus, the Daily Graphic stated: "After being paid with useless chits which usually take a long time to mature, the proud farmer is having to undergo the further humiliation of borrowing again, more likely than not, at a more exorbitant rate of interest."<sup>58</sup> This level of indebtedness had a number of effects on the farmer. To the Daily Graphic, it had the effect of "killing all stimulus to higher productivity. The farmer drinks on credit to drown his sorrow and thereby ruins

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<sup>57</sup>Christina Okarley and Robert Kotei, Akokoaso: A Resurvey (Legion Institute of Social and Scientific Research Publication, 1973), p. 3.

<sup>58</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 26 September 1970.

his health to say nothing of his economic viability."<sup>59</sup>

It was, therefore, recommended that the chit system be abolished and the commercial banks provided with some logistic support in the form of storage facilities so that they could buy and pay directly to the farmers.

One bottleneck in the efficient operation of the industry was in transportation of the crop from the hinterland to the ports and also the shipment to the international market. There had been persistent congestion at the main port and this had caused irregular scheduling of ships that carry cocoa abroad. The Daily Graphic said that unless the problem was solved, Ghana was likely to lose customers who would turn to other producers.<sup>60</sup>

On the other hand, should the shipping bottleneck be eased only after a long delay, the flooding of the international market with the Ghana stock would bring down prices. This would affect the foreign exchange situation and the prices paid to the farmers. Thus, the editorial recommended that the CMB review arrangements already made for the shipping of cocoa. In this exercise, "they should do away with all shipping concerns which are

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 22 January 1971.

not reliable, for our cocoa is too precious an item to be left to the whims of unreliable sailors."<sup>61</sup>

The international cocoa price and its effects on the national economy remained a dominant issue throughout the period. In January 1972, the leading cocoa-producing and consuming nations met in Geneva for consultations. The aim of this meeting was to draft a new international cocoa price and trading agreement. The meeting ended without any favorable agreement for the producer nations.

During the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference the same year, Dr. K. A. Busia, then Prime Minister of Ghana, made reference to the import barriers to primary products. These issues were extensively covered by the press. However, in its editorial coverage the Daily Graphic expressed concern over the inability of producer and consumer nations to arrive at a stable price. The Daily Graphic argued that the failure to arrive at an agreement was in the main due to:

. . . transactions of speculators who sell cocoa crop on the futures system even before the crop is produced, and secondly the reluctance of cocoa consumers, and the manufacturers to pay adequate prices because they are sure of substitutes for cocoa and also because of the activities of speculators in the "futures" market and the vagaries of the weather which affect the volume of the cocoa crop each year.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 6 September 1972.

It was noted that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) after eight years in existence had made no progress. The rich industrial nations had shown no significant degree of willingness to pay better prices for commodities from Africa, Latin America and Asia. Yet, the prices of the manufactured goods from these nations continued to soar. The Daily Graphic noted that:

This is the dilemma of most countries in the Third World. The commodities such as cocoa that form the basis of their economies continue to fetch low prices in the developed countries while the prices of the plant and machinery which they purchase from these countries continue to rise daily. The result is of course the chronic imbalance of payments in the poor countries.<sup>63</sup>

What is important to note here is that the Daily Graphic in its editorial columns attempted to provide information and explain to the rest of the public the problems of the cocoa industry and why there existed in Ghana a balance of payment problem and economic instability. In this case, the paper was essentially performing its explicative function with respect to the problems that government faced in pursuing the kind of economic policies that were formulated.

With a steady worsening of the balance of payment and debt situation in Ghana during the Busia administration, the cocoa industry and its problems became a

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

predominant concern of the Ghanaian Times as well. The Ghanaian Times, however, was more concerned about the internal politics and problems of organizing the cocoa industry. The Ghanaian Times also took up the issue of the "chit system" which was discussed earlier.

The Managing Director of the State Cocoa Marketing Board (SCMB), Mr. U. K. Hackman, decided to withdraw licenses from four of the buying agents after the board of the SCMB found their performances unsatisfactory. It was found that some of these organizations diverted the funds for the purchase of cocoa into other private businesses. The decision to withdraw these licenses resulted in a confrontation between the SCMB Director, Hackman and the Minister of Trade and Industries, R. A. Quarshie. The Minister pressed for a reinstatement of the dismissed buying agents. Hackman threatened to resign if the organizations were reinstated. The Ghanaian Times took up the issue in its editorials:

So far the explanation given by the buying agents has not been convincing at all and if anything gave credence to some of the charges levelled against them by the board. The Times is therefore surprised that the Minister of Trade should have called for a review of the board's decision in the face of the overwhelming evidence of breach of trust adduced by the SCMB.<sup>64</sup>

The Ghanaian Times editorial said the Minister had no guarantee whatsoever that, given a second chance, these

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<sup>64</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 17 October 1969.



organizations could pay back the loans given to them by the SCMB. The Ghanaian Times then said:

We would ask the honourable minister whether it would be right to give some of the organizations which were found to be waste pipes in the Nkrumah era a second chance to operate? When public funds to the tune of NC8 million are in the woods, sentiments must give way to harsh realities. The plain fact is that these companies have abused the trust reposed in them by the board. This is indeed a harmless acknowledgment of the true situation.<sup>65</sup>

