CHAPTER VIII

AFTERMATH OF THE DECISION

Though the Congress approved the VRP funding for the fiscal year 1962, scattered criticisms against aid to Ghana continued to be made in the press and in the Congress.

Smith Hempstone, writing in the Saturday Evening Post characterized the internal situation of Ghana in 1962 as "distressing". The country's economy was in shambles. The policy of suppression of civil liberty and the officially-sponsored deification of Akuffo in Ghana suggested Ghana's drift towards Communism. The effect of American aid would be "to prop up the regime of a police state which had opposed the United States internationally at every turn." "It will relieve Russia of the burden of financing the dem while in no way committing Ghana to change her anti-Western foreign policy," Hempstone noted. 1

Senator Richard B. Russell (Democrat, Georgia) made a speech on the floor of the Senate attacking the Administration for paying glowing tributes to the "great democracy" which existed in Ghana. He deplored the release of any large amount of American dollars for such "show case" countries. 2

Meanwhile, relations between Ghana and the United States began to improve as the domestic situation in Ghana took a somewhat different turn. While the pro-Western elements in

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the CPP had been silenced, radicals like Lewis Ademafio and A.K. Berdan had not been rewarded with office by Nkrumah. Also during the time, 321 political prisoners including Nkrumah's arch rivals like Joseph B. Danquah and Joe Appiah were released. For some time Government-monitored newspapers like the Ghanaian Times and the Evening News had refrained from attacking the United States in their columns. 3

MACKNEY REPLACES RUSSELL AS AMBASSADOR

A change had taken place at the US Embassy in Accra as Ambassador William P. Mehoney, Jr. replaced Ambassador Francis H. Russell as Ambassador to Ghana. As has been pointed out earlier, Nkrumah could not get along with Russell, especially during the last phase of the latter's stay in Ghana. Mehoney was an extrovert and an outgoing person. The initial impression that he made on Nkrumah was good. "Nkrumah was quite warm in receiving me", Mehoney told the present writer. 4

But Mehoney had hardly settled down when an attempt was made on Nkrumah's life at Kulungugu, while he was returning from a trip to Upper Volta. The Ghanaian Times attacked the "imperialist powers" for their complicity in the attempted murder at Kulungugu and subsequently lashed out at the American press for dubbing Ghana as a Communist state. The paper referred to the "curious kind of diplomacy" displayed by the

3. Interview, Brian Edmondson.
4. Interview, Ambassador Mehoney.
American Embassy at Accra in convening a press conference after Kulungugu affair only to read out a message from Kennedy to Nkrumah. The State Department's role, the paper noted, seemed "mischievous" because without attempting to denounce the dastardly act right away, the Department had merely observed that the attempt had failed. The whole thing appeared as if it was "an attempt by the State Department to correct a mistake or a miscalculation," the paper said. 5

Ambassador Mehoney responded to the Ghanaian press attacks with a statement demanding that "the unfounded charges and distortions" in the Government radio and press should stop against a country that had always remained friendly and helpful to Ghana. He remarked that the matter was being brought to the notice of Nkrumah. 6 The New York Times reported that the State Department had instructed Mehoney to meet Nkrumah personally to lodge a protest against attacks on the United States. 7

The Government of Ghana conveyed its apology to the United States Government for the attacks by the Ghanaian Times. It issued a statement to the effect that it found no evidence at all to suggest any American association with the bomb explosion. Nkrumah invited Mehoney for discussions and their

7. Ibid., 21 September 1962, p. 5.
meeting lasted forty five minutes. Apparently the issue came to be treated as closed.

The atmosphere was again surcharged with emotion shortly thereafter when it was reported that Assistant Secretary Williams had stated in a television interview in the United States that "Ghana fluctuated more toward the East then toward us." The remark provoked Nkrumah to write a personal letter of protest to President Kennedy.  

Ambassador Me honey, in an interview with the present writer, said that the tense atmosphere of charges, and counter-charges between the two countries began to subside by the end of September after he had called on Nk r umah a couple of times to discuss the Kulungugu attack. The Ambassador noted that despite anti-American rhetoric which emanated from the CPP and the Ghanaian press from time to time, both he and Nkrumah developed mutual friendship and respect for each other to offset any diplomatic snarls between the two countries. As for himself, he had no problem in gaining access to Nkrumah whenever he wanted, the Ambassador said.

The New York Times reported around that time that after the shooting incident contained no direct criticisms of the United States. The American officials were generally satisfied with that speech in early October. According to the newspaper, they

8. Ibid., 23 September 1962, p. 43.
10. Interview, Ambassador Me honey.
characterized Nkrumah's views on Ghana's foreign policy as "moderate". They had noted that Nkrumah had made a reference to just once case of foreign aid and had chosen to express his thanks only to one country, namely, the United States.\(^\text{11}\)

Some American diplomats stationed in Accra during the time told the present writer that the Kulungugu incident was significant in the impact it had on Nkrumah. They were of the view that it was from that point really that Nkrumah started moving away from the West and to make overtures to the Soviet Union owing to his concern over his personal security. According to the same sources, Khrushchev complied with Nkrumah's request promptly by sending a senior Soviet security officer to Ghana.\(^\text{12}\)

In November 1962 Senator Allen J. Ellender (Democrat, Louisiana) arrived in Ghana to make an on-the-spot report on United States Foreign Operations in Africa, on behalf of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. During his stay in Ghana he declared that the United States would be willing to give further technical assistance to Ghana.\(^\text{13}\) In his report submitted in February 1963, Ellender made a few favourable remarks concerning Ghana. "I was amazed at the progress made [in Ghana] since my last visit. A modern port has been constructed at


\(^{12}\) Interview.

