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**African Liberation and Unity in Nkrumah's Ghana: A Study of the Role of "Pan-African Institutions" in the making of Ghana's foreign Policy, 1957 - 1966**

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## **5. Between Diplomacy and Revolution (January 1963 - February 1966)**

### **Introduction**

In 1963, Nkrumah's government entered its last phase. Between 1963 and 1966, the Ghanaian President led his country towards a harsh confrontation with other independent African states and the Western powers. A more "militant" and "military" approach had been adopted. As a result, Accra became increasingly isolated. Nkrumah's political influence was reduced progressively to just a few radical governments and liberation movements. Furthermore, Ghana's close relations with the East and the BAA's "unorthodox" methods had attracted the fears of London and Washington. Thus, Ghana became known in Africa as the source of "subversive" and "terrorist" activities. Nkrumah himself was accused of being the head of a plan to pave the way for communism in the continent. The conclusion of this phase was the end of Nkrumah's rule itself, when his government was overthrown by a military coup on February 1966.

The goal of this chapter is to outline the history of the last phase of Nkrumah's government, focusing the analysis on Ghana's radical Pan-African policy. It will be explained how the policy was conceived after 1963 and how the BAA worked to attain its targets. Moreover, the reaction of the West to Barden's moves in Africa will be described. Finally, the chapter will close with an analysis of the changes occurred in 1965. This year proved to be crucial as Ghana's foreign policy was totally put under revision in order to cope with the failures of the previous years. Changes occurred particularly in both the structures and the policies performed by the Bureau. The most important event of 1965 was Barden's removal as director. Two different approaches emerged. On one side, Nkrumah made a last attempt to use diplomacy for re-launching his Pan-African policy. On the other side, he kept supporting radical liberation movements and he also planned a vast military

intervention to solve the Southern Rhodesia question. The latter mission – never put into practice - was going to be the last one of Ghana's Pan-African policy.

The analysis of this last period will start with the definition of the new political phase in Ghana. Since the second half of 1962, Ghana speeded up the ongoing process of radicalization. Two events particularly influenced Nkrumah's policies in this period and led Ghana towards the new phase, the life attempt suffered by Nkrumah at Kulungugu on August 1962 and the establishment of the Organization of African Unity in May 1963.

The chapter will begin with the description of these two events in order to explain the basis of the new Pan-African policy of Ghana and why, up to spring 1965, Barden and his BAA gained more power than ever within the system of Ghana's foreign policy.

## **5.1. Kulungugu and its Consequences**

On August 11<sup>th</sup> 1962, Nkrumah was injured as a result of a terrorist attack at Kulungugu (Northern Ghana) while on his way back from a meeting with the Voltaic President Yameogo. This event shocked Ghana and it led to a dramatic change of Nkrumah's political approach. Accra's internal and external policies were deeply affected by it. In the short term, Nkrumah closed politically to any of his political rivals in Africa. In the long term, his reaction was to push forward on the radicalization path, a decision that had important consequences on the composition of the CPP party ranks and also on his foreign policy. It represented the final victory for radicals like Barden who were willing to take a clear militant and military stance.

Before Kulungugu, Nkrumah had worked hard to give new impetus to the African unity project in West Africa, but with scarce results. He had even used traditional diplomacy to promote such a project. However, the activities of the BAA had obscured the work done diplomatically. The majority of the other West African states feared the strengthening of the Ghanaian influence in the region and they strongly opposed any

project of federation which was seen as Nkrumah's Trojan horse to extend his control to any adhering state.

The only relevant success had been to involve Yameogo in a project of federation, adopting more or less the same strategy used in 1958-1959 with Guinea and in 1960-1961 with Mali. Nkrumah had offered him better terms for the use of harbors (the Upper Volta was bound to the Ivory Coast for its exports) and he also offered a loan on the model of those granted to Guinea and Mali in the previous years. The meeting between Yameogo and Nkrumah on the eve of the bomb attack was just the final step before a proper federation agreement between the two states was signed.

While Nkrumah had succeeded in tightening his relations with Yameogo, the majority of the other West African states were still looking at Ghana with suspicion. Indeed, Nkrumah was accused of plotting against other West African governments. The presence of members of opposition parties at the African Affair Centre was considered as a proof of the subversive plans orchestrated by Nkrumah. Hosted as "freedom fighters", these men were considered terrorists by the countries involved. Thus, Ghana itself was accused of planning terrorist attacks in Africa.