The harshness of the Ghanaian Times' criticism will have to be viewed in the light of the fact that the general public was very much aware of how opposed the government of Busia was to almost anything that the Nkrumah government did. Indeed, the government blamed much of Ghana's economic ills on the failure of Nkrumah and his ministers to apply strict standards to the operation of government business. In effect the Ghanaian Times was suggesting that the Minister of Trade was applying much less rigorous standards to himself than he had demanded from others whom he had been critical of. It is important to note, furthermore, that the Ghanaian Times had been able to take this stand irrespective of the fact that the government controlled the newspaper. Of course, the Minister in question could easily bring pressure to bear on the editors through his influence in the government, but this did not prevent the Ghanaian Times from making such observations as have been quoted above.

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

Soon after the exchange between the Minister and the Managing Director of the SCMB, the latter, Mr. U. K. Hackman, was relieved of his duties by the Busia administration. The Ghanaian Times noted in its editorials from the government as to why Mr. Hackman was removed from his post. The paper felt that: "With the decision of his dismissal coming hotly after these exchanges, we cannot but believe that there is more to it than meets the eye and that's the more reason why we feel the public must be furnished with the full facts before their sympathy sways where it should not be."<sup>66</sup> The paper was in effect criticizing the failure of the government to curb rumors about this delicate matter by not providing the relevant facts. Also implicit in the statements by the Ghanaian Times in its editorial was the view that government did not seem to have enough reason to dismiss Hackman other than the private interest of some members of the government. This had to be implied and not stated directly.

Other editorials of the Ghanaian Times after this incident indicated quite clearly that the organization of the internal cocoa trade had not improved in spite of the measures that government had taken, including dismissing Hackman. The Ghanaian Times noted that 10,000 bags of cocoa stored in eight villages in the main

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<sup>66</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 25 October 1969.

cocoa-producing area (Brong Ahafo) remained uncartered to the main marketing center due to transport problems. A Ghanaian Times editorial said that all attempts to get local drivers to transport them had been in vain because of the bad conditions of the roads linking the villages and the marketing centers (in Sefwi-Wiawso).

The Ghanaian Times was critical of the situation and described it as a "classic example of short sightedness" since the cooperative societies and the buying agents, including the CMB, should have made arrangements for the cocoa to be transported promptly. The Ghanaian Times implied that the government had no reason to complain because, "we talk about drop in cocoa production and yet NC200,000 worth of cocoa cannot be transported."<sup>67</sup> Evidently the Ghanaian Times wanted to drive home the fact that government mismanagement and lack of foresight in the implementation of policies were root causes of the internal problems associated with the cocoa trade. These were further indictments of the government in the light of evidence that the buying agencies had not performed the function expected of them.

It is evident from the discussion that both papers, the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times, did provide extensive coverage of the pertinent questions of economic development. More importantly, however, the sampled

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<sup>67</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 7 January 1970.

editorials did not only support government policy without an examination of the alternatives. Thus, they took positions which differed from stated government policies. No doubt, they were controlled by government. But this did not make them lose sight of the essential ingredients of an active press, acting both as an agency for constructive criticism and serving as an instrument for mass education. These functions must be seen, therefore, in relation to the overall effort to achieve public welfare and national development. In the rest of this chapter, the focus will be on how the editorials reflected these ingredients with regard to industrial development.

#### Editorial Comment on Industrial Development

The Nkrumah government's Seven Year Development Plan embodied the government's program for industrialization. Thus, the launching of the plan was of great interest to the people and the press. The Daily Graphic pointed out that it was the first really integrated and comprehensive plan ever dreamed up for Ghana's development and saw it as a manifestation of government's desire to ensure the welfare of all. But as the Daily Graphic editorial pointed out:

The idea of constructing a socialist society will be nothing more than wishful thinking unless . . . the plan enjoys the active support and efficient performance of all sections of the population. . . . This will be the core and backbone of our success.<sup>68</sup>

The Ghanaian Times outlined what it saw as its role in the implementation of the Seven Year Development Program. "We of the Ghanaian Times (will be) exercising vigilance . . . for it is our duty to do so in the interest of party solidarity and the welfare of the people in our role as party watchdogs."<sup>69</sup>

The Daily Graphic believed its role was to provide suggestions and ideas which should guide both workers and management in shouldering their responsibility and demonstrating a correct appraisal of the task before them.<sup>70</sup> Thus, although the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times dealt with the question of industrial development in Ghana, the two papers emphasized different aspects of the issues involved.

The program of industrial development placed severe economic strains on the country. Both the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times dealt with the question of how to raise revenue to support the program. The Daily Graphic

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<sup>68</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 4 February 1963.

<sup>69</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 14 February 1963.

<sup>70</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 4 February 1965.

took up the issue by suggesting a need to widen the tax net. The paper felt that for some time the tax burden had fallen principally on the farmers and workers. "Yet there were others who pursued occupations with enough incomes without being taxed."<sup>71</sup> The editorial suggested that the Minister of Finance consider reviewing the list of taxpayers in order to enable everyone to contribute to the development effort.