\(^{13}\) See Daily Graphic, 5 November 1962, p. 6.
Tema and also a fine University," the Senator said. "The country is forging ahead at a rapid rate," he added. Work on the Volta dam, Ellender noted, was going ahead of schedule and that Ghana's industrial prospects would be enhanced under the auspices of the Volta River Project. The senator stated that, according to information furnished to him, dollars loaned by the United States to Ghana would be utilized for the purchase of American equipment.

Senator Ellender was a staunch segregationist and was widely regarded by liberal Americans as "anti-black." He strongly believed that assistance and guidance to African countries could best be provided by their former colonial rulers. He had many caustic things to say about various countries he visited in the course of his tour. That his report contained some condemnation of Ghana and no attack on Nkrumah was probably due to some good public relations work by Ambassador Mehoney.

It is also to be noted that the ebullient Chad Calhoun of the Keiser Corporation played host to the Senator at the site of the Volta dam. Again, apparently, the Calhoun magic worked successfully. On his return from his trip, while addressing the Senate, Ellender said that of the projects that he had visited, the Volta River Project in Ghana looked most promising.

16. Ibid., p. 211.
17. Ibid., p. 70.
In the months that followed, there were by now familiar spells of critical reports in the Ghanaian newspapers against the United States and reports in the American press about "the drift of Ghana towards Communism." But the State Department continued to reiterate its view that Nkrumah's attitude was not hostile, and that American aid to the Volta River Project was worthwhile. Indeed, Assistant Secretary Mennen Williams sought to caution Americans against expecting that the institutions sought to be built by Africans should correspond to and function in the manner of American institutions. Williams offered his exposition when a reporter posed a question with respect to certain domestic developments in the Congo. His answer, couched in general terms, was particularly applicable to Ghana in view of the continuing criticisms of the domestic policies of Nkrumah. Williams developed the argument further in an address on 14 March 1963 before the thirteenth annual North Carolina Conference of World Affairs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina.19

Williams said in that address that in the African context Abraham Lincoln's concept of "government of the people" meant the transfer of power from the alien ruler to indigenous

19. For Williams's Speech see Department of State For the Press; No. 126, 14 March 1963, pp. 1-4.
hends, i.e., decolonization. "Government by the People" meant governing with the consent of the governed, i.e., with elections in which the "one man one vote" principle was given effect to. "Government for the People" meant a government that concerned itself with efforts to provide a decent living for its people.

Williams went on to say that most Africans were of the view that it was possible for them to achieve their goals. They were not opposed to centralization of power to meet the task of building the nation.

The Assistant Secretary also dealt with the criticisms that "African socialism" was inimical towards foreign enterprise. "Even in countries which most strongly profess socialist beliefs, private investment is not only welcomed but eagerly sought." That Williams had Ghana and its leader Nkrumah especially in mind was clearly indicated by the fact that he chose at this point to quote a passage from a speech by Nkrumah in the previous month. In that speech Nkrumah had declared that African ideas of socialism could exist with private enterprise. Private capital and private investment capital in particular, Nkrumah had stated, "has recognized and legitimate part to play in Ghana's development." The Assistant Secretary's address was printed in full in a Department of State Press Release and was given wide publicity. 20

It constituted the most comprehensive response by an official source to the kind of criticisms about Ghana in

20. Ibid.
Congress from the American press.

During a visit to Ghana in June 1963 Williams characterized the VRP as "a model of Ghanaian integrity and industry in which every citizen of Ghana can rightly take pride." "Just as Ghana is rightly proud of what you are doing here, so America is proud to be associated with you in this historic project," he declared. Williams went to the extent of declaring at a press conference that "Ghana is a place where the indigenous people are living in a world of freedom and justice." He expressed his admiration for the all round developments that had taken place in Ghana especially in the field of industry, agriculture and education. 21

The United States Information Agency in Washington had in the meanwhile brought out a pamphlet on the VRP entitled "Power for Ghana - The Volta River Project". Fifty thousand copies of the pamphlet were presented by Ambassador Mahoney to A.J. Dowuona-Hammond, Ghana's Minister of Education, on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of Ghana's independence. 22

SHARP QUESTIONS FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATION

Both Mennen Williams and Edmond Hutchinson, Assistant Administrator, AID ran into familiar rough weather when they appeared before the Committee on Appropriations of the House

