

Current Intelligence Country Handbook
Ghana Nov 1966

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Current Intelligence Country Handbook

GHANA



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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I. Political

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The governing National Liberation Council (NLC) of eight army and police officers is headed by Lt. General Joseph Ankrah, who had been retired earlier by Nkrumah, and includes Major General E. K. Kotoka and Police Inspector General John Harlley. Kotoka and Harlley were the two prime movers of the coup which overthrew President Nkrumah on 24 February 1966 while he was in Peking. Although some differences and frictions have developed—mostly involving ██████████ Colonel A. A. Afrifa, the sole representative of the important Ashanti tribe—the NLC members have on the whole worked fairly well together. A number of functional committees staffed by able civilian specialists provide the politically inexperienced NLC members with needed guidance and expertise. Civil servants direct a reduced number of ministries under the general supervision of a designated NLC member. A number of commissions are investigating the Nkrumah regime's corruption.

The coup against Nkrumah was organized by pro-Western army and police leaders who considered themselves threatened with being relegated to a role subordinate to the Soviet-trained Presidential Guard. The takeover and immediate release of some 1,000 political detainees were well received by the populace who were weary of Nkrumah's repressive policies and the country's growing economic problems. The new regime immediately dissolved the radical Convention Peoples Party (CPP) and other organizational props of Nkrumah's rule. It also drastically reduced the large Soviet and Chinese presence to 18-man embassies and expelled hundreds of Communist technicians.

According to General Ankrah, the NLC intends to stay in power for 2-3 years before relinquishing control to a civilian government. But former opposition leaders who have returned from exile abroad are anxious to accelerate that change and come to power. Chief among these is Professor K. A. Busia, Ashanti-based leader of the former United Party, a loose grouping of ineffectual opposition parties which was formally outlawed by Nkrumah in 1964. Despite the present ban on political party activity, Busia has sought broader support via "lectures" and meetings. His insistence, with press support, induced the NLC in June 1966 to form a Political Committee of

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23 prominent citizens to advise it. Busia, the vice chairman, seems in a position to dominate the committee and use it as leverage for further concessions from the NLC. Another potential power seeker is pro-Western K. A. Gbedemah, former finance minister and one of the original CPP leaders whom Nkrumah purged in 1961.

Within a week of the February 1966 coup Nkrumah took up residence in Conakry, Guinea, where he was still based as of the following October. For a while he received vigorous moral and propaganda support from Guinean President Sekou Toure, but this diminished when it began to have an adverse effect on Toure's internal position. There have been indications that Nkrumah and his Guinean allies are plotting covert activities aimed at causing trouble for the new regime in Accra and preparing the way for an eventual comeback attempt.

In the African context, the Ghanaian armed forces and police are well equipped and large enough to handle internal security. But due to Nkrumah's canceling of various Western training programs and to accelerated Ghanaianization, most of the army and navy officers have had little effective training. Neither the navy nor the air force—the latter having only half its aircraft flyable—has combat capability. Corruption in the police ranks reportedly persists.

2. Economic

Ghana's resources include minerals such as gold, diamonds, bauxite and manganese, but its economy is largely dependent on cocoa, which forms 60 percent of the exports. A bumper cocoa crop in 1965 offset the adverse effects of the falling world market price, but huge imports for Nkrumah's forced-pace development program brought the 1965 trade deficit to \$132 million, compared to that of \$20 million in 1964. Such deficits, along with costly prestige projects, brought Ghana close to bankruptcy, and the new regime inherited a debt of over a billion dollars. It acted early to cut back on expenditures. The number of foreign posts was sharply reduced, unprofitable airline routes eliminated, and some of the expensive 55 state-owned enterprises are to be sold to private bidders. By such measures, the regime regained some of Ghana's financial prestige abroad.