To provide the much needed financial support for the industrial program, government set up the National Investment Bank to encourage Ghanaian participation in State enterprises. The Daily Graphic believed that government needed to go much further and suggested that the bank apply strict financial rules in the policies because in the past, money went into the wrong hands. The Daily Graphic wanted to ensure that money was not given to inexperienced enterprises. The editorial said that in any case these measures should have been given a priority by government because they were lessons from previous experiences.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, unless the government's fiscal policies were successful, the program of industrialization embodied in the Seven Year Development Plan could not be

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<sup>71</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 30 December 19 .

<sup>72</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 20 February 1963.

implemented.<sup>73</sup> In view of this, several of the Daily Graphic's editorials were devoted to explaining the policies and providing the rationale for these policies while at the same time criticizing loopholes in government fiscal policy. In this respect, there was a good deal of discussion in the paper about the necessity to conserve foreign exchange to finance the industrial program.<sup>74</sup> The Daily Graphic argued that: ". . . however unpleasant import controls may seem to importers, we cannot afford to ignore the fact that Ghana's balance of trade position must be improved in the interest of the nation."<sup>75</sup>

It was the view that the core of the industrial development program was import-substitution, i.e., the production of commodities locally to replace those being imported. However, greater production could only be achieved when there was greater consumption of Ghanaian products. But, as the Daily Graphic commented, "there are still many people who regard commodities made in Ghana as being inferior to those imported."<sup>76</sup> Despite this, the editorial was critical of some of the Ghanaian

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<sup>73</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 20 February 1962.

<sup>74</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 9 May 1963.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 9 April 1964.

products which according to the paper were shoddy and in many cases showed much higher prices than those imported.

Also discussed by the Daily Graphic was the government's effort to control commodity prices. It should be noted here that a significant percentage of foreign exchange that could be used to finance the industrial program had been used to import consumer goods. These goods were most often retailed at much higher prices. This situation had tended to be complicated by the system of hoarding, profiteering and the inflation that it engendered. To bring the situation under control, the government instituted the system of price inspection with culprits brought to court for prosecution. Although this was a legitimate approach to the problem of inflation, the Daily Graphic was particularly critical of the government's handling of the system. "We are particularly dismayed to learn that . . . government price inspectors make arrests but conveniently fail to attend court to give evidence for the prosecution."<sup>77</sup>

The Daily Graphic argued in its editorial that such practices hampered the economic progress of the country. The Minister of Trade was seen as not sufficiently forceful in enforcing the price control laws. "The Minister of Trade has to find a way of enforcing

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<sup>77</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 7 November 1964.



whatever prices may be issued if the policies of the government are to be effective."<sup>78</sup>

The Ghanaian Times also expressed concern about the lack of control over the internal trade which adversely affected the government's program of industrialization, particularly as it relates to inflation. The Ghanaian Times editorial examined the Ghana National Trading Corporation (GNTC) to which the Nkrumah government had assigned the task of controlling the country's internal trade.

The Ghanaian Times pointed out that the GNTC, like some of the other state enterprises, was plagued by several irregularities including heavy financial losses. This was of great concern to the government because these enterprises had been seen as important sources of revenue for the development of industry. Members of the National Assembly discussed this but as the Ghanaian Times editorial of February 12, 1966, noted, the members blamed the irregularities in the retail trade on the GNTC without touching on the fundamental issue.<sup>79</sup> The Ghanaian Time's view was that the corporation's note of explanation as read by the then Minister of Trade, Kwesi Armah, to parliament showed that "management had not been in

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 12 February 1966.

favor of the idea that the bulk of the country's trade be in the hands of the state."<sup>80</sup> The Ghanaian Times expressed surprise that the Minister failed to recognize that management's position undermined the socialist basis of the government's policy on economic growth. Thus, the paper said: "It is worth asking whether the ministry made any efforts to help the corporation's management out of its erring point or whether it agreed with the management of G.N.T.C.'s view."<sup>81</sup> With a touch of irony that implied a criticism of malpractices that had plagued the internal trade in the past, the editorial said: "The Minister of Trade would do well to clarify such matters of policy if further "Commissions into the Trade Pattern" are to be avoided."<sup>82</sup>

Over the years, there had been questions as to whether the state enterprises had fulfilled their expectations and whether government had also exercised enough supervision over the operation of these enterprises. The Ghanaian Times in several editorials dealt with these questions. The paper stated rather bluntly that these corporations had not been supporting the national effort: "We state emphatically that some corporations continue to make heavy losses, some showing no signs of making any

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

headway even with continued government assistance, some are sinking fast with gross managerial inefficiency and mal-administration, while in some cases it is known that undue political interference, and not the direction or management, is ruining these enterprises."<sup>83</sup>

The editorial comment assigned a number of reasons for this problem. One problem the Ghanaian Times saw was a super heavy wage structure with fantastic allowances and privileges. Furthermore: "In some cases, it is learned that some Ministers under whose responsibility some of these corporations perform send letters to the Chairmen, General Managers or Directors of the enterprises in favor of particular individuals to be engaged on specific salaries and under stated conditions most favorable to these individuals who in some cases are complete misfits."<sup>84</sup>