22. Ibid., 6 March 1963, p. 15.
of Representatives in April 1963. The hearings on Foreign Operations Appropriations was chaired by Democratic Congressman Otto E. Passman of Louisiana. It was seldom a pleasant experience for representatives of the State Department to appear before the prickly Passman. He had a relish for interrupting them, cutting them short and making it appear as if they were engaged in efforts to sell American interests "down the river." It appears that there was a sharp exchange between Passman and Williams at an executive session, Oliver L. Troxel, Jr., who was at that time the Economic Officer in the US Embassy at Accra told the present writer in an interview that Passman interrupted Williams when the latter offered a defence of Nkrumah. The Louisiana Congressman told Williams that his duty was to work in defence of national interests of the United States instead of singing praises for Nkrumah. 23

In the open session Williams stuck to his position that "While the Ghanaian situation shows unfortunate tendencies from time to time, I am convinced of the basic long run soundness of the people in Ghana." 24 He emphasized that under Nkrumah a sizeable sector in Ghana had been reserved for private foreign investment as well as domestic private investment. "In fact, in Ghana, by far the greatest activity is in the private sector." He repeated to the Committee his favourite quotation

23. Interview, Oliver Troxel.
from Nkrumah's speech concerning the "recognized and legitimate part" of private investment in Ghana's development. 25

Representative H.R. Gross (Republican, Iowa) referred to Nkrumah as "a dictator and a tyrant of the worst order" and asked Williams whether he advocated continuation of American aid to Ghana. The Assistant Secretary's answer was very significant. In fact it was a succinct statement of the attitude of the US Government. "We are not giving him aid, Sir," Williams replied. "We are giving aid to the people of Ghana. We feel that in the long run the people of Ghana are going to establish a Government and a society which will contribute to the well-being of the world. I think the United States has to take a long range point of view," Williams noted. 26

Later Hutchinson appeared before the Passman Sub Committee. Passman was by no means friendly to foreign aid programme. He was particularly opposed to aiding countries that he regarded as unfriendly to the United States. Under the Kennedy Administration, the Treasury Department had urged upon the Congress to obligate funds for three years for long term projects instead of the usual annual appropriations. Passman was critical of the move as it would weaken his annual inquisition concerning various programmes. He jealously sought to guard the powers of his Committee in regard to foreign appropriations and was averse to leaving loop-holes to the Executive

25. Ibid., p. 332.
26. Ibid., pp. 373-4.
The point at issue in the hearings was the Administration's position that the Congress had already committed to more than annual financing for Volta River Project. Passman was of the view that any such commitment would violate the right of the Congress to de-obligate funds in case it felt necessary to do so.

Representative Joseph M. Montoya of New Mexico asked Hutchinson whether the contracts that the United States had entered into with regard to the Volta dam contained any provision which made the agreement contingent upon appropriations of the Congress. Hutchinson replied that there was no such provision in the agreement. Montoya asserted that such a situation was contrary to the assurance that had been given to the Committee by Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Hutchinson clarified the point that the loss in respect of agreements about which he had been speaking had been made and obligated against funds already appropriated. In regard to commitments based on money not yet appropriated, the assurance given by Secretary Rusk would apply.

Passman pressed Hutchinson to give a definite date by which the Volta dam would be completed. The latter regretted

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27. Interview.


29. Ibid., p. 100.

30. Ibid., p. 105.
Mr Passman: Of the $110 million, when is it contemplated that the aluminium smelter will be completed? Approximately what date will it be completed?

Mr Hutchinson: My understanding is, and I am speaking from memory and I would check myself, that the smelter will be completed in about 7 years, Sir.

Mr Passman: In 7 years?...

Then, in effect by the language of the legislation approved last year, you can block off and obligate funds as many years in advance as you like for projects?

Mr Hutchinson: Sir this--

Mr Passman: Would you answer my question?

Mr Hutchinson: I cannot answer it straight-forwardly with a yes or no answer and give you a true answer.

Mr Passman: We want to know how far in advance you can obligate funds of the DLF; that will be my question?

Mr Hutchinson: I would have to check the law.

Mr Passman: Let us check it now.

Mr Hutchinson: Last year there was no limit.

Mr Passman: Let us find out how far in advance you can obligate funds on projects.

Mr Hutchinson: So far as I am aware, Sir, and I would want to check with Counsel on this, you can obligate funds through to the completion of the project....
Mr Passman: This is just as serious as it can be. We are going to find out how— we are not going to get sidetracked.... As far as you know... there is no law that would limit the number of years that you could obligate funds in advance. It is to the completion of a project, is that your understanding?

Mr Hutchinson: That is my understanding.

Mr Passman: Thank you. That gives you a general idea of what we have not ourselves into by this bowl of fish we strewed up last year.... You made these obligations available with long-range planning. All you have to do is to tie that in with previous years' authorizations, and believe me you have it just as neat and perfectly wrapped up with a blue ribbon as a project could be.... I am speaking specifically of this Volta project that you have obligated to the presently estimated completion cost.

