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# **Ghana: Outlook for the Rawlings Regime**



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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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*ALA 82-10106  
July 1982*

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# Ghana: Outlook for the Rawlings Regime



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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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This assessment was prepared by   
with a contribution from  both of  
the Office of African and Latin American  
Analysis. Comments and queries are welcome and  
may be directed to the Chief, West and East Africa  
Division, ALA, 

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This report has been coordinated with the National  
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**Ghana: Outlook for  
the Rawlings Regime**

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**Key Judgments**

Lt. Jerry Rawlings's regime, which came to power in December 1981, in our estimation offers a greater opportunity for Communist countries and Libya to nurture a radical, anti-Western regime in Ghana than has existed at any time since the overthrow of leftist President Nkrumah in the mid-1960s. We believe the consolidation of radical control in Ghana could enable Libya, Cuba, and the Soviet Union to gain a sufficient foothold to use the country as a base for subversion of Ghana's moderate neighbors at the expense of Western interests.

We see Rawlings as a transitional figure in a chaotic regime that is beset by ideological, personal, and structural problems and has few results to show after six months in power. In our view, Rawlings—a populist visionary and professed admirer of Qadhafi—has exploitable weaknesses: no clear idea of how to achieve his aim of an equal and prosperous society, dependence on radical advisers, and preoccupation with his personal security. We acknowledge that at this juncture, however, Rawlings remains basically in charge because he has a larger following in the military than does any other leader or faction making up the disparate regime.

Although we detect no united opposition or immediate threat to the regime, the situation remains unstable. We know that Ghanaian exiles in neighboring countries are trying to put aside differences and attract foreign support for a coup attempt.

the economy continues to deteriorate. The few economic policies articulated by the regime are unlikely to have much positive impact because they fail to address underlying structural problems. Shortages of food, consumer goods, and industrial raw materials are as serious as Western observers can remember. We believe the armed forces, whose organization and discipline have deteriorated sharply, are a source of anxiety for Rawlings because his regime can count on the support of only a radical core within them.

In our view, radicals in Rawlings's entourage are ascendent over moderates. We believe they will try to align Ghana more closely with Communist states and Libya, with the aim of eventually having Ghana adopt a socialist

*Information available as of 12 July 1982  
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

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economic system. Kojo Tsikata, the most influential radical and one with leadership ambitions, is the man to watch, in our estimation. [redacted]

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[redacted] the radicals, though still lacking a broad power base, have succeeded in taking over the internal security apparatus and government media, are busily implanting "people's defense committees" throughout the country as the revolution's eyes and ears, and are determined to bring students and labor under their domination.

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Despite its professed nonalignment, we believe that the regime has kept relations with the West cool and sought closer ties with Libya and Communist states. There is circumstantial evidence of Libyan involvement in Rawlings's coup, and we believe Ghana has received some arms, ammunition, and military advisers from Tripoli in addition to Libya's publicly announced gifts of food, medicine, and oil. Rawlings's progress in eliciting Communist aid has been limited thus far. We cannot verify allegations that Cuba will provide military training assistance. The Soviets and East Europeans, however, have promised to reactivate old development projects. Communist aid and influence probably will increase as Ghanaian radicals consolidate further.

In conversations with the US Ambassador, Rawlings professes to wish to continue cooperative relations with the United States. Nevertheless, he has not curbed the anti-Western slant of Ghana's radical-dominated media. What leverage the United States has with Ghana at present derives largely from Washington's influence with the International Monetary Fund, which Accra may approach for assistance, and from the modest US aid program, mainly food.

In looking ahead, it is our assessment that Ghana is likely to shift further to the left as radicals in the regime consolidate power and most likely relegate Rawlings to a figurehead role. We also believe the regime could easily drift into increasing anarchy. In our view, such a development could impede short-term gains for the Libyans and Communist states, but in the longer run it probably would afford them new opportunities for exploitation. In our judgment, more repressive rule—whether dictated by growing

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economic discontent or by an abortive exile attack—would accelerate a consolidation of power by the radicals and encourage them to turn more sharply toward Libya and Communist states for aid.

We believe Rawlings's elimination in the near term, either by an overly eager radical faction or by a moderate-led counter coup, would increase the risk of anarchy in the absence of an alternative figure capable of attracting widespread support. In our view, the armed forces could easily collapse into factional fighting and that Americans and other expatriates could become targets of lawlessness.

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**Ghana: Outlook for the Rawlings Regime**

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**Introduction**

US Embassy reporting since Rawlings's coup on 31 December 1981 has consistently portrayed Ghana as a floundering and nearly bankrupt state. We believe Rawlings is the only force holding the fragile regime together at present, but his lackluster, indecisive leadership has allowed the radical faction to gain the upper hand and make inroads in key areas, including internal security and the media. In our estimation, the country appears to be drifting leftward, most notably in its foreign policy stance and attempts to engender public support through leftist "people's defense committees." Accordingly, this paper examines the economic and political instability stemming from the regime's indecision and drift, the growing influence of the radicals in the regime, the opportunities for Libyan and Communist inroads in Ghana and in its moderate and pro-Western neighbors, and the implications for the United States of these developments.

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**The Regime's Major Worries**

US Embassy reporting portrays head of state Rawlings as preoccupied by security concerns growing out of his fear of an attack by Ghanaian exiles, the shattered state of the military, and the country's continued economic decline. A US Embassy assessment in July noted that at least one group inside Ghana was plotting against the regime. Embassy sources claim the regime's radical dominated security services receive a near-constant stream of rumors and reports of externally based coup plotting and internal opposition. These sources say that security officials are not above exaggerating such reports and rumors to play on Rawlings's anxieties in attempts to manipulate the regime in directions that serve their interests.

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**Ghanaian Exiles.** Embassy reporting from the region indicates that a sizable but ineffective community of Ghanaian exiles exists in all states bordering Ghana as well as in Nigeria and London

and that disparate opposition groups have sprung up composed of ex-military and civilian officials of previous Ghanaian regimes. Neighboring countries have given safe haven to Ghanaian refugees and political asylum to ranking officials of the deposed Limann government, but in our view they are wary of Ghanaian exile leaders seeking Rawlings's overthrow. In our opinion, they do not wish to risk retaliation by giving the exiles open support.

