



4 March 1966

OCI No. 1154/66

Copy No. 35

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

GHANA'S FREEDOM FIGHTERS' CAMP AND THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

Office of Current Intelligence

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: APR 2001

(b)(1)
(b)(3)

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

200672


CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
4 March 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Ghana's Freedom Fighters' Camp
and the Chinese Communists

1. One of the earliest pronouncements of the new regime in Ghana was a promise to end Ghanaian meddling in the internal affairs of other African states. This statement was broadcast shortly after the discovery of a secret training camp for subversives run by the Chinese Communists in the interior of Ghana.
2. The Nkrumah regime had been in the business of providing support, in the form of hospitality, money, and training in guerrilla techniques, to African "freedom fighters" virtually since Ghana became independent in March 1957. Chinese Communist assistance in this effort, however, apparently dates only from late 1964 or early 1965.
3. Ghanaian aid and comfort were extended at first only to African nationalists from still-dependent territories--which in 1957 included all of Black Africa except Liberia, Ethiopia, and Ghana itself. After 1960, Ghana "adopted" and similarly aided dissidents from neighboring independent African states--particularly French African--considered by Nkrumah to have "neocolonialist" regimes.
4. For a number of years after 1957, it was difficult to discover any of the details about these training programs. It was established early that they were operated under the aegis of Nkrumah's Bureau of African Affairs--an official government agency set up mainly to deal with the freedom fighters. However, for a long while, available [REDACTED] reports remained generally vague as to the locale of these activities and the numbers and nationalities of trainees. Between 1958 and 1964 several different localities in Ghana were mentioned, and it seems likely that the site of the program was moved several times. Many of these early reports also included generalized references to the presence of specialists from Communist countries. The USSR and East Germany were most frequently mentioned in this connection.

5. Since late 1964 a succession of reports has made it clear that the major and perhaps the only freedom fighters' camp in Ghana is the one now being publicized in the press. The decision for its establishment was apparently made in August 1964. It was set up some 140 miles northwest of Accra and not far from the upcountry city of Kumasi. The actual site is an abandoned gold mine near the small town of Obenemasi. Between 9 and 13 Chinese guerrilla trainers arrived in Ghana in late December 1964 or January 1965.



6. Field reporting during 1965 indicated that the number of Chinese may have fluctuated somewhat, but apparently never exceeded the size of the original group. The latest report, dated 11 February 1966, stated that nine Chinese instructors who had been on leave in Accra were to return to the camp that day to assist the Ghanaian commandant in preparations for a new training session.

7. A wide variety of Africans deemed by Nkrumah to qualify as "freedom fighters" have received training at Obenemasi. Apparently included were dissident elements from independent Niger, Cameroon, Congo (Leopoldville), Ivory Coast, Senegal, and South Africa. The largest individual contingents, however, evidently came from Rhodesia and Portugal's three African territories, especially Angola and Mozambique. At the time of the coup, arrangements were already under way to process additional recruits through this program.

8. All told, perhaps several hundred trainees have passed through the Obenemasi camp since the Chinese became involved in the program. A good many of these Africans were reported to have left Ghana en route to staging areas (e.g., Tanzania) nearer their homelands.