The Ghanaian Times' criticism was clearly that not only was the practice of interference rampant but the process of recruitment was tampered with. Consequently, these enterprises did not have qualified people employed, and this led to inefficiency. The corporation heads were often victimized by their political bosses and were often blackmailed into accepting wrong policies.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 8 April 1964.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

The operations of some of these state enterprises were the subject of Ghanaian Times editorial comment. Even though the Ghanaian Times praised the steps that the government had taken in respect of the state enterprises, it noted that "the Ghana Airways, the State Mining Corporation, and the State Farms Corporation together were responsible for 13.6 million out of the 15.1 accumulated losses of the 32 state owned enterprises as at the end of 1963."<sup>86</sup> This illustrates the general direction of Ghanaian Times editorial policy. It frequently supported the policy but criticized the way it was carried out.

The Ghanaian Times agreed with the Minister of Trade that some noneconomical routes operated by Ghana Airways could be a major contributing factor to the failure of this corporation. However, the Ghanaian Times took the issue further in its comment. The paper felt it was imperative to reexamine the operations in terms of economic efficiency. By implication, the Ghanaian Times was critical of government's failure to see the importance of the economic viability of state enterprises like the Ghana Airways Corporation, in the first place. The

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<sup>86</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 9 February 1965.

editorial comment called for a full investigation so as to find the means of improving the performance of these enterprises.<sup>87</sup>

The paper outlined its own views on why there were heavy losses in the Airways Corporation.

Managerial efficiency or lack of it is one reason. Lack of operational skills is another and there is further reason which reflects upon the honesty of many of the airlines personnel, especially the overseas personnel. . . . Inefficiency cannot be eliminated by increased investment and therefore the Airline must clear the interior of the house before the new external coating.<sup>88</sup>

The Ghanaian Times also suggested ways in which the problem could be resolved. The Ghanaian Times suggested that: "In their instrument of incorporation, strict rules and regulations should be laid down for the management and directorate of the State corporations so that no room is left to be exploited by the greedy, and no flimsy excuses accepted as explanation for failures that can only be attributed to the excuses and shortcomings of those in charge of these corporations."<sup>89</sup>

In the case of the State Housing Corporation, the paper praised the corporation for putting in effect a new housing scheme to curb the increasing housing problem in the urban industrial centers. However, the Ghanaian Times maintained that the corporation had not always been

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<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

fair in the allocation of houses and in the collection of rent. But what was more interesting, as the Ghanaian Times pointed out in its editorial comment, was that most of the defaulters were government officials. It was, therefore, suggested that: "If they do not pay up their arrears within a week, we (the Times) would be compelled to publish their names, pictures and addresses with details of the amounts they owed in our columns."<sup>90</sup> As the Ghanaian Times noted later, within a week, 30,000 pounds of the 39,000 pounds had been received by the government corporations.

The Ghanaian Times editorial was particularly critical since the National Assembly was at the time discussing the issue of public indebtedness to state industrial concerns.<sup>91</sup> The paper implied, of course, that it was pretentious for parliamentarians to discuss the issue when in fact they were the worst offenders. The indebtedness of prominent government officials and parliamentarians to the State Furniture Corporation and State Housing Corporations was shown to be a bad example. The paper said: "This is a most reprehensible state of affairs and the great tragedy is that many other State

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>"Today in Parliament," Ghanaian Times, 8 February 1965.

enterprises are in the same quagmire and require some decisive measures to lift them up."<sup>92</sup>

The two national dailies seemed to complement each other by dealing with different issues related to industrial development. It is important to note the often implied criticism. This is in keeping with indigenous Ghanaian respect of the office that "government" holds in the society.

On February 24, 1966, a military government, the National Liberation Council, came into office and took over control of both the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times. As noted earlier, the new government replaced Nkrumah's editors with those sympathetic to its policies. There was much preoccupation after the coup with what had gone wrong. With the Nkrumah government no longer protected by the sacredness of its office, the criticisms were more direct if not rude. The joint State and Private enterprises that the Nkrumah government had hoped would be a basis for industrialization came under review after the coup particularly in relation to their financial consequences. The Daily Graphic editorial of March 11, 1967, stated that:

The huge internal and overseas debts incurred by the previous regime were due not only to that regime's pre-occupation with prestige projects or anxiety to industrialize at breakneck speed, but partly to the operations of smart overseas

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

creditors, particularly pre-finance agents and some management agents. Some of these agents took advantage of the naivety of our negotiators to push through fast deals from which they and not the Ghanaian taxpayer benefits.<sup>93</sup>

In the editorial of April 29, 1966, the paper outlined what went wrong with the meat factory in Bolgatanga. The view was that the Nkrumah government "built a number of factories without giving the least consideration to the availability of raw materials."<sup>94</sup> The editorial indicated that the available statistics showed that during the first two months of its operation, the factory spent 50,000 pounds in foreign exchange on the importation of cattle from other African countries. This policy raised the cost of production and made the factory's products sell at uncompetitive prices. The effects of such problems on the public patronage of made-in-Ghana goods was detrimental to the industrialization program. In this respect, the Daily Graphic described as a realistic and welcome step the NLC government's "decision to establish a cattle breeding station at Bolgatanga to provide meat to feed the factory."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> "Editorial," Daily Graphic, 11 March 1967.