Mr Miller [Leigh N. Miller, Legislative Program Co-ordinator, G.J.]. Those funds were obligated from previously appropriated funds.

Mr Passman: If it takes 13 years to complete it, the $27 million, plus any additional obligations, will remain available until expended, and until the project has been completed.

Mr Hutchinson: That is the provision of law....

Mr Passman: You have obligated $27 million for the construction of the project. You have obligated $55 million to the American smelter Co., and those funds remain available until expended.

Mr Hutchinson: That is correct.

Mr Passman: And if takes 15 years to complete the project, you have obligated the total cost for 15 years?

Mr Hutchinson: Yes, Sir. 31

31. Ibid., pp. 106–08.
AN ONSLAUGHT FROM SENATOR DODD

For a period of about ten months there had been no Ambassador posted by Ghana at Washington. The appointment of Miguel A. Ribeiro as Ghana's Ambassador to the United States was thus regarded as a further indication of improvement in the relation between the two countries. Clearly the State Department had desired such improvement. But as sometimes happens in the United States, a hostile move in the Congress resulted in a setback to the process of improvement. The source of attack on Nkrumah and aid to Ghana was Senator Thomas J. Dodd (Democrat, Connecticut).

The Senator who had made quite a career for himself by building himself up as an uncompromising foe of communism had fathered the so-called "Ghana Hearings". The record was published under the title "Is U.S. Money Aiding Another Communist State?" The proceedings were rather strange and unusual even for Senator Dodd. The hearing was called by him in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the "Sub Committee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws" of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Aid to Ghana was not most intimately connected with the internal security of the United States. There were other features of the proceedings that were unusual. The hearing was concluded in a single day. Only a single Senator was present—Senator Dodd himself. Testimony was received from a single witness who was not an American and who was not
known to have deep knowledge of the administration of the Internal Security Act and other related laws of the United States. Senator Dodd's handiwork was an example of how the policy worked out by the Executive branch and endorsed by Congress could be affected by the action of a single Senator or Congressman.

The witness who testified before the Dodd was Kofi A. Busia, a long-time political enemy of Nkrumah who had been the leader of opposition of Ghana during 1957-1960. He had been living in exile since 1960. Busia also had a record of opposition to the Volta River Project even while he was a member of Ghana Legislature as early as 1953.

In his introduction to the record of hearings on Ghana Senator Dodd stated that Ghana was recipient of an American aid on an accelerated scale since 1956, the largest of which was aid to the VRP. In granting the assistance, the Administration had taken the position that in spite of Nkrumah's repeated hobnobbing with Moscow, neither he nor Ghana had gone Communist. But the evidence and documentations that presented in the record of his hearings conclusively suggested that "Ghana had become the first Soviet satellite in Africa just as Cuba is the first Soviet satellite in the Americas." "It is the focal point for the subversion in Africa, just as Cuba is the focal point of subversion of the Americas. It is the mortal enemy of true freedom and independence for the people
of Africa and the mortal enemy of African race," Dodd declared.

The Senator went on:

It is my opinion that, if one applies the rule of political common sense and the knowledge that can be gained from careful study of Communist history, it is in most cases, possible to decide whether or not a man is a communist or whether a movement is Communist controlled.

It all boils down to the oft-repeated observation that if a bird looks like a duck, waddles like a duck, quacks like a duck, and associates with other ducks, it can be taken as certainly that the creature is, itself, a duck...

Our obstinate refusal to accept the facts about Nkrumah's Ghana is just as difficult to understand as our failure to face up to the facts about Castro. 32

The sole witness Busia was questioned almost entirely by Robert C. McManus, "investigations analyst". Busia testified at length concerning his belief that Kwame Nkrumah...was pushing Communist activities in Ghana. Referring particularly to the American assistance for the VRP, Busia argued that the massive aid for the project would ultimately force the United States to underwrite the policies of the Government of Ghana. Though the VRP was a good scheme, it was still premature as far as Ghana's needs were concerned.

(1) In terms of development, the underdeveloped countries, many of them are tending to go into large projects which are spectacular and which command or appear to command support of those who have money. But they are premature because they require certain skills and attitudes of

industrialization and I feel that this can be built up better by going in first for small schemes, and so it is, first, premature because you have not got there the skills.

(2) It is premature because we have not the investment to produce such massive power and also we do not have the basic industrial structure for the proper consumption of the power.

(3) From the point of view of the United States lending that money, I would say that it was premature at the time of the loan being allowed, for this reason. When Ghana became independent she had 260 million pounds, and last year, when the decision was being taken to grant the loan, that had been whittled down to 80 million pounds. And last year, before the loan was granted, Ghana had introduced an austere budget. This touched off a strike which led to the dismissal of the Minister of Finance who had been 10 years Minister of Finance and negotiated the loan, for having compulsory savings enforced and a new structure of taxation.

I would say that I think that the United States should have sought to see what the results would be upon Ghana's own economy, what economic measures were going to be taken so as to give assurance that the money lent would not only be properly used but could be repaid.