The strain on the budget for FY 1967, introduced in July 1966, was eased by a 12-month IMF standby loan of \$36.4 million and by a 3-month suspension of payments on medium-term supplier credits. The budget follows IMF recommendations. Although determined to keep expenditures in tight rein, the NLC has nonetheless, committed itself to a welfare state policy, avowedly through cooperation between the

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public and private sectors. To deal with growing urban unemployment stemming from the new retrenchment measures—a problem with potential political repercussions—the NLC plans diversion of labor to agricultural projects. The NLC envisions a two-year consolidation period for Ghana's development program ending in June 1968, after which new medium-range development plans will be considered.

Meanwhile, the government hopes the recently completed Volta dam, heavily financed by the US and the UK, and the smelter complex under construction will foster new industry. An International Trade Fair is to be held in Accra early in 1967.

3. International Relations

The National Liberation Council professes to follow a course of "true" non-alignment in contrast to Nkrumah's pro-Communist variant. In fact, Ghana's leadership is now decidedly pro-Western, and especially pro-US, in orientation. The US, Canada, and West Germany have all earned credit for their early economic assistance following the coup. Ghana has also requested some US military assistance. Ostensibly as part of its economic retrenchment, the present regime has cut back Ghana's representation in Communist countries to Moscow, Peking, Prague, and Belgrade, and relations with Peking have been near the breaking point since the coup. Albania, North Vietnam, and North Korea had all closed their Accra embassies by July 1966, and the Cubans have subsequently been told to go. The NLC continues to suspect the USSR of conniving with African radicals in plotting Nkrumah's return to power. Ghana and the GDR reciprocally withdrew their trade missions after a bitter wrangle initiated by Accra's detention of an East German intelligence agent employed by Nkrumah. The NLC is also reducing the number of Ghanaian students in Communist countries. All Soviet and Chinese aid technicians were expelled from Ghana immediately after the coup. However, by September 1966 the Ghanaians were actually seeking the return of some Soviet specialists.

Under the new regime Ghana has moved from the radical to the moderate grouping of African states. The shift has been particularly welcomed by neighboring and other moderate states against whom Nkrumah had trained subversives via his notorious Bureau of African Affairs. The radical All-African Trade Union Federation, which Nkrumah heavily subsidized and used for his own political purposes, is now expected to shift its headquarters from Accra to a more congenial environment.

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4. Subversion

A reservoir of potential subversives among the vast membership of the former Convention Peoples Party and its ancillary groups could exist both in and out of the present government. Many of the top-level leaders of the former regime that were placed in protective custody by the NLC are now free, and none has yet been tried on criminal charges. The NLC has taken the calculated risk of relying in many cases on untested loyalties by retaining numerous Nkrumah-era officials.

It appears unlikely that Nkrumah can manipulate such diverse elements for a return to power, but they might be used by some other disgruntled persons in Ghana who may aspire to power. Moreover, the differences within the NLC itself could be exploited by subversive elements.

The military and the students are two categories that would especially bear a close watch by the regime, as they include a considerable number of former bloc trainees. Students now being compelled by the NLC to end their studies in the bloc may hold this against the regime. Few if any of the bloc-trained army officers appear to have been dismissed from service. Moreover, the personnel of the two Soviet-instructed former Presidential Guard units have been distributed among the regular army battalions as a precautionary measure, yet these could form battalion nuclei in an uprising. Lastly, there were indications in mid-1966 of a continuous undercurrent of discontent among junior army officers and the enlisted men over lack of promotion and pay raises.

5. Ethnic Problems

The heterogenous nature of Ghana's population has played a significant part in its politics. Over 50 ethnic groups—all of Sudanese Negroid stock—are still delineated by language, religion, and tradition. The tribes were eliminated as organized political forces by the Nkrumah regime, but the NLC is seeking to restore some of the lost prestige of the chiefs. Moreover, within the NLC and the armed forces tribal considerations appear to be of greater importance than previously, a consideration which could eventually adversely affect the new regime's stability.