<sup>95</sup> "Editorial," Daily Graphic, 29 April 1966.



As noted earlier, in throwing search lights on the industrialization program under the Nkrumah government, one of the basic concerns of the press was to answer the question of what went wrong with the State industrial enterprises? The discussion of the steel plant at Tema indicated this concern. This industry was established at the cost of more than one and a half million pounds. Despite such heavy investment, the steel plant was running at a loss up to the time of the military coup. The Daily Graphic's view was that the 1964 Auditor General's report which linked the poor results of the factory to disproportionately high overheads was just half the truth.

A careful examination of the nature of steel production and what makes a steel mill profitable will establish the inescapable fact that the decision to establish the steel mill in the first place was ill-conceived, in the second place rushed, in the third place imposed, and it was established without any feasibility studies having been conducted.<sup>96</sup>

The paper said if a feasibility study had been conducted, it would have become plain even to the blind that Ghana could not operate profitably a steel mill and that even if it could, cost of the steel produced would have been so high that the whole venture would not have been worthwhile--in spite of the small amount of foreign exchange that would have been saved. In the words of

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<sup>96</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 30 August 1966.

the Daily Graphic: "the Tema Steel Works Corporation is a typical example of how to run a bad business."<sup>97</sup>

The absence of feasibility and profitability surveys was not limited to the steel factory only but it applied equally to others. The 8,000 pound Fire Extinguisher Factory at Tema illustrated the same problem. And the Daily Graphic editorialized: ". . . all our factories and industries must undertake market surveys outside Ghana in order to play a worthy role in earning foreign exchange for the country by exporting their products."<sup>98</sup>

In 1954 the Nkrumah government set up the National Paper Distribution Organization (NAPADO) Advertising Service. This organization was expected to cater for the advertising requirements of all statutory corporations and other state enterprises. At the close of its first year of operation the company incurred 10,831 pounds of debts. In the view of the Daily Graphic this was due to poor management. The government's failure to raise revenue for the program of industrialization was again attributed not only to the inability of this company to select firms and organizations with which it did business but also its lack of perseverance . . . in the collection of debts due.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> "Editorial," Daily Graphic, 6 May 1963.

The Daily Graphic did not blame the continued unprofitability of the State enterprises on the Nkrumah government per se. It was also critical of the NLC governments' policies with regard to trade which did not encourage local industry. The editorial accused the Ministry of Trade of ". . . insensitivity to our insolvency. For example 300,000 pairs of shoes produced by the State Shoe Manufacturing Enterprise had no buyer for about a year."<sup>100</sup>

As a result four hundred workers were on the verge of losing their jobs. The Daily Graphic maintained that the shoes had not found a market because the Minister of Trade had issued licenses to import shoes while there were enough on hand. This was incomprehensible as the paper noted: "If the government is not prepared to support industries in the country, then we are not really prepared to come out of the present unpleasant economic situation."<sup>101</sup>

In other editorials, the Daily Graphic outlined its own approaches to solving the problem of raising enough money to finance industrial development. The problem of making the enterprises profitable was taken on by the NLC. In a December 2, 1968, editorial the paper said that those State corporations that were still

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

running at a loss should be examined. In the Daily Graphic's view: "Some may need a last boost of some kind to enable them to get on the sound road to recovery and even profit making."<sup>102</sup> The Daily Graphic believed that money-losing State enterprises could not be justified on the basis of the jobs they provided. It reasoned:

Our people must have the opportunity of being employed; but if for only this reason we have to set up enterprises which are incapable of looking after themselves, then we might just as well dish out the money for keeping them running as unemployment benefits for all our people who cannot find work. At least in this respect, expenditure would be only in the matter of wages, and we do not have to expend large sums on machinery (and) enterprises which are dead from birth.<sup>103</sup>

Recommendations as to how to increase productivity in the industrial concerns was the subject of further comment. Industrial firms needed new ideas to stimulate activity and make the workers directly interested in what they were doing, the paper argued. Thus, management and industrial relations were to be of great importance if the government program of industrialization was to be a success. In recommending a program of action the paper noted: ". . . there must be discipline in any enterprise that engages a number of people for the purpose of producing a commodity for the use of the public; but we

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<sup>102</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 2 December 1968.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

think the bosses and the rank and file in this country are still too Victorian to induce enthusiasm in the people who carry out the dull routine of producing the goods."<sup>104</sup>

Furthermore, it suggested that more workers should be more directly involved in the organizations in which they worked. Involving workers in decision-making and providing incentives such as bonuses should promote efficiency and increased production. What is important to note is that the program of industrialization under the Nkrumah government had created an economic crisis which the NLC thought it could solve. The press in its function was equally concerned about what the options were. It had thrown search lights on the state industrial enterprises and provided recommendations as to how to achieve increased productivity and efficiency. However, in what could be considered an indictment of both the government and Ghana's economic planners, the Daily Graphic suggested the need for an economic czar.