Incidentally, I might say that those particular measures ended with Ghana being 46 million pounds in deficit, the reason being that the estimated revenue from compulsory taxation and savings, those revenues were in fact not realized.

But politically, too it is unsound, because Ghana had already made clear the kind of policy she was going to follow; namely, what you would call the one-party Nkrumah Socialist state.

And there is no doubt in my mind that, if you are going to invest money in that kind of a structure, and putting in that money would affect
the social structure which would be guaranteed. If it were to change the social structure, if it was going to mean increased liberty of the people, or the kind of a situation which Western democracies would like to see in a country—that was just not there in Ghana. 33

The Dodd report evoked sharp criticisms from the State Department and the Ghanaian Mission in Washington. The State Department issued the following statement:

In our judgement information available does not support the suggestion that Ghana has become a Soviet satellite. The Government of Ghana follows a policy called as positive neutralism and in furtherance of this policy, has established relations with both Western and Eastern bloc countries. Ghana has a long history of close association with the West and there exists a basic goodwill among the Ghanaian people for the United States and the West in general. 34

The Ghanaian Mission in Washington dismissed the contents of the report as baseless and noted with shock that "a responsible body of the United States Congress could give credence to fabricated lies and distortions against a friendly country, emanating from a person like Busia who no longer commands the respect of his own people and whose antagonism for the Government of Ghana is well known." 35

Prominent newspapers in the United States like the New York Times, the Washington Post and some members in the Congress were sharply critical of Dodd's handiwork and came

33. Ibid., pp. 21-22
35. Ibid.
forward to contradict the Senator. The New York Times states that the Senator's assertions would only harm the interests of the United States. The statements were unjust to Ghana, because the evidence to such effect was not only mixed but even contradictory. The paper stressed that the aid for the VRP was given by the United States, Britain and the World Bank after careful consideration. Countering the view that Ghana had gone Communist, the New York Times pointed out that Ghana had promulgated a new law encouraging foreign private investment and that the Peace Corps maintained a successful programme in Ghana. The paper went on to say that Ghana's foreign policy statements did not coincide always with the Soviet position and that it would be wrong to characterize Ghana as a Soviet satellite. Describing Nkrumah as a "fanatical anticolonialist", "anti imperialist" and a "variation of a Marxist", the paper expressed the view that the wild statements of the type made by Senator Dodd would only push African leaders into the Soviet camp. 36

The Washington Post observed that despite the anti-American feelings displayed in Ghana, experts generally agreed that it enjoyed basic independence of action. They were of the view that Nkrumah's anti-American sentiments emanated out of the personal ordeals that he suffered as a Black in the United States. They conceded that though Nkrumah was a Marxist and an admirer of the Soviet economic system, he was not a Communist. 37

In Congress Nkrumah was defended by Black Congressmen, Adam Clayton Powell of New York. Powell asserted that Ghana, under the leadership of Nkrumah, had transformed itself not only as the leading country in Africa but of the neutral world as well. He expressed the hope that the implementation of the Volta River Project would provide power to process the Ghanaian bauxite and thus inject additional incentives for Ghana's economic development. Representative Barratt O'Hara (Republican, Illinois) acquainted the House with the progress that had been made with respect to the Volta dam. She stated that contrary to the misgivings expressed in certain American circles, Ghana had fulfilled its financial obligations with respect to the dam and the power house.

THE TREND: TOWARDS A REAPPRAISAL OF NKRUMAH IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Inside the State Department opposition to continued aid to Nkrumah came to be voiced by some. This group was seriously concerned over what it regarded as evidence of subversive activities of Ghana directed against its neighbours. It held Nkrumah responsible for developments leading to the assassination of Sylvanus Olympio, President of Togo. If Ghana persisted in its course, the group favoured economic reprisals against it in order to make Nkrumah "reasonable". The

39. Ibid., p. 16213.
dissidents' views were not shared by Assistant Secretary Williams who still continued to hope that Nkrumah would "settle down". Williams and his supporters held the view that, instead of reprisals, the United States should even consider an expansion of AID programmes in Ghana. They reiterated their conviction that the United States should take a long term view in respect of Ghana and asserted that such a perspective would mean continued financial support for the country. 40

Hard documentary evidence is not available in regard to the attitude of the White House at this point. One view that the present writer gathered on the basis of interviews suggested that Kennedy had begun to feel increasingly restive over the "depressing developments" in Ghana. The sources stated that the President was disturbed by the delivery of Soviet arms and ammunition to the Congolese insurgents through Nkrumah. The White House had also received reports to the effect that Soviet arms had been sent to Nkrumah to strengthen his personal security apparatus and for developing a President's Own Guard Regiment (POGR) in Ghana. The White House was also apprehensive over Soviet arms given to Ghana being transferred for subversive activities against Ghana's neighbours. 41

Ambassador Mahoney in an interview told the present writer that a perceptible change had come over among American

40. Interview.

41. Interview.
AID personnel in Ghana around this time. There was no longer any enthusiasm on their part to expand their programmes. Rather they began to feel that AID activities should be curtailed and that only projects for which money had already been obligated should be completed. They were quite disinclined to suggest any new AID project for Ghana. Ambassador Mehoney said, in reply to questions put by the present writer that, after a series of assassination attempts on his life, and after reading Andrew Tully's book entitled, CIA: The Inside Story, Nkrumah's obsessions about the CIA had increased. According to Mehoney, Nkrumah wrote to President Kennedy voicing his concern over alleged CIA intervention in Ghana. Kennedy assured Nkrumah that the CIA was not active in Ghana. Kennedy, it appears, instructed Mehoney to keep an eye on the solitary CIA representative stationed in Ghana. According to another source, Kennedy sought to reassure Nkrumah by giving him the name of the CIA functionary.