Ghanaian exiles are divided by tribal and regional rivalries with no single leader or significant source of military or financial support. Nonetheless, we would expect these groups to strive to close ranks and sooner or later to attempt a coup. Based on recent trips into the interior of the country by the US Ambassador, the Embassy reports that the populace in northern Ghana and the Ashanti tribe in central Ghana—which feels under-represented in the Rawlings's regime—would come a coup.

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**The Economy.** Even before the coup, Ghana's economy was on a downhill slide, according to US mission reporting:

- There has been no real economic growth since 1978.
- Exports of cocoa and gold—the two leading revenue earners—have been falling because of depressed world prices and declining production.
- Ghana amassed an external debt of more than \$1 billion by 1981.
- Inflation—nearly 120 percent last year and 80 percent this year—has averaged an annual rate of 70 percent since 1975.

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Under Rawlings's leadership, the government continues to have severe foreign financing difficulties because of reduced export revenues and international banker reluctance to extend further credit. The US Embassy estimates the lower cocoa production—the



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*From Coup to Coup*<sup>a</sup>

*The coup on 31 December 1981 that brought former Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings to power for the second time in less than two and a half years represents the latest attempt to rescue Ghana from some 25 years of intermittent political and economic decay. Since becoming the first country in black Africa to win independence from European colonialism in 1957, Ghana has experimented with a variety of civilian and military regimes. At first, the new nation appeared to offer a model for emergent Africa with high hopes for parliamentary democracy and economic vitality. It was the spokesman for African liberation and unity and aspired to build a modern industrial state that would dominate Africa.*

*Today, Ghana labors under the heritage of internal antagonisms and economic ruin bequeathed by the late Kwame Nkrumah, its first President and foremost leftist. Nkrumah, who was ousted by the Army in 1966, managed to turn Ghana away from its traditional friends and orient it toward the Communist world. In the process, he added a burden of some \$1 billion in external debt, and moved from parliamentary democracy to increasingly corrupt one-man rule.*

*Successive regimes returned Ghana to the Western camp, but they were unable to stop further economic deterioration. Unpopular economic reforms contributed to several coups, while mismanagement and corruption took their toll. Like many other LDCs, Ghana also suffered from the effects of sharp increases in oil import prices and dampened demand*

*for exports of nonoil commodities. Ghana's key difficulty, however, remained its inability to devise a workable, lasting political system that would foster economic recovery.*

*Jerry Rawlings previously ruled Ghana from June to September 1979 as the chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, a government made up of junior officers and enlisted men. His 1979 coup was a direct response to the economic mismanagement and corruption that marked the previous eight years of military rule. He quickly became a folk hero to Ghana's military and civilian have-nots by championing a populist "revolution" to stamp out corruption, extravagance, and malpractices that had brought the country to the brink of collapse.*

*In practice, Rawlings produced few results. His popularity eroded, and the regime became increasingly bogged down in tribal infighting. His government barely held together long enough to meet the September 1979 target date for return to civilian rule—a date set by an earlier military regime that Rawlings decided to honor. Months later, Rawlings confided to a visiting Western journalist that he had come to regret this decision, fearing that his "mistake" had resulted in worsening economic conditions and more hardship for the country's have-nots under Limann's lackluster rule. By late 1981, US Embassy reporting indicated that Limann had come under growing public criticism and that active plotting had begun that resulted in Rawlings's takeover.*

<sup>a</sup> This background assessment of Jerry Rawlings's rise to power is based on analysis provided by the US Embassy in Accra and by academics who have observed Ghanaian politics firsthand while teaching there.

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**Leading Ghanaian Exiles**

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*the following are the leading Ghanaian exiles*

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[Redacted]

*Former Maj. Boake Djan, a Brong tribesman from west central Ghana, was the second-ranking member of Rawlings's 1979 regime and now resides in London. According to US Embassy reporting, he served as Rawlings's principal spokesman and theoretician, but broke with him by leading the regime's Akan-speaking members into resisting Ewe domination. The Embassy notes that Djan was primarily responsible for pressing Rawlings to turn power over to former President Limann. We regard Djan as having mildly socialist views,* [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

*Former Gen. Joshua Hamidu is a northerner and a former Chief of Defense Staff who has been in voluntary exile since 1978. He is now regional director in Nairobi for World Vision, a private voluntary organization.*

*Former Maj. Gen. Emmanuel Erskine is a 55-year-old southern Fanti tribesman residing in Jerusalem, where he serves as Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Support Organization. A British-trained officer, he briefly commanded the Ghanaian Army in the early 1970s before being assigned to Lebanon, first in charge of Ghanaian peacekeeping troops and later as commander of all UN forces until 1981.*

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[Redacted]

1981-82 crop is the lowest since independence and the second-smallest in more than 50 years—will reduce total export earnings to \$600-650 million in 1982, about half the 1980 level but only slightly below last year. Ghana had run up \$590 million in overdue bills by the end of February, according to the US Embassy. Banks are refusing to issue new letters of credit until some of the debt is repaid, and overseas suppliers will not step in with their own financial arrangements. Openly available international financial statistics show that, at the end of April, Accra had about \$200 million in international reserves available to offset its debts [Redacted] 25X1