We suggest the appointment of what should be virtually an economic czar or overlord to preside over the National Economic Council. . . . It will be the duty of this high powered economist to preside over the economic fortunes of Ghana, recruit efficient administrators, attorneys and managers trained in the ways of the world to untangle our economic problems.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 11 March 1967.

It was Sir Arthur Lewis the paper had in mind. Lewis had worked with the United Nations and served in a number of nations including Ghana as Chief Economic Consultant. The Daily Graphic believed he was qualified not only in terms of international standards but had the reputation and knowledge to deal with the problem. In its justification the paper felt that "it will be a challenge to his high intellect to repair what the locusts have eaten as well as to challenge Ghanaians to pull their weight."<sup>106</sup>

The criticism that the press wanted to run on the failure of government and its planners was clearly implicit. Still, there could be little doubt that this editorial indicated the confidence that the press had in the government's ability to handle its own problems. In short, the economic problems were so overwhelming that the press under the NLC period felt free enough to criticize past and present performance and to make suggestions for change in spite of government control.

What, then, were the concerns of the Ghanaian Times in the NLC period? Were they significantly different from those of the Graphic? Both the Ghanaian Times and the Daily Graphic seemed to have given equal weight to the problems of industrial development. However, even though the Ghanaian Times also dwelled on the theme of

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

"what went wrong?" it sought to explain more of what the NLC government's policies were going to be in solving the economic crisis.

The present government is interested in state enterprises only without ideological compulsion. Furthermore, at the present time it is obvious that the (Nkrumah) government had set up more industrial enterprises than it could economically handle profitably with the manpower resources at its disposal. In the coming two years of stabilization, therefore, the government will concentrate on completing the projects already started, assuring competent management to run the existing enterprises and to lay the ground work through careful project preparation for the industrial development of the future.<sup>107</sup>

The problem of unemployment remained a critical one for the NLC. The Ghanaian Times, in dealing with what had gone wrong with the state enterprises, dwelled on the subject of employment in these enterprises during the Nkrumah regime. The Ghanaian Times argued that the failure of these enterprises was related to

. . . a practice which had become so much of an obsession among the managements of public corporations. They tumbled over each other to declare profits which never existed in reality, paper profits which were never supported in hard cash.<sup>108</sup>

The editorial comment stated further that "it was these deceitful declarations which led the workers in these corporations to believe that all was fine in the garden when in fact all was wrong."<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 15 May 1966.

<sup>108</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 16 February 1967.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

Another issue dealt with was the agreements that the previous government entered into with foreign companies to run these enterprises. The Ghanaian Times believed that "misrepresentations induced the signing of agreements with foreign companies which often exposed the Ghanaian economy to huge risks."<sup>110</sup> The Ghanaian Times did not blame this entirely on the Nkrumah regime alone. The Ghanaian Times found the NLC equally guilty. The Ghanaian Times was of the opinion that:

The trouble with us all is that we are completely under the spell of things foreign to such an extent that we are not prepared to give local products a chance. We think mostly or chiefly about goods or things from Britain or America.<sup>111</sup>

In the opinion of the editorial, the worst offenders were the top government officials who refused to buy anything made in Ghana. The Ghanaian Times did not, however, visualize the problem as being a simple one of lack of patronage. The paper felt that there was a feeling among some employees that they were working for an anonymous impersonal entity called "Government."<sup>112</sup> This attitude led to a failure on the part of the workers to put in their best for the success of these enterprises.

These industrial organizations did not entirely alleviate the unemployment problem. In view of that, the

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<sup>110</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 9 April 1968.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid.



Ghanaian Times suggested that more encouragement should be given to foreign investors in the industrial sector. The Ghanaian Times editorialized: "It is important and urgent that foreign investment here, under reasonable conditions, is encouraged, if for no other reason than to help create more jobs for many of our people who would otherwise be unemployed."<sup>113</sup> But foreign investment was not to be sought at all cost. It was to be carried out under mutually agreed to fair conditions. There were equally useful ways to deal with the economic problem and, without directly saying so, the Ghanaian Times implied the government was wasteful.<sup>114</sup>

High unemployment coupled with the continuing rise in the cost of living also resulted in a number of industrial strikes which the Ghanaian Times commented upon its editorial columns. To deal with the rampant industrial strikes by the workers, the Ghanaian Times suggested that a court should be set up as a matter of urgency. In the event of any dispute on the interpretation of an agreement or the right of an employer to change conditions of service, the status quo would be maintained pending the decision of the labor court.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 18 January 1969.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times.

Thus, it is evident that the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times under the NLC discussed similar issues but the emphases were different. Both were concerned with what had gone wrong, what could be done and how it was to be done. They were critical only to the extent that they saw alternative approaches to the economic problems. In this respect, it is difficult to see any difference in their functions under the different governments.

When the Busia government came into office, it was quite clear that it would follow to its logical conclusion the policies started by the NLC government. Once its methods for revitalizing the economy were clear, both the Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times looked critically at the direction in which the country seemed to be going in its industrial development.