It appears to the present writer that by this time Kennedy himself had begun to develop some misgivings concerning Nkrumah. The considerations that had induced him to assist Ghana in respect of VRP were not producing the results he had expected. Nkrumah's "drift" to the left had not slowed down. According to Arthur Schlesinger, Kennedy began to regret his decision

42. Interview, Ambassador Mehoney.

43. Interview, J. Luther Evans, Jr., Military Attache to the U.S. Mission in Accra.
and felt that a tougher course might have to be thought of in dealing with Nkrumah. 44

Attorney General Robert Kennedy was reportedly critical of persons who had earlier supported aid to the VRP over his opposition. Harry Shooshen, a member of the Randell mission in 1961 told the present writer that he was once summoned by Robert Kennedy and was accused of having failed earlier to make a proper assessment of Ghana's economic capabilities. Shooshen politely informed the Attorney General that his appraisal had been made on the basis of information that was then made available to him. He pointed out that Ghana had not defaulted on its financial obligations for the VRP. 45

Oliver L. Troxel, Jr., Economic Officer of the American Mission in Ghana told the present writer of a meeting that he had with Robert Kennedy at which the Attorney General expressed President Kennedy's concern and frustration over developments in Ghana. According to Troxel, Robert Kennedy charged that the American Mission in Accra had not been sending reports to the State Department depicting and evaluating correctly the actual state of affairs in Ghana. Troxel told Robert Kennedy that virtually everything had gone wrong in Ghana except the Volta River Project. 46

It cannot be stated with any certainty whether these internal discussions might have led to a decision by the

45. Interview, Harry Shooshen.
46. Interview, Oliver Troxel.
Kennedy Administration to modify its attitude towards the Volta River Project.

On 22 November 1963 President Kennedy was assassinated. In spite of the vicissitudes in Ghana's relations with the United States, both Nkrumah and the Ghanaians held Kennedy in esteem and mourned his untimely demise. Nkrumah made an impassioned speech to the nation and also wrote a letter of condolence to the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson. He declared that Kennedy would be remembered by Africans for his uncompromising stand against racial inequality and for his championship of human dignity. "By his notable achievements during his unexpectedly brief term of office, President Kennedy left a profound mark on the course of human history," Nkrumah wrote. 47

DETERIORATION IN US-GHANA RELATIONS

In the weeks following Kennedy's death incidents occurred in Ghana that adversely affected relations with the United States. President Lyndon Johnson reacted unfavourably to the developments. In Ghana itself opposition to Nkrumah continued to grow which Nkrumah sought to meet by extraordinary measures that received very adverse publicity in the United States.

In December 1963 Nkrumah revoked the appointment of Chief Justice Arkku Kobina Korsah for not informing Nkrumah in

advance of a judgement of the Special Court concerning a treason trial. The New York Times was sharply critical of Nkrumah's action.48

On 3 January 1964 one of Nkrumah's own security guards made an unsuccessful bid to assassinate him. With the incident Nkrumah started tightening further his control over the country. On 24 January he ordered a referendum seeking a mandate from his countrymen to declare Ghana a one party socialist state and to give him appropriate powers to sack judges, in case he deemed it necessary in the interest of the state. The electorate promptly voted him with all the powers he requested.

On 4 February 1964 a huge procession of workers started from the CPP headquarters in Accra and proceeded towards the American Embassy. The demonstrators raised slogans like, "Down with immoral films, literature, and cowboy books." "We will deal severely with CIA engineered rumour mongers." "You killed Lumumba, Uncle Sam," "This is not Cuba nor Panama." T.D. Baffoe, editor of the Ghanaian Times, took over the megaphone to shout, "Down with America. Socialist Yes, Capitalist No, American Imperialism is a filthy civilization."

Ghanaian police watched while demonstrators pulled down the American flag. As the mob was about to tear the flag, Emerson Flayer, a Black attache in the Embassy, fought his way through the crowd to grab the flag and he hoisted it up again.49


Ambassador Mehoney characterized the demonstration as "an unfriendly act by the Ghana Government" and lodged a strong protest with Kojo Botsio, Ghana's Foreign Minister. In Washington, Assistant Secretary Williams summoned Ambassador Ribeiro of Ghana to the State Department and wanted to know whether the Government of Ghana had instigated or fanned the anti-American demonstration. On the following day the State Department announced the recall of Ambassador Mehoney for "consultations". The Washington Post reported that Nkrumah had declined a request from Mehoney for a meeting at which the Ambassador proposed to deliver a note personally to Nkrumah.