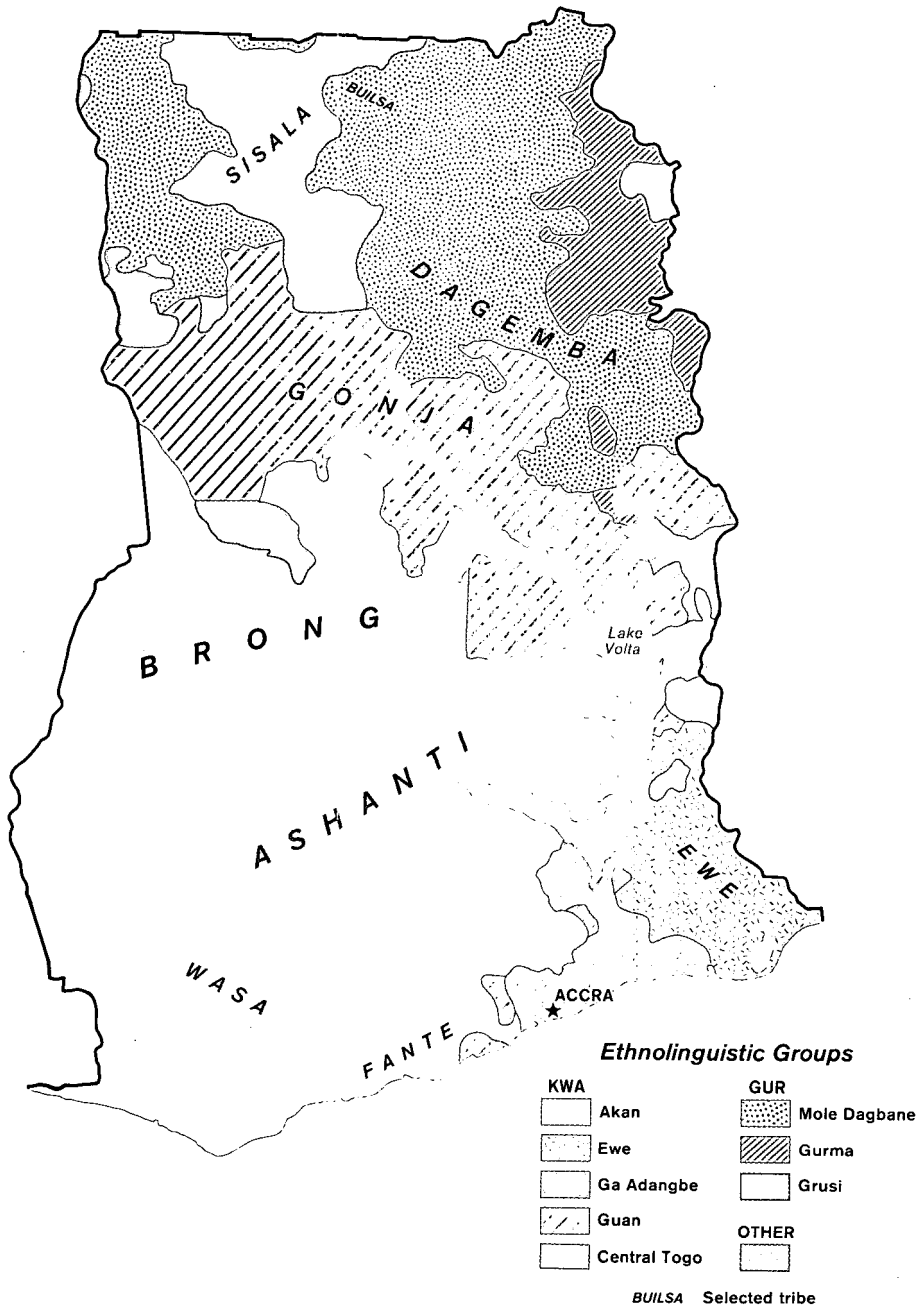
The US Embassy reports that severe shortages of foodstuffs and other essential items are common in most areas because of a lack of imports, the imposition of price controls, and increased enforcement of antismuggling decrees. The period from June to August is traditionally a lean one, as the harvest of staple foods does not begin until September. To ensure that available goods reach the market, Rawlings has set up an agency to distribute 15 essential items and has ordered house-to-house searches for hoarded goods. [Redacted] 25X1

In our judgment, Rawlings so far has displayed only a little more aptitude for solving Ghana's economic problems than he did during his short-lived regime in 1979. It took the current regime five months to announce plans to tackle its domestic financial problems and to appoint a secretary for finance and planning. The regime has adopted a new budget in order to cut the deficit in half, but the Embassy doubts that the roughly \$350 million owed by the cocoa marketing board to the Bank of Ghana is included in it. Measures to control public expenditures include a freeze on nonessential government spending, the closure of a third of Ghana's foreign missions, and the delay of all new public sector construction. Any savings in public spending associated with these moves, however, will be more than offset by costs associated with the tripling of cocoa producer prices last fall. [Redacted] 25X1

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### GHANA: Ethnolinguistic Groups



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The US Embassy believes, and we concur, that the government's economic program will have only limited impact because it does not address the central issue—the country's overvalued currency. Currency devaluation is the principal measure prescribed by the International Monetary Fund before an agreement can be signed that would give Ghana access to \$275 million in balance-of-payments support and pave the way for other Western donor aid.

[redacted] an assassination plot against Rawlings in early March involved several enlisted men plus some junior officers. The plot also included members of Rawlings's fellow Ewe tribe, indicating that discontent is rising even among his own ethnic group.

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[redacted] We believe Rawlings almost certainly will continue to resist any hint of devaluation because of the close linkage between currency reform and the overthrow of previous Ghanaian regimes.

**Internal Rivalries and Radical Drift**

The outstanding characteristic of the Rawlings regime, in our view, is its lack of coherent structure and policy direction. This has resulted in a chaotic system of government which, in our estimation, cannot long endure as presently constituted. According to US Embassy reporting, the regime consists of disparate elements that differ on government goals. These elements include a core of enlisted men and lower ranking officers who share Rawlings's vision of a more equal and prosperous society, a few moderate senior military officers who see a chance to eradicate corruption and revitalize the armed forces, and leaders of radical civilian fringe groups and student activists who see the coup as an opportunity to move Ghana leftward. (Key personalities are discussed in appendix I.)

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**The Military.** The US Embassy reports that within the military a core of enlisted men probably supports Rawlings or at least his "revolution" with its promise of economic betterment. But according to the Embassy, the regime does not trust the majority of the uncommitted and leaderless troops who remain idle in barracks or wander the streets often abusing the civilian population. We believe that as time passes with no noticeable economic improvements, conditions in the military are likely to deteriorate further and generate more unrest.

The US Embassy reports that a cumbersome governmental structure, together with ideological and personality differences among regime members, have hampered policy formulation and frequently paralyzed decisionmaking. The seven-member Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) chaired by Rawlings is the supreme policymaking body. Aside from Rawlings, only Chief of Defense Staff Brigadier Nunoo-Mensah—the lone moderate—is widely known and politically experienced, according to Embassy sources. These sources regard the other five members, three of whom are civilians, as radicals of mediocre ability.