The Busia administration, like its predecessor, showed an interest in industrial expansion. This was indicated in the sessional address of the Chairman of the Presidential Commission to Parliament, in the budget statements of the government and in its One Year Development Plan. The government believed that one of the most efficient strategies to achieve increased expansion in industry was to develop indigenous entrepreneurial talent. Thus, in its early years in office, the Busia administration sought legislation to provide opportunities

for Ghanaian businesses to participate fully in important sectors of the economy. The Ghanaian Business Promotion Act was meant to do this.

This Act reserved for Ghanaians some areas of the economy which in the past had been in the hands of expatriate firms owned primarily by Lebanese, Syrians and Indians. However, the implementation of the Act met with some difficulties. The Daily Graphic pointed out how attempts were made by the foreigners affected to sabotage the Act. First, they demanded very high prices for the businesses they had to sell. Then, they demanded payment in foreign exchange for businesses sold in Ghana. While this was in contravention of the Exchange Control regulations, the paper added that these businessmen were only looking for ways of taking foreign exchange out of the country. To avoid such problems, the Daily Graphic said the purchaser might well pay in foreign exchange but the owner of the business should be made to put cedis in the Bank for eventual transfer.<sup>116</sup>

The critical aspects of the editorials were related to the procedures set out by the government for sale of these foreign enterprises. In the first place, there had been rumors that some top government officials were taking advantage of the Act and buying the foreign businesses themselves. The Daily Graphic urged that an

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<sup>116</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 3 February 1970.

inquiry be set up to investigate the sale of businesses and that the names of the sellers as well as the buyers of the business and the price paid be published. Said the Daily Graphic: "Such an enquiry will certainly dispel the fears of those who believe that some people who are in advantageous positions have used others as front men to buy and sell businesses while others have dug up ill gotten gains from 'mattresses' to take the lion's share of the enterprizes on sale."<sup>117</sup> What is of interest in this study is the indirectness of the criticism of the government. The Daily Graphic knew that any such investigation would catch many of the government officials as the worst offenders. The editorial was indeed meant to be a criticism of the government presented in a style that was legitimate and in keeping with the traditional way of criticizing the office of head of the society.

The relationship between industrialization and government budget priorities was inevitably a matter of editorial comment. One of the major questions was how to raise revenue to meet the program of industrial development. The government's policy emphasized taxation and putting surcharges on certain imported items.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

<sup>118</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 28-31 July 1971.

Second-hand cars were among the items on which surcharges were placed. This raised a spate of criticism from both the public and the press. The Daily Graphic pointed out that to overtax such an essential area of activity as transportation, which served both industry and agriculture, was to say the least unrealistic. It pointed out that the reason why there was so much importation of second-hand cars was the lack of an effective public transportation system. The editorial was critical of the fact that as much as "NC14 million is spent on transport in the government services."<sup>119</sup> The paper believed that if this special privilege were abolished then a proper public transportation system would be devised.<sup>120</sup>

Without taxation the government felt that it would be difficult to solve the unemployment problem through industrial expansion. The Busia government went ahead, however, and entered into a number of agreements with foreign companies to establish industries in Ghana to help solve the unemployment problem and expand the industrial sector of the economy. There was an agreement to establish an aluminum industry. There was also to be a Petroleum Industry Commission to serve as a nucleus

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<sup>119</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 20-21 September 1970.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

organization for the petroleum industry when the oil explorations had been completed.

The Daily Graphic came out in support of the government's plan and explained the usefulness of what the government was doing. The paper was particularly supportive of the fact that most of the raw materials were going to come from the country. At the same time, the paper saw in the industrial expansion, a basis for import substitution as well as further inter-African trade. In this light, the Daily Graphic also supported the idea of a chemical factory in Ghana. As the editorial comment sought to explain, the industry would use Ghana's own raw materials in producing "caustic soda" to be used by firms producing soap, batteries and fertilizers for agricultural development. In addition neighboring African countries could serve as a ready market for these products. The Daily Graphic did, however, caution the government on the issue: "Financing new industry has been in the past undertaken by government borrowing from developed countries at penurious rates of interest as Ghana knows well enough."<sup>121</sup> In view of this, the success of the program would in the opinion of the Daily Graphic depend upon what agreements the country made with foreign investors for the establishment of these industries.

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<sup>121</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 27 October 1970.

However, the heavy industrial expansion had introduced some imbalance in the process of development in Ghana. Most of the heavy industries were concentrated in the big cities like Accra, Kumasi, Tema and Takoradi. The Daily Graphic believed that "the problems created by this system usually result in bigger and more costly social and economic difficulties which threaten to undermine the whole effort of national reconstruction."<sup>122</sup>

The paper pointed to the migration of young people to the town in search of jobs. Since the industries could not absorb the young, they channeled their energies into anti-social behavior like stealing. Thus, it was the view that industries could not provide sufficient employment. The Daily Graphic suggested that to achieve industrial expansion and to lay the foundation for a strong rural development, businessmen who invest in the rural areas should be given rebates and other incentives such as bonuses on exports.<sup>123</sup>

It is important to note in all these examples that while these papers carried out their explicative functions in their editorial comment, they also provided alternatives to government policies.

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<sup>122</sup>"Editorial," Daily Graphic, 22 January 1971.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid.