For its part, Ghana was turning the accusations towards the same West African countries. According to Adamafo and Ikoku, before Kulungugu, there were proofs that Togo, Nigeria and Ivory Coast were working together with the United Party (UP) – the Ghanaian main opposition party in exile - to overthrow Nkrumah. The bomb attack confirmed such suspects.<sup>529</sup> According to UP members - who admitted their involvement in 1966 - the bomb attack of Kulungugu had been planned in Togo by the UP and executed by Ghanaians trained in Lomè.<sup>530</sup> The same UP members in exile were responsible for terrorist attacks in Accra one month later.

The Kulungugu affair was not a surprise. It simply confirmed Nkrumah's fears of murder plots against him. Moreover, it proved right the radicals who were pushing Nkrumah for a more active (and aggressive) foreign policy. From this point of view, the bomb attack marked the very end of a "diplomatic approach" towards Pan-Africanism. In

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<sup>529</sup> See T. Adamafo, *By Nkrumah's side*, pp.124 ff. and S. Ikoku, *Le Ghana de Nkrumah*, pp.196-199.

<sup>530</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.266.

Ghana, the Bureau of African Affairs consolidated its leading position in the foreign policy machinery. Ghana entered a new phase in which its foreign policy became as radical as ever.

First of all, Nkrumah closed every political negotiation with the three neighboring states, investing more resources in the BAA activities there. All the borders of Ghana were closed immediately after the bomb attack. The fear of subversive plots against Ghana was raised not just by “traditional” enemies (Togo and Ivory Coast) but also by Upper Volta. Such suspects led to the end of the project of federation with Ouagadougou, which consequently turned back to Abidjan, which emerged stronger than before. The relationship between Ghana and the three neighboring states reached the lowest level.

Nkrumah’s third move was to use the freedom fighters as a political weapons for strengthening his consensus both in Ghana and in Africa. Soon after Kulungugu, he invited the nationalists hosted at the AAC to protest against the life attempt he suffered. Just two months before, a conference of freedom fighters had been held at Winneba. In that occasion, Ghana had re-launched its role as the torch-bearer of African liberation. Now, the same freedom fighters were called to support Nkrumah in the difficult situation after the assassination attempt. Such an action was presented as part of the struggle for African liberation and unity, since without Nkrumah’s Ghana the Pan-African struggle was doomed to fail. It was the first time the Ghanaian President was clearly exploiting the net of freedom fighters built throughout Africa. From this point of view, his Pan-African policy could be also evaluated for its political return. The operation has also another target: checking within the ranks of freedom fighters in Ghana those who were loyal to Nkrumah and those who were not.

To reach all these purposes, a public demonstration was organized in Accra on August 17<sup>th</sup> 1962. Several of the parties which had a representative office in Accra took part to the rally. They were: UPC, BPP, UNIP, Sawaba Party, Sanwi Movement and the Union for Togo Liberation.<sup>531</sup> With the rally, Nkrumah showed his political strength to both his citizens and his rivals.

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<sup>531</sup> The text of the speech of the freedom fighters representatives at the rally can be found in the article “All Africans must answer to the call of Osagyefo against colonialism” in Evening News, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1962. They

The BAA was behind the demonstration. Nkrumah had personally instructed Barden to organize it. It was the proof that the President had an absolute trust in the Bureau and that he was ready to rely on it in the new political phase.<sup>532</sup> Barden himself undertook the organization of the whole event. In September, the BAA tried also unsuccessfully to create a proper organization to gather together all the freedom fighters hosted in Accra in order to coordinate their actions better. Such an fragile body included: Sawaba Party, UPC (Cameroon), Sanwi Movement, BCP, UNIP and the Union for Togo Liberation.<sup>533</sup>

In the following months, Ghana attempt to reconcile with its neighbors partially succeeded.<sup>534</sup> However, in the long period the consequences of Kulungugu proved dramatic. Nkrumah's attitude after the bomb attack convinced every moderate African state not to adhere to any plan of federation led by Ghana. Thus, in early 1963, Ghana became strongly isolated. While Nkrumah launched an even more radical campaign for African unity, the rest of the continent discussed on alternative solutions to achieve the same target.

## **5.2. Defense of Sovereignty and Fears of Subversion: the Togo Affair and the Road to the OAU**

In 1962, the UAS project suffered its final crisis. Touré showed his will to abandon the Union in order to give shape to a new project of African unity, this time involving Ethiopia as its favorite partner. Together with Emperor Haile Selassie, he launched the idea of establishing a continental organization of African states. The two leaders met on 28 June at Asmara to discuss the possibility of merging the Monrovia and Casablanca groups

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can also be found in AGPL, un-catalogued file, Speeches delivered on the occasion of the freedom fighters' demonstration at Accra on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1962. The BCP sent an apology to Barden for their absence at the rally. See AGPL, BAA/424, Letter, BCP representatives in Ghana to Barden, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1962.