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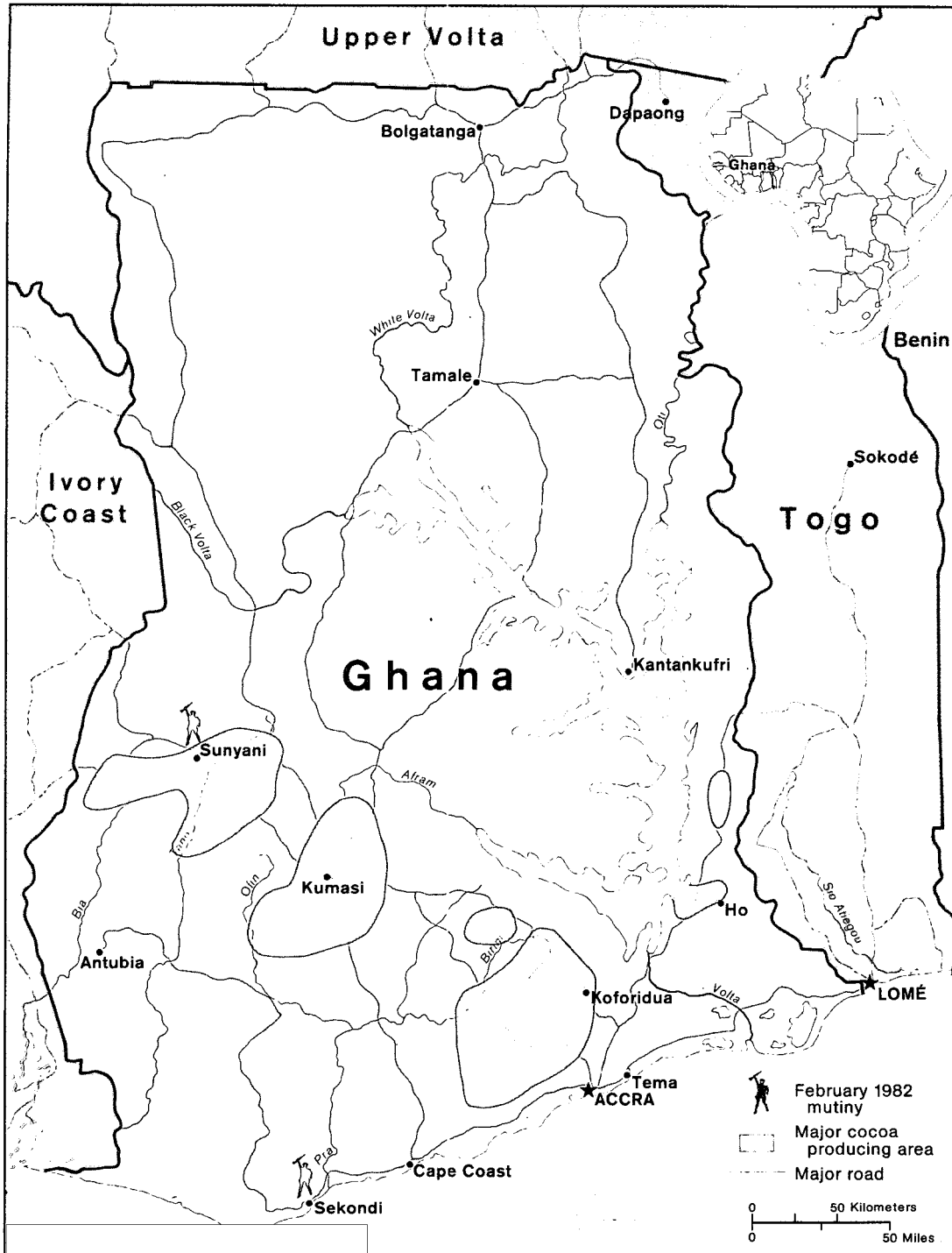
[redacted] the organizational integrity and already limited combat capabilities of the armed forces have deteriorated considerably. The chain of command and discipline have largely disintegrated and there is a scarcity of uniforms and other basic equipment. Enlisted men are in charge of most units and many officers—especially those who are Western trained and hold middle class values—have fled, retired, or been arrested. Mutinies last February of a naval unit in Sekondi and an Army battalion in Sunyani served to intensify officer apprehensions, according to [redacted] Embassy reporting. The US Embassy reported that new disturbances erupted in May, involving shooting incidents inside Army encampments in Kumasi and Koforidua [redacted]

[redacted]

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**Rawlings's Position.** We believe that Jerry Rawlings, a 34-year-old former Air Force pilot and son of a Scottish father and Ewe mother, came to power with a "Robin Hood" reputation in Ghana. Though indecisive and not a deep thinker, Rawlings is regarded by the US Embassy as the sole force capable at this time of holding the disparate regime together. The Embassy believes his charisma and public recognition give him more of a following than anyone else in the government. Recent Embassy reporting suggests that Rawlings may be near physical and mental exhaustion from overwork and excessive worry [redacted]

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We regard Rawlings as a relatively nonideological populist dedicated to creating a more egalitarian society through his ill-defined revolution. His stated aim is to take power away from the country's Western-oriented middle class, which he blames for Ghana's difficulties, and to return the country to the "people," thus eliminating corruption, bribery, and mismanagement. In his speeches, Rawlings betrays an underlying distrust of capitalism and Western motives toward Ghana. [redacted]

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**Ascendent Radicals.** US Embassy [redacted] reporting indicates that Rawlings is heavily dependent on a "kitchen cabinet" of advisers dominated by radicals who aim to align Ghana more closely with Communist states and Libya. The US Ambassador characterizes the radicals as doing their best to keep Rawlings isolated from other influences. According to the US mission, the leading radical is Kojo Tsikata, a self-professed Marxist revolutionary and a former Army captain, followed by Chris Atim, a former leftist student leader. [redacted]

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In his public remarks, Rawlings frequently acknowledges his gratitude to Tsikata, who befriended Rawlings after he surrendered power in 1979 and who Rawlings says helped to protect him from prosecution by ex-President Limann's security services. [redacted]

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[redacted] Tsikata's aspirations to become head of state make him a potential rival to Rawlings [redacted]



Head of State Jerry Rawlings [redacted] African Affairs ©

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Radicals have become influential in the regime in several key areas. Within days after Rawlings's coup, according to the US Embassy, radicals took complete control of the government media. Press articles, punctuated by periodic allegations of Western-backed invasion plots, have appeared attacking Washington's policies toward Libya and Central America. In our view, radicals see control of the media as an opportunity to marshal wider public support and to reclaim Ghana's place—recalling the Nkrumah era—as a self-proclaimed progressive African state in the forefront of the struggle against neocolonialism and racism. [redacted]