Commenting on the recall of the Ambassador, the New York Times stated that the American Government's move was a "low-keyed diplomatic signal of displeasure". The paper added that more serious diplomatic and economic sanctions were being contemplated but no threats would be made until the reasons and the implications for the anti-American venomence were assessed.

On 7 February 1964 Mehoney arrived in Washington. He told reporters that he had his own ideas on how the incident happened. He would not elaborate his comment that there was "some justification" to believe that the demonstration had been organized to cover up something else.

51. Ibid., 6 February 1964, p. 3.
52. Ibid., p. 1.
55. Ibid., 8 February 1964, p. 4.
On 8 February 1964, the Government of Ghana deported four American and two other foreign faculty members of the University of Ghana, charging them with subversive activities against Ghana. After expulsion orders were served, more than two thousand members of the CPP stormed into the campus of the University of Ghana at Legon, carrying anti-American placards and shouting, "Down with Yankee Stoogism; CIA students, Go Home." 56

The United States Government issued a strong statement denouncing the deportation orders as "a hard blow against academic freedom", that would have unfortunate repercussions on American public opinion. 57 The Ghanaian Times described the American protest as the "height of hypocrisy". "We have done no more than protect our national interest by bundling out of our shores shady characters, CIA agents, fellow travellers of decadent imperialism who have tried with consistency to subvert our university students," the paper said. 58 The moderate Daily Graphic also expressed similar feelings on the issue. 59

The reaction of the American press and of the Congress was one of anger and bitter frustration. Even the New York Times which had all along taken a moderate and even sympathetic


59. See in this context Daily Graphic, editorial, 6 February 1964, p. 5, editorial, 10 February 1964, p. 5.
line towards Ghana, was angered by the succession of incidents. Referring to the demonstrations and deportations, it said that there was no "rational basis for such conduct." "The United States has been seeking for years to help, not hurt Ghana, and American aid has taken such tangible forms as massive assistance to the Volta River hydroelectric project," the paper stated. The newspaper cautioned the Johnson Administration to consider the situation soberly and not fall into the temptation of taking retaliatory measures. A wiser course would be "to exhibit patience and to refuse to be provoked," it counselled.

The Washington Post commented sadly that Nkrumah's name alone at one time as a "bright star" in the world horizon. But Ghana's leader had begun to look like a prototype of Haiti's dictator, Papa "Doc" Lavalier. Perhaps the best course for the United States, the Post said, might be to stop bothering itself about Ghana for some time. In an editorial, "Please Roar Gently", the Christian Science Monitor said that Nkrumah's problem was his pretentiousness for which he rightly got a bad press in the West. It was difficult to accept whatever was happening in Ghana in the name of African Socialism or one party Government, the Monitor wrote.

In the Congress Nkrumah was criticized by Senator Strom Thurmond (Democrat, South Carolina),\textsuperscript{64} and Representatives Bruce Alger of Texas,\textsuperscript{65} William F. Ryan of New York,\textsuperscript{66} John Brademas of Indiana,\textsuperscript{67} and Katherine St. George of New York.\textsuperscript{68} Representative Charles Bray of Indiana characterized the demonstration against the United States as a striking example of "chickens coming to roost". The Congressmen asserted that freedom had all but disappeared in Ghana under Nkrumah. He reiterated his opposition to American aid to Ghana.\textsuperscript{69}

That old foe of Nkrumah and aid to Ghana, Senator Thomas J. Dodd chose at this point to release yet another report of his Sub Committee entitled "Ghana Students in United States oppose U.S. Aid to Nkrumah". The report carried an introduction by the Senator which was a distaste against Nkrumah. The witnesses who had testified before the Senator were K.A. Akwasah and W.K. Biddier, President and Secretary respectively of the Ghana Student Association of the Americas.\textsuperscript{70}

Dodd said in his introduction that "Nkrumah continues to convert his country into a total dictatorship and to foment

\textsuperscript{64} See \textit{Congressional Record}, vol. 110, Appendix A 921.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., A 531.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., A 712.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., A 861.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., A 1300.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., p. 2523.
\textsuperscript{70} U.S. Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Sub Committee on Internal Security, Ghana Students in United States Oppose U.S. Aid to Nkrumah. Staff Conferences of the Sub Committee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws, August 29, 1963 and January 11, 1964, Cong. 88, sess 2, 1964, pp. III-VI.
hatred and violence against the United States despite all it has done for him." He claimed that the publication of the hearings was timely and appropriate in view of the February demonstrations which had brought to the fore the question of a reappraisal of American policy towards Ghana.71

Dodd said that even the New York Times which had criticized his earlier hearings had now come out with a report entitled "Ghana Viewed as Going Marxist". Within the State Department too the truth about Ghana was beginning to have an impact, "One can only welcome the evidence that the State Department is at last beginning to face up to facts which it has heretofore refused to face up to," the Senator wrote.72

The two Ghanaian students witnessed alleged in the course of their hearings that some officials in the State Department were interested to see that Nkrumah remained in power and dictated to the people of Ghana.73 The following exchange between Robert C. McManus, "Investigation Analyst" for the Sub Committee and the two students gives an idea of the questioning and nature of the replies.