While the government was trying to increase or at least maintain the rate of economic development, the debt situation was having a crippling effect on the economy. In 1972 the Minister of Finance made a plea to the British government for debt relief. The Minister noted that the terms of British loans to Ghana were too harsh. Again the Daily Graphic editorial sought to explain the issue.

The British government's attitude contrasts painfully with that of the Chinese in the case of the loan for the building of the Tanzan Railroad from Dar-es-Salaam to the Zambian copperbelt. . . . In the case of Ghana's loan it would appear that Britain is determined to cripple the Ghanaian economy through the imposition of impossible payment terms. The ultimate result of such a harsh policy will be political instability due to economic stagnation. We are compelled to ask: is this what Britain wants to happen to Ghana? And is this the price Ghana has to pay for maintaining cordial relations with Britain over the long years?<sup>124</sup>

The Ghanaian Times also discussed the issues related to industrial development. It did, however, have an emphasis different from the Daily Graphic. First the Ghanaian Times was concerned about the pace of rural development to which the government considered itself committed. The paper's criticism was, however, indirect. "It is becoming evident that much exhortation on what must be done never brings any results until someone starts doing something however limited his resources may

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<sup>124</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 19 March 1971.



be."<sup>125</sup> The clear implication was that the government ought to be doing much more for the rural areas and that the question of lack of money was only an excuse for doing nothing.

The Busia government decided to lay much more emphasis on private participation in the economy. In this respect, the sale of the state enterprises to private individuals that had begun in the NLC period continued. However, there was a general feeling that the enterprises were sold to people who had political connections. This view was clearly expressed when the Ghanaian Times called for the publication of names of persons to whom enterprises were sold. For "this will dispel suspicions in the mind of many Ghanaians that these enterprises had merely been given to party functionaries."<sup>126</sup>

Of course, the government did not respond to the request. In 1970, therefore, the Ghanaian Times editorial raised the issue again, pointing to the need to publish the names of those who purchased the enterprises.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 22 January 1971.

<sup>126</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 19 September 1969.

<sup>127</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 2 February 1970.

In its drive to industrialize, the Nkrumah government had entered into a number of agreements with international agencies as well as private individuals such as the Drevici Group, which was involved in the processing of food and cocoa. After the coup of 1966, the Drevici group more or less folded up. The NLC established a committee whose task was to review the Nkrumah government's agreement with Drevici. Following the investigation, the Busia government reported that the group operated other businesses that were not in the initial contract. Also, the report stated, "the contracts are tainted with . . . improper gifts, inducements, and rewards given by the Drevici group of companies to the employees, servants or agents of the previous governments of Ghana for doing or forbearing to do acts in relation to obtaining or execution of such contracts."<sup>128</sup>

The critical point here was that implicated in this scandal were both the Nkrumah and the NLC governments. Since a number of highly placed members of the Busia government were also equally highly placed in the NLC government, they too had been implicated. Within the bounds of courtesy but yet critical of the problem, the Ghanaian Times said since the government seemed to be

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<sup>128</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 2 February 1970.

in the possession of the facts it must make them public so as to exonerate itself.<sup>129</sup>

Other agreements that were entered into by the government came up for review by the press. In general, the Ghanaian Times believed that Ghanaian negotiators had become so hysterical about the magnitude of the debts incurred that they were inclined to sign off projects which would further "slide us into debts."<sup>130</sup> The Ghanaian Times criticized the easy terms on which large concession of forest land had been leased to corporations like Firestone for example.

In conclusion, it has to be noted that the Ghanaian Times and the Daily Graphic in their editorial comment both explained and criticized government policy. This they did irrespective of government control. As long as they kept within the bounds of accepted usage, their criticism of the government could be and was harsh without an open confrontation.

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<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

<sup>130</sup>"Editorial," Ghanaian Times, 17 July 1970.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study evaluates the part played by the press of Ghana in providing a forum for public "discussion" of the nation's economic development. Within this purview, the degree of freedom of the press is measured by the degree of editorial criticism of government policy. The main perspectives here were that the critical function of the editorial in the Ghanaian press was not directly related to the degree of stated or actual government control of the press. Secondly, the explicative function of the editorials was directly related to the role that government expected the press to play in providing explanation of government policies. The question was whether in view of government control the press uncritically presented government policy.

The sampled editorials clearly indicated that there was significant criticism but it was nearly always implied rather than direct. This was in essence a reinforcement of the basic values of Ghanaian society. The linguist who had a role analagous to that of the modern

press was controlled by the chief as head of the community and though the linguist criticized the chief, he was expected to do this within the bounds of decorum.

In terms of the explicative function of the press, the sampled editorials discussed the government's policy to the extent that they provided reasons why government had to take a particular line of action. Where there was disagreement between the press and the government, the editorials provided alternatives and used the style of language that Ghanaians considered as legitimate.

Clearly, this study would seem to indicate the need to study the institutions of different societies in their own right rather than apply theories of freedom of the press that are grounded in societies that have entirely different values, different historical experiences and development problems. Unless analysts make the efforts necessary, their judgments about other societies are bound to be misleading.

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