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Rawlings has embraced the radical-initiated people's defense committees as a means of establishing a broad political base and has publicly declared that they will be used to restructure society. In our view, these committees—constituting the Ghanaian version of similar bodies found in Libya, Ethiopia, and Cuba—will serve as the revolution's "eyes and ears." The committees' tasks—laid out in their charter—include exposure of corruption, exposition of national issues as the regime sees them, consideration of local problems, and implementation of regime decisions. A reading of the Ghanaian media suggests that the defense committees are gradually appearing in workplaces and trade unions, government facilities, campuses, local communities, and the military. [redacted]

[redacted] Kojo Tsikata has succeeded in gaining de facto control over Ghana's internal security apparatus. Embassy sources say that the radicals have also succeeded in removing the elected moderate leadership of Ghana's Trades Union Congress and its constituent unions. Nevertheless, Embassy reporting indicates radicals failed in their efforts to continue to dominate student organizations, losing a key election in June to antigovernment-backed moderates. [redacted]

**Beleaguered Moderates.** We believe that the few moderates in the regime are isolated by radical maneuvering and that they fear becoming scapegoats for the regime's failures. [redacted]

[redacted]

We have observed that Secretary for Foreign Affairs Obed Asamoah, though moderate in his personal views and married to an American, dutifully echoes the regime's foreign policy line. According to the US Embassy, Asamoah's appointment was opposed by the leading leftist student organization, which has dubbed him a "counterrevolutionary." [redacted]

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Nevertheless, according to Embassy reporting, the moderates are searching for ways to strengthen their position. In June moderates began taking pro-Western public positions and Embassy sources indicate they are ready to counter radical efforts to discredit the West by publicizing Western economic assistance. We believe moderates may have helped arrange the US Ambassador's long-awaited meeting with Rawlings in late June. While the Embassy reported the tone of the meeting was cordial, we have not observed a marked improvement in relations. In our estimation, the moderate faction remains weak. [redacted]

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**Opportunities for the Libyans, Cubans, and Soviets**  
In our estimation, Ghana's current instability and its proximity to several moderate states provide exploitable opportunities for the USSR, Libya, and Cuba to score new gains in their longstanding efforts to undermine Western influence and to install radical regimes wherever possible in West Africa. In our judgment, the ouster of pro-Western President Limann (who displayed open hostility toward Tripoli and Moscow), the emergence of the shaky Rawlings regime, and the potential for its replacement with an even more leftist one could over time allow Communist states and Libya to develop a strong enough position to be able to use Ghana as a base for regional subversion. [redacted]

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From our perspective, the Soviets, Libyans, and Cubans can hardly be displeased with current trends in Ghana. Rawlings's ostensibly nonaligned foreign policy has been characterized by the establishment of relations with Libya, a gradual expansion of ties with the USSR and other Communist countries, and underlying suspicion of the West. US Embassy reporting

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indicates that Rawlings—though still basically in charge—is an ineffective leader surrounded by leftist advisers who dominate the inner circle and are making inroads in key areas. In our estimation, these gains for Moscow, Tripoli, and Havana have thus far come with minimal expenditure of effort and money on their part.

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Qadhafi moved quickly to take advantage of Rawlings's coup. He immediately recognized the new regime and in a Radio Tripoli broadcast described Rawlings as a friend. Not long afterwards, US diplomats observed the arrival in Accra of Libyan transport aircraft, which Tripoli publicly claimed were delivering gifts of food and medicine. The regime's public expressions of warm feelings for Libya and the continuation of Libyan flights on a sporadic basis to Accra have given rise to considerable speculation among Ghanaian, other African, and Western observers over the extent of Libyan presence and involvement in Ghana.

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**Libyan Involvement.** In our view, Ghana's quick restoration of diplomatic relations with Libya—announced by Radio Accra only 11 days after Rawlings's coup—has been the key development in the regime's foreign policy. Former President Limann severed ties with Tripoli in November 1980 after publicly accusing Libya of subversion

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the US Embassy portray Rawlings and many of his radical advisers as having great admiration for Libyan leader Qadhafi and his "revolution."

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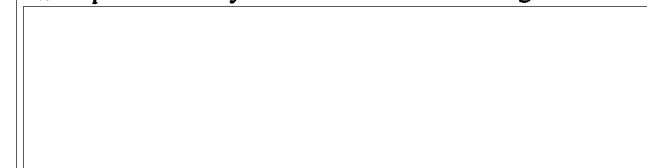
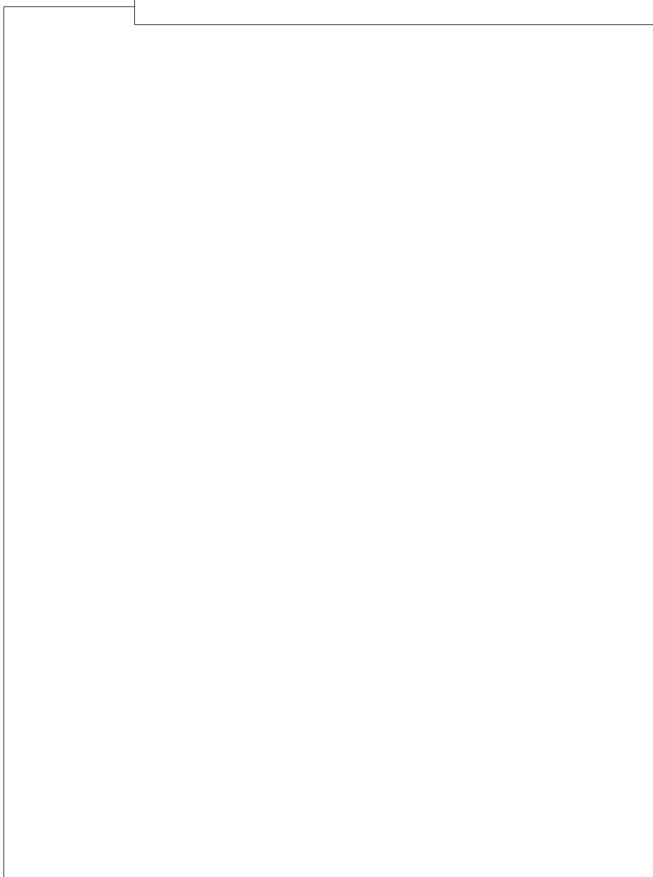
the Libyans at

least have provided Ghana with modest quantities of food, drugs, and munitions. Tripoli has agreed to supply Ghana with eight months' worth of its oil needs—two months free and the rest on delayed credit terms, according to US Embassy reports. In our view, any effective implementation of joint economic projects that Tripoli has pledged to undertake will depend upon the speed of Libya's financial recovery from the adverse impact of the world oil glut. We also believe that Qadhafi may calculate that he can make inroads in Ghana with only token aid offers, especially if this were to contribute to Rawlings's downfall and his replacement by an even more radical regime.