The Ashanti and the Fanti are sub-groups of the large Akan tribal group, they predominate in the central cocoa growing area and in the coastal area between Accra and Sekondi, respectively. The Ashantis are represented by Colonel Afrifa; the Fanti by Brigadier Ocran. The

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Ewe tribal group of the eastern coastal area is well represented in the senior officer ranks of the army and in NLC councils by Armed Forces Commander Kotoka and vice chairman Harley of the Ewe tribe. In the north are the Moslemized Dagomba, Nankanse, and Dagaba as well as the migrant Mossi from Upper Volta. The Mossi comprise the largest single group in the lower police ranks, as well as a large part of the army.

Chronology of Key Events

- 1482 Portuguese built Elmina Castle, first contact with Europeans.
- 1826 United Kingdom took over control of English private trading company operating in Gold Coast.
- 1844 Fanti chiefs signed bond recognizing Queen Victoria's jurisdiction over them.
- 1949 Nkrumah forms Convention Peoples Party.
- 1952 Nkrumah chosen Prime Minister by Legislative Assembly.
- 1954 (April) New constitution gives Gold Coast nearly complete self-government in internal affairs.
- 1957 (March) Gold Coast becomes independent state of Ghana.
- 1958 (July) Assembly passes Preventive Detention Act.
- 1960 (April) Republican constitution approved in plebiscite; Nkrumah chosen first president.
- 1961 (December) US agrees to extend major aid to Volta River dam project.
- 1964 (January) Ghana officially becomes one party state.
- 1966 (February 24) Coup overthrows Nkrumah government; National Liberation Council takes power.

Selected Factual Data

LAND (U)

92,000 sq. mi.; 19% agricultural, 60% forest and brush, 21% other

PEOPLE (U)

Population: 8.1 million (est. 1 January 1967); males 15-49, 1,892,000; 950,000 fit for military service

Ethnic Divisions: 98% Negroid African (major tribes Fanti, Ashanti, Ewe), 2% European and other

Religion: 66% animists, 20% Christian, 14% Muslim

Language: English official; African languages spoken include Akan (44%), Mole-Dagbani (16%), Ewe (13%), and Ge-Adangbe (8%)

Literacy: about 25% (in English)

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Labor force: 2.8 million; 61% agriculture and fishing, 16.8% industry, 15.2% sales and clerical, 4.1% services, transportation and communications, 2.9% professional; 1.5% unemployed
Organized labor: 14% of labor force

GOVERNMENT (U)

Capital: Accra

Political subdivisions: 8 administrative regions and separate Greater Accra Area; regions subdivided into 47 districts

Type: provisional military regime, established in Feb. 1966 following overthrow of first president, Kwame Nkrumah, by army and police officers

Branches: executive authority exercised by National Liberation Council composed of 4 army and 4 police officers and supported by special functional committees made up of senior civil servants; former legislature dissolved; separate judiciary continuing intact

Government leader: Lt. General Joseph A. Ankrah, Chairman of the NLC

Suffrage: universal over 21

Elections: last contested elections were referendum on constitutional amendments in Jan. 1964 and presidential election of 1960; military regime has promised to hold elections after new constitution is prepared, but no indication yet when this will be

Political parties and leaders: all parties dissolved and political activity proscribed by military regime

Communists: a small number of actual Communists and sympathizers, totally without influence since Nkrumah's overthrow

Member of: UN, (UPU, ITU, WMO, IMCO, IMF, IBRD, ICAO, ILO, IAEA, FAO, UNESCO, WHO), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Commonwealth

ECONOMY (Secret—No Foreign Dissem)

GNP: US\$1.9 billion (1964) at current prices, under \$250 per capita

Agriculture: main crop—cocoa; other crops include root crops, corn, peanuts, bananas; not self-sufficient, but can become so

Major industries: mining, processing, light manufacturing, fishing; aluminum industry under development

Electric power: 271 mw capacity (1965), 514.4 million kw.-hr. produced (1964)

Exports: \$319 million (1965); cocoa (59%), wood, diamonds, gold, manganese, bauxite

Imports: \$449 million (1965); textiles and other manufactured goods, food, mineral fuels, machinery, chemicals, transport equipment