<sup>532</sup> Barden himself wrote to the main representatives of the party and the state for calling to the demonstration. See AGPL, BAA/424, Letters, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1962.

<sup>533</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.267. Thompson wrongly refers to Union for Togo Liberation as "United Front" from Togo.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 305 and 307.

together.<sup>535</sup> Consequently, in August, Diallo Telli was sent by Touré to eighteen African states to propose a conference to be held in Addis Ababa on May 1963. These turned out to be the first steps towards the establishment of the Organization of African unity.<sup>536</sup> Although Nkrumah had always sponsored a Pan-African union of states, he was not involved in the talks between Touré and Haile Selassie nor in the following preparation of the conference.<sup>537</sup>

At least since 1961, Touré had increasingly criticized Nkrumah's Pan-African policy. He had particularly contested the choice of establishing the Casablanca group, as he feared Guinea could suffer a political isolation from the rest of the African states. In several occasions, Guinea and Mali had showed willingness to join the Monrovia group, even if it was the expression of a moderate attitude towards African unity and socialism.<sup>538</sup> Only Ghana's intervention had prevented them to adhere to the group. The charter of the new Union of African States of July 1961 was signed only after Nkrumah's promise to grant other funds to the other two members.<sup>539</sup> However, despite Nkrumah's efforts, the UAS was still weak and Touré's opening towards Selassie marked its final failure.

Most of the independent African states were supporting African unity, but they opposed Nkrumah's radical plan for a Continental Union Government and considered Touré and Selassie's moderate Pan-African platform as the best solution for uniting the continent.

In contrast, the "radicals" were losing power and Ghana had lost most of its influence among them. Still, Nkrumah's road towards radicalization did not stop, but it affected more and more his Pan-African policy. The Ghanaian propaganda machinery definitely put the revolution in Ghana and Africa on the same ground. Socialism made its final entry into the Nkrumahist Pan-African discourse. Moreover, by that time, the Ghanaian President had begun attacking several independent African countries, defining them as "neo-colonialist

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<sup>535</sup> Z. Červenka, *The Organization of African Unity and its charter*, C.Hurst & Company, London 1968, p.2.

<sup>536</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.307.

<sup>537</sup> Dzirasa, Ghana's resident minister in Conakry, was not informed of Guinea's moves, included the establishment of a seven-state group to work on the dissolution of Africa's blocs before the conference. *Ibidem*.

<sup>538</sup> Both countries were radical, but they were also willing to join a wider platform of states in order to promote cooperation in Africa.

<sup>539</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.202-203.



regimes". In such way, he justified his support to opposition parties coming from the same states.<sup>540</sup>

The response of moderate Africa to Ghana's campaigns was even stronger. Mutual accusations of subversive plans between Ghana and its political opponents characterized the whole period before the conference. The questions of subversion and the defense of sovereignty almost overshadowed the discussions on the draft proposals for the charter to be signed at the Addis Ababa conference. That was the situation when the "Togo Affair" came on the scene. This crucial event channeled more and more the fears of moderate Africa on Ghana and it influenced the road to the OAU.

The 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1963, the Togolese army overthrown and assassinated the President of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio. Few days later, Nicolas Grunitzky was appointed as the new President of the West African country. It was the first coup d'état in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Almost immediately after Olympio's overthrow, moderate African countries and the Western world suspected Ghana was involved in the coup. Knowing the bitter relationship between Olympio and Nkrumah, Accra's involvement was considered plausible. Indeed, at least since 1959, Olympio had lost Nkrumah's support, despite their close political stance. Since then, Accra had supported Olympio's political opponents and the Togolese President did the same with Nkrumah's adversaries. The most evident proof was the Kulungugu

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<sup>540</sup> The article "The Theory of African Revolutionary Struggle" published on the Bulletin on African Affairs in November 1962 analyses in detail the new political line. The BAA journal - created for the internal use of the members of the State and the CPP - described neo-colonialism in independent Africa and the way to fight it: "In some of the independent African States the old colonial masters have skillfully handed over political power to an upper class in such way as to safeguard their economic and military interest. While these countries are nominally independent in the political scene, they are not in the position to use this political independence to achieve economic, social and cultural emancipation. Here the forces of the African revolution are the masses organized against the upper (usually feudal and capitalist) classes in the drive for total freedom from any form of foreign control. [...] whereas the reactionary forces depend on support from, and collaboration with, imperialism and colonialism, *the progressive forces draw their strength and inspiration from all those sovereign African states that have travelled the road of complete independence from foreign control and from the mass movements all over Africa*". In "The Theory of African Revolutionary Struggle", Bulletin on African Affairs, vol.2, n°124, 22 November 1962. A copy of the article can be found in AGPL, BAA/2.

affair. The main reason of resentment between the two leaders was Olympio's refusal to join a union with Ghana.<sup>541</sup>

Even if Nkrumah immediately rejected all the allegations, his opponents used the coup in Togo to attack Ghana's Pan-African policy. In the mind of Nkrumah's rivals, the fall of Olympio was the proof that Nkrumah was ready to physically eliminate his enemies in order to rule a united and revolutionary Africa. Thus, the questions of sovereignty and subversion came at the top of the agenda of OAU conference.