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Western diplomatic missions have reported their inability to verify or deny allegations of a Libyan military presence whether in an advisory, training, or bodyguard capacity. In the absence of verified sightings, we estimate that Libyan military personnel are



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present only in small numbers because a large presence presumably would be difficult to conceal. The US Ambassador believes that at any given time there probably are no more than 50 to 60 Libyans in the country. His estimate includes civilian and military advisers, visiting Libyan delegations, reserve flight crews for Libyan transport aircraft, and about 15 members of the Libyan "People's Bureau," that is, the diplomatic mission. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] Soviet influence is most evident in Ghana's radical-dominated official media, where the US Embassy has noted an increasing use of Soviet-supplied propaganda materials. We are unaware of any offers as yet from the Soviet Union to provide arms and military training to the Ghanaian armed forces. [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

We believe one barrier to the expansion of Libyan influence over the longer run in Ghana is the absence of a large Muslim community to respond to Qadhafi's vision of pan-Islamic unity. According to the last reliable census in 1970, only 12 percent of the population professed to be Muslim while some 70 percent claimed to be influenced by Western education and Christianity. The census revealed that Ghana's Muslims are concentrated in pockets in the thinly populated north and in the southern cities. [redacted]

At the time of Rawlings's coup, according to information available to the US Embassy, the Soviets had a 62-man mission in Accra, while approximately 650 Ghanaian students were in the USSR and 350 more in Eastern Europe. In 1980, according to the latest available USSR trade data and Ghanaian cocoa export figures, the Soviets purchased about 23 percent of Ghana's total export of cocoa, one of its principal foreign exchange earners [redacted] 25X1

**Cuban Involvement.** A Ghanaian delegation headed by one of Rawlings's radical advisers journeyed to Cuba last March. According to the US Embassy in Accra, the visit resulted in a Ghanaian decision to reopen its long-closed Embassy in Havana and in promises of Cuban technical assistance for Ghana's ailing sugar industry, for some modest industrial and fisheries projects in Ghana, and for training some Ghanaian youths in Cuba. The US Embassy in Accra also reported that Cuba and Ghana signed an air services agreement in June. [redacted]

A Ghanaian delegation, led by a radical member of the ruling council, visited Moscow last March seeking economic aid. On their return home, Radio Accra made various conflicting claims about new Soviet aid promises, but Moscow has not made any public commitments. At most, we believe that the Soviets seem to be considering resuming work on some of the 10 Soviet aid projects that were abandoned when President Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966. In our view, this would be fairly cheap for Moscow and would provide a cover for introducing Soviet personnel into the country for other purposes. The same Ghanaian delegation also sought aid from East European countries and Cuba, but only Cuba has since been reported by US diplomats to be moving to reactivate an old project. [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

**Soviet and East European Involvement.** Although favorable TASS commentaries after Rawlings's coup attest to the positive view Moscow takes of the new Ghanaian regime, in our view the Soviets have so far moved cautiously and slowly to develop links to the new regime. Nonetheless, we believe that the Soviets are seeking low-cost ways of exploiting the situation in Ghana over the longer run to gain influence there, and possibly to obtain the use of Ghanaian military facilities. [redacted]

**Looking Ahead.** We see the regime's political, economic, and military weaknesses offering considerable potential for Soviet, Libyan, and Cuban inroads in Ghana. Continued economic deterioration, in our view, could compel the regime to adopt more repressive measures to ensure its survival and encourage the [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

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radicals around Rawlings to solicit more security, technical, organizational, and propaganda assistance from the Soviets, Libyans, and Cubans. Other catalysts that we believe could encourage the same result would include the regime's continued inability to reestablish viable security and military services or the traumatic effect of any future attempted coup by Ghanaian exiles or disgruntled soldiers. [redacted]

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Reporting from the US mission since Rawlings's coup indicates that radical advisers around Rawlings have succeeded in gaining control over the country's internal security apparatus and government-controlled media. According to the Embassy, the radicals, mindful of their need to develop a broader power base, are actively attempting to implant "people's defense committees"—similar to those found in other radical Third World states—as a mass political organization, and to extend control over student and labor organizations. [redacted]

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Academic studies of the Nkrumah era suggest what could happen again if Ghana continues to drift leftward, as seems likely to us. There is the potential for the USSR, Libya, and Cuba to become more deeply involved in regime efforts to rehabilitate Ghana's shattered military and security services through the provision of equipment, training, and advisers. We believe small amounts of financial and technical assistance could be forthcoming—possibly via international Communist front organizations—for assistance in molding the regime's control over political, youth, and labor groups, along with scholarships for ideological indoctrination of a new generation of Ghanaians. [redacted]

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#### West African Concerns and Vulnerabilities

Officials in Ghana's neighboring states have repeatedly expressed concern in conversations with US diplomats about the country's radical turn under Rawlings. They are especially uneasy about the danger that Ghana could become—like Benin—a base for Libyan- and Communist-trained subversives. These officials have urged that the West do nothing to drive Ghana closer into the embrace of Libya and the Communist states. From our perspective, events in Ghana have served as an unwelcome reminder to most African governments of the consequences of failing to

deal effectively with their own longstanding economic and political problems. [redacted] 25X1

To date, we have not seen any evidence that suggests the Rawlings regime is engaged in subversive operations against Ghana's neighbors, or that Libya or the Communist countries are using Ghana as a base for subversion elsewhere. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] the Rawlings regime is primarily concerned with forestalling external coups against itself and putting its own house in order rather than trying to foment trouble abroad. [redacted] 25X1