Mr Robert C. McManus: Is it a demonstration of friendship to the Ghanaian people to give money and technical assistance to the government of Kwame Nkrumah? That is the question.

Mr Winfried K. Biddier: I think I will answer this. We will immediately say no. It is high time that official Washington—excuse me to use this word—comes to realize that the people and a government of a country differ,

71. Ibid., p. III.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid., pp. III-IV.
They are different entities.

And in some cases, as in the case of Ghana, by a very wide margin. In fact, the Nkrumah regime is completely isolated from the people of Ghana, in ideology, in outlook, and in aspirations.

If the U.S. Government claims that by helping Nkrumah's regime, which is at best oppressive, ruthless, lacks all sort of human values, something which is completely opposed to the Ghanaian philosophy of life, it is in fact hurting the people of Ghana.

It is hurting the people of Ghana?

Yes. It is worth mentioning here that despite all official and anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and anti-neo-colonialist heresies, the United States enjoys a great deal of prestige among the people of Ghana, but not the Government. And I would like that to be underlined. (74)

On that occasion too Dodd's intervention did not have any noticeable "bomb shell" effect. The general sentiment towards Nkrumah was at this time quite unfavourable.

The present writer made efforts to gather the views of the American diplomats stationed in Accra at that time with respect to the reasons for Nkrumah's belligerence against the United States. Many of them were of the view that Nkrumah was strongly suspicious of the complicity in assassination attempt of Ghanaian opposition groups, notably the United Party, most of whose leaders had gone into exile. Further, according to the

74. Ibid., p. 41.
source, United Party had been critical of Nkrumah's policy of non-alignment and had advocated a pro-American line. The diplomats explained that when Nkrumah attacked the opposition, it also turned into an attack on the United States. Further, according to the diplomats, Nkrumah was personally convinced that Americans were supporting his opponents in exile notably Kofi Busia and Komla Gbedemah with funds even while they were aware that the Ghanaian exiles were hatching plots in order to remove him from power. 75

On his return to Washington for "consultations", Ambassador Mahoney was asked by the White House to work with Averell Harriman, Under Secretary of State, to prepare a report advising on possible courses of action with regard to the situation. Mahoney told the present writer that he suggested to Harriman and the White House that it would be advisable to maintain a low profile in Ghana temporarily and, at the same time, to take a tough stance against Nkrumah. As a first step he recommended that the American pledge of $6 million towards the construction of a large hospital in Accra should be kept in abeyance. Mahoney said that the White House accepted his suggestions. 76

A Ghanaian source close to Ambassador Ribeiro of Ghana recounted to the present writer that the Ghanaian

75. Interview.

76. Interview, Mahoney. Other sources of the period like Oliver Troxel, Economic Officer, U.S. Mission, Accra, and Frank Pinder, Deputy Director, AID Mission, however, contested Ambassador's position.
Ambassador was summoned to the White House for a meeting with President Johnson. The meeting was attended by Averell Harriman and Kennen Williams. At the meeting the Ambassador was interrogated with regard to the anti-American reports in the Ghanaian press. Ribeiro reportedly responded that the press in Ghana was free and was doing its normal work. It was not and could not be influenced by the Government of Ghana, contrary to the belief of the American Administration. Ribeiro then raised the question of CIA activities and told Johnson that Nkrumah was greatly troubled by the presence of the CIA in Ghana. The President responded that Nkrumah's fears were baseless and he had received information directly from the Director of the CIA himself that it was not involved in any anti-Nkrumah activities in Ghana.  

The *New York Times* reported on 13 February 1964 that at the Nassau meeting between President Johnson and the British Prime Minister, Alec Douglas-Home a discussion took place on the Ghanaian situation. According to a high placed source, the discussion touched on implications of Temaule air base in Ghana whose construction with the Soviet help started around that time. The issue was whether the base in Ghana might be used as a staging post for Soviet use for activities in Africa or even in Cuba.

77. Interview.


79. Interview.
President Johnson was apparently sufficiently irri-
tated with Nkrumah to contemplate some strong measures. A
State Department source told the present writer, that the
Department posed before the White House the issue of pulling
cut "the oldest card of all", the Volta River Project, for "a
last play". It was pointed out that the American consortium,
VALCO, was at that point committed only to buy electricity for
thirty years but that there was no obligation under the contract
to build a smelter to utilize the electricity. The smelter
work was scheduled to start from November 1964. If the
Ghanaian situation seemed sufficiently distressing, Kaiser
could be advised to withdraw, or, as a beginning, threaten to
withdraw rather than pour more money into a hostile Ghana.
Such a threat was considered a good bet to put a curb on
Nkrumah's "recklessness" and "to teach him a lesson".80

80. Interview.