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Trade: major partners: UK, EEC, US, and Japan; bloc accounted for 10-15% of total (1964), \$31 million exports to bloc, \$50 million imports from bloc

Aid: UK, US, Canada, Israel, West Germany, Japan, Yugoslavia, international organizations; Communist economic \$239 million (extended), military \$9 million (through mid-1966); US economic \$159.2 million (through 1964)

Exchange rate: 1 Cedi=US\$1.17 (official)

Fiscal year: 1 July-30 June

COMMUNICATIONS (Confidential)

Railroads: 611 mi.—all 3'6" gage; 19 mi. double tracked; diesel locomotives gradually replacing steam engines; government owned

Highways: 20,629 mi.; 2,183 mi. bituminous surface, 3,598 mi. gravel, 3,408 mi. improved earth, 11,440 mi. unimproved earth

Inland waterways: 450 mi., most of which is limited to small craft navigation

Freight carried: rail (1959-60)—225,040,300 ton-miles

Pipelines: refined products, 2 mi.

Ports: 2 principal (Tema and Takoradi), 1 naval base (under construction), 4 minor

Merchant marine: 16 ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 99,459 GRT, 130,700 DWT; all cargo

Civil air: 12 major transport aircraft

Airfields: 13 total, 12 usable; 4 with permanent-surface runways; 1 with runway 8,000-11,999 ft.; 9 with runways 4,000-7,999 ft.; 1 seaplane station

Telecommunications: telephone fair to good in urban areas; fairly good telegraph and radiobroadcast services; one AM broadcast station, TV broadcasting begun July 1965; 30,700 telephones

DEFENSE FORCES (Secret)

Personnel: army 14,600, navy 896 (plus 74 British officers and enlisted men), air force 1,650 (plus 96 British officers and enlisted men and 2 Canadian officers), national police force 13,000

Major ground units: 2 brigades (6 infantry battalions, 2 armored reconnaissance squadrons, and 1 paratroop battalion)

Ships: 2 corvettes, 2 seaward defense craft, 2 inshore minesweepers, 1 coastal minesweeper, 1 training craft, 1 repair and maintenance craft

Aircraft: 67 (6 jet, 44 prop., 17 helicopter), including 64 in operational units (5 jet trainers, 11 prop. transports, 33 prop. utility aircraft, 11 piston helicopters, 4 turbine helicopters)

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Supply: dependent on external sources; most materiel obtained from Commonwealth countries, some Soviet equipment
Military budget: for fiscal year ending 30 Sept. 1965, \$46,800,000; less than 9% of total budget

National Intelligence Survey (NIS) Material

The following sections of the NIS are relevant:

NIS Area 50A (Ghana)

GENERAL SURVEY and the following specialized sections:

- Sec 21 Military Geographic Regions
- Sec 22 Coasts and Landing Beaches
- Sec 24 Topography
- Sec 25 Urban Areas
- Sec 31 Railway
- Sec 32 Highway
- Sec 38 Telecommunications
- Sec 41 Population
- Sec 43 Religion, Education, & Public Information
- Sec 44 Manpower
- Sec 45 Health and Sanitation
- Sec 50 Introduction—Political
- Sec 51 The Constitutional System
- Sec 52 Structure of the Government
- Sec 53 Political Dynamics
- Sec 54 Public Order and Safety
- Sec 55 National Policies

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- [REDACTED]
- Sec 57 Subversion
 - Sec 58 Propaganda
 - Sec 60 Introduction—Economic
 - Sec 61 Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry
 - Sec 62 Fuels and Power
 - Sec 63 Minerals and Metals
 - Sec 64 Manufacturing and Construction
 - Sec 65 Trade and Finance
 - Sec 91-94 Map and Chart Appraisal

NIS Area 50 (West Africa)

- Sec 35 Ports and Naval Facilities
- 25X1B
- [REDACTED]

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Map

The best available general reference map is: Central Intelligence Agency; *Ghana*; 1:1,500,000; Map #50608; 1965. Inserts show vegetation, economic activity and administrative regions.

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