Libya, the USSR, and Cuba, however, may soon have more incentive for establishing a foothold in Ghana for regional subversion. The US Embassy in Benin reports preliminary indications that the Cotonou government is moving to reduce its dependence on Libya and Communist states and improve ties with the United States. If this trend continues, we believe that Libya and the Communist countries may be more inclined to see Ghana as an alternate base for stirring up trouble in the area. However, it is our analysis that such a regional role would be secondary in Soviet thinking to obtaining influence and possibly military facilities, such as landing rights for naval reconnaissance aircraft, in Ghana itself. [redacted] 25X1

From Libya's perspective, Ghana's immediate neighbors—Ivory Coast, Togo, and Upper Volta—are all inviting targets. Each has a minority Muslim population, a moderate orientation, close ties with France, and good relations with the United States. Embassy reporting from posts in the region suggests that Togolese President Eyadema is most nervous of all. As a northerner, he has long faced hostility from the southern Ewe tribe, which spills over into Ghana; Rawlings and his leading radical associate, Kojo Tsikata, are Ewe tribesmen. Moreover, according to the US Embassy in Lome, the brother of the Togolese leader of a Ewe dissident group in Accra allegedly serves as an economic adviser to Rawlings. [redacted] 25X1

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Upper Volta's influential Muslim minority, chronic economic problems, and agitation by leftist labor leaders make President Zerbo particularly sensitive to potential Soviet and Libyan threats, according to US Embassy reporting. In the Ivory Coast, the possible turbulent succession when aged President Houphouet dies would, in our estimation, increase the country's vulnerabilities despite the sizable French presence and interest there. [redacted]

In our view, however, the radical-dominated regime probably will continue to eschew significant involvement with the West and gamble on its abilities to indoctrinate and repress the populace with Communist and Libyan support. Our suspicion is that Ghana may be set for some time on a course of radical experimentation to solve its problems. We believe, therefore, that Ghana is likely to be marked by political and economic instability for the foreseeable future. [redacted]

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US Embassy reporting from Lagos indicates that Nigeria, West Africa's dominant state, distrusts the Rawlings regime. According to the Embassy, Nigerian President Shagari was personally close to deposed President Limann and he regrets the setback to civilian rule and the resulting potential for increased Libyan meddling. Authorities in Lagos acknowledge that Nigeria has resumed crude oil sales to Ghana after suspending them immediately after Rawlings's coup because of payments arrears of over \$120 million. Ghana has since agreed to repay its debt over an 18-month period in exchange for future oil shipments with 90-day credit terms, [redacted]

Our assessment of scenarios which may evolve in Ghana in the future suggests to us that prospects are bleak for US interests. We see four possible outcomes; continued consolidation of power by the regime's radicals; a radical-led coup; a drift into anarchy; or a short-lived countercoup by moderates. [redacted]

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The most likely scenario, we believe, is for the radicals to continue their gradual consolidation of power under Kojo Tsikata, with Rawlings to be eased aside within two years or so, or retained in a figurehead role. In our estimation, Ghana will continue to move leftward as the radical faction becomes more dominant. [redacted]

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[redacted] Although Nigerian oil is less expensive than that supplied by Libya, Tripoli's repayment terms are more advantageous for the financially strapped Rawlings regime. [redacted]

We judge that the USSR, Libya, and Cuba will wait in the wings for the time being pending further radical consolidation before becoming more directly involved in Ghana. In our view, an abortive coup by Ghanaian exiles and their moderate friends in the country would accelerate radical efforts to consolidate power and to involve Communist states and Libya more deeply in Ghanaian affairs. We believe that a radical consolidation of power and growing Ghanaian dependence on Communist and Libyan support would make it difficult over the longer run for authorities in Accra to resist pressure from these benefactors to use the country as a staging base for regional subversion. [redacted]

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**Outlook and Implications for the United States**  
Ghanaian moderates in conversations with US Embassy contacts have repeatedly urged Washington to be patient and understanding with the regime. They believe that sooner or later the regime will be forced—out of economic desperation—to renew cooperation with the West in order to obtain support for new economic stabilization measures. If the moderates are right, the areas of leverage that the United States has in dealing with the Rawlings government are the US aid program and Washington's influence with the International Monetary Fund. In June 1982, Ghana presented a formal request to Washington for continuation of the PL 480 food program and made informal soundings about possible US military training assistance. [redacted]

A radical-led coup that overthrew Rawlings, in our judgment, would yield the same results as would a gradual consolidation of power by this group. But the US Embassy believes, and we concur, that the abrupt

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elimination of Rawlings in the near term—before the radicals have established a broader power base—would risk plunging the country into anarchy. We do not see Tsikata or any other radical figure on the horizon as having sufficient stature or popular following now to retain power without substantial foreign support. In our estimation, however, an ill-timed radical coup remains an ever-present possibility if frustration grows among these avowed leftists in Rawlings's entourage who are dissatisfied with the regime's frequent policy paralysis and the slow progress of social and economic change. [redacted]

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A drift toward chaos could come in other ways. We believe that growing economic hardship—as the radicals attempt to solidify their hold, drive moderates out of the regime, and transform society—could lead to more mutinous eruptions in the military. Any future effort to build up a "people's militia," particularly if it received favored support over the regular armed forces, would also be a likely source of rebellion in our estimation. In our view, outbreaks of factional fighting within the armed forces, unless quickly controlled, could spread throughout the country and result, we believe, in the regime's loss of control. Ghana's collapse into anarchy, we believe, could frustrate short-term gains for the Soviets, Libyans, and Cubans, but almost certainly would yield exploitable opportunities over the longer term. [redacted]

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Even if a moderate-led coup is successful, we would have serious doubts about the survivability of the government that would emerge. In our judgment, most Ghanaian exiles and professional military officers of a moderate bent are part of Ghana's largely discredited middle class. They would have little prospect of rallying the widespread support among Ghana's have-nots that would be required to establish a stable and lasting new regime. Ghanaians over the last decade and a half have witnessed abortive efforts by a succession of moderate regimes seeking to redress the country's economic problems with Western and international financial help and politically unacceptable austerity programs. [redacted]

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### *United States Trade and Investment*

*The United States supplied Ghana with \$23.5 million worth of assistance in 1981, 80 percent of which was food. Thus far in 1982, more than 3,000 metric tons of food have been delivered to Ghana under the PL 480 program. The Peace Corps maintains 104 volunteers throughout the country.*

*Trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$153 million in 1981. Ghana ranks fifth among Sub-Saharan African states as a purchaser of US imports. Food makes up 20 percent of these imports.*

*The book value of US investments in Ghana totals about \$170 million, with 70 percent of it in the aluminum processing industry. There has been little new US investment in recent years except in an offshore oil operation that provides 10 percent of Ghana's minimum domestic requirements.*

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Several of the scenarios we have outlined above could imperil the approximately 2,600 American citizens and diplomats in Ghana. The assassination of Rawlings could be blamed on the United States by surviving authorities and, in our judgment, Washington in any case would be immediately suspect. His death, an attempted coup, or an exile attack might easily precipitate rioting, looting, factional fighting in the military, and acts of violence against expatriates. Under such circumstances, there would be a danger that the Ghanaian left would demonstrate against or attack the US Embassy. [redacted]

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## Appendix I

## Key Personalities

Radicals Around  
Rawlings

**Kojo Tsikata.** Reporting from the US Mission in Accra has consistently portrayed Kojo Tsikata as the leader of the regime's kitchen cabinet of radical advisers, who has gained de facto control over the country's internal security apparatus and is a key influence on Head of State Rawlings. A self-styled Marxist and African revolutionary, he is an advocate of close ties with the USSR, Libya, and Cuba. [redacted] he maintains especially close ties with Cuba and in the past has urged Rawlings to adopt Cuba and Ethiopia as models for Ghana. Tsikata, 45 years old and a retired Army captain, holds the title of special adviser to the ruling council, and is a southern Ewe tribesman like Rawlings. [redacted]

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Chris Atim, Member of  
Provisional National  
Defense Council [redacted]

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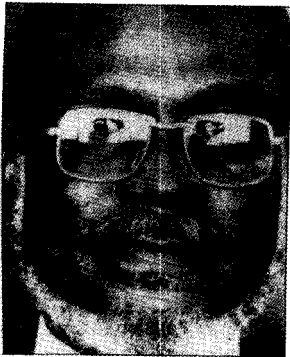
**Chris Atim.** The US Embassy regards Chris Atim as the most pro-Libyan and leftist member of the ruling council. [redacted] he is close to Kojo Tsikata and influential with Rawlings. Atim was identified in the Ghanaian press as the leader of delegations the regime sent last February and April to solicit aid from Libya, the USSR, Eastern Europe, and Cuba. The US Embassy speculates that he probably was responsible for drafting the guidelines for Ghana's people's defense committees, which are similar to security and propaganda organizations found in Libya, Cuba, and Ethiopia. Atim, 30 years old and a northern Builsa tribesman, was the leader in the leftist National Union of Ghanaian Students before his graduation in 1979 and subsequently became an editor of a pro-Rawlings newsletter that had an anti-Western and anti-American slant. [redacted]

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**Tsatsu Tsikata.** Kojo's cousin or brother, Tsikata is an intellectual mentor to the radical faction, according to the US Embassy. He is a Marxist-oriented law instructor at the University of Ghana. During the Limann regime, Tsatsu was frequently observed by members of the US Mission on the lecture circuit, propounding Rawlings's populist and "revolutionary" virtues. [redacted]

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Johnny Hansen, Secretary for Internal Affairs [redacted]

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**Johnny Hansen.** As Secretary for Internal Affairs, Hansen is officially in charge of Ghana's internal security apparatus and works closely with Kojo Tsikata, [redacted]. He is a longtime radical with extreme leftwing views and ties to the Soviets, according to the US Embassy. He was formerly head of the Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards, a radical fringe group, which, the Embassy notes, strongly endorsed the Rawlings coup and has pushed for the formation of people's defense committees. [redacted]

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**Ato Austin.** As Secretary for Information, Austin is responsible for the media. Two prominent lawyers with access to the ruling council have characterized Austin as part of Rawlings's inner circle of radical advisers in discussions with Embassy officials. Only in his twenties and of obscure background, he was a member of ex-President Limann's ruling party until he was dropped in November 1981, according to the US Embassy. He led a Ghanaian delegation to North Korea last April. [redacted]

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**Kwasi Amoako-Atta.** Amoako-Atta is a leading member of the National Economic Review Committee responsible for reviewing economic policy alternatives for the regime; US Embassy sources consider him the most radical member of the economic council. Amoako-Atta served as Finance Minister under Nkrumah, favoring a planned socialist economy and closer ties with Communist countries, according to our biographic information. [redacted]

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**Moderates Around Rawlings**

Chief of Defense Staff Brig. Joseph *Nunoo-Mensah*, Army Commander Brig. Arnold *Quainoo*, and Secretary for Foreign Affairs Obed *Asamoah* are the most prominent moderates associated with the regime, according to US Embassy sources. Nunoo-Mensah, a 43-year-old Fanti tribesman, served as chief of the defense staff during Rawlings's 1979 regime and he was forcibly retired by Limann, according to US Embassy reports. [redacted]

DIA

[redacted], he was not involved in Rawlings's 1981 coup, but was brought back by Rawlings because of his earlier popularity with enlisted men. [redacted]

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Liaison ©

Joseph Nunoo-Mensah, Chief of Defense Staff [redacted]

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Secretary for Foreign Affairs Obed Asamoah, according to his official biography, is a 46-year-old Ewe tribesman and a lawyer with advanced degrees from British and American universities. During former President Limann's rule, the US Embassy reported that Asamoah served as secretary general of the All People's Party, which was a coalition of five major opposition parties. In the late 1960s, he served as a member of the Ghanaian parliament. [redacted]

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Quainoo, of mixed Ewe and Fanti origin, received military training in the United States, [redacted]

he is popular with enlisted men, who consider him honest and interested in their welfare, but not with fellow officers. Quainoo was Army Commander during Rawlings's first regime and was forcibly retired by Limann. <sup>DIA</sup>

[redacted] Quainoo feuded in the past with Nunoo-25X1

Mensah and we believe it is likely that problems between the two will arise again to weaken further the moderate faction. [redacted]

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*Arnold Quainoo,  
Army Commander* [redacted]

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