These issues had been discussed in Africa since 1958. They had been part of the themes of the IAS conference, of the first All-African People's Conference and they had even been raised at Sanniquellie.<sup>542</sup> Every time Nkrumah had proposed his plans for African unity to other independent African states, they had responded with talks about the defense of sovereignty and the integrity of their territories. This cautious attitude towards Ghana turned into suspect after Nkrumah began financing opposition parties of other independent African states. Just before the OAU, the suspect on Nkrumah's plans evolved into an open attack against his government. On mid-February 1963, Touré, Keita, and Houphouët met to discuss Ghana's role in the Togo Affairs and in an alleged coup attempt in Ivory Coast in the same period.<sup>543</sup> Despite Nkrumah's attempts to heal the divisions with Houphouët-Boigny, the Ivorian President, backed by his Malian and Guinean counterparts, was ready to present the question of subversion at the Addis Ababa conference.<sup>544</sup>

The Togo Affair had further increased Nkrumah's political isolation. The campaign against the Ghanaian President and his foreign policy was taking place just before the most important gathering ever held in Africa. It was probably the last opportunity for Nkrumah to present his ideas on African unity in a diplomatic way. For this reason, despite the

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<sup>541</sup> Interviews with K.B. Asante. Olympio had always refused a project of political union with Ghana as he feared Togo would have been absorbed by Ghana losing its identity and independence, as it has been the case with British Togoland in 1956.

<sup>542</sup> For references on discussions on subversion and sovereignty in Africa at the IASC see A. Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound*, p.66. For discussion on the same issues at the AAPC see A. Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound*, p.72. See also Legum 42-45 Bakpetu., pp.126-140. For Sanniquellie see A. Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound*, pp.77-78 and Legum 45 and 162-163.

<sup>543</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.315-316.

<sup>544</sup> In this period, Nkrumah sent K.B. Asante to conduct private talks with Houphouët-Boigny, in order to work for a reconciliation. Interviews with K.B. Asante.

general suspect surrounding his government, the Ghanaian President launched a final campaign to support his vision of a Continental Union Government just before the OAU.

### **5.3. The Addis Ababa Conference and the Confrontation between Models of Political Unity**

In the months before the Addis Ababa conference, Nkrumah tried to renew his call for a continental government and he also tried to re-launch his role as a political guide of a the Pan-Africanist front. The Ghanaian President made every effort to recall the times when Ghana was leading the political scene in Africa. The aim was to counteract the negative propaganda which was damaging Ghana and his political vision in order to influence the talks of the OAU.

The Bureau played a fundamental role in this phase, as it controlled an effective propaganda machinery which could reach hundreds of influential African nationalists. BAA publications such as *Voice of Africa* and the new-born political journal *The Spark* (established in December 1962) worked hard for connecting the conference of Addis Ababa with the previous Pan-African platforms established by Ghana.<sup>545</sup>

Nkrumah tried also to renew the IAS platform in order to influence the works of Addis Ababa. First of all, he tried to deepen the relations with Tubman.<sup>546</sup> Then, he also attempted to call a new IAS conference at Tunis in late 1962, but he failed. Finally, just before the Addis Ababa conference, Ghana celebrated the “African Freedom Day”, the anniversary of the IAS conference. By celebrating it, Nkrumah wanted to remind to Africans that Ghana had hosted the first ever pan-African organization in the continent. In

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<sup>545</sup> See, for instance, “Africa! The Clarion Call”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 2-4(1963), pp.2-14 and 35; A.K. Barden, “The evolution of African unity”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 2-4(1963), pp.20-32; “Towards Continental Unity” *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 5-7(1963), pp.1-2.

<sup>546</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 305.

such a way, he tried to link any new organization coming out of the Addis Ababa conference to the IAS experience.<sup>547</sup>

In the meantime, Nkrumah also launched a campaign to explain in detail his vision of African Unity. The model he wanted to promote at Addis Ababa was a continental union of States with common institutions, common currency and common foreign policy. The proposed union of states was to be based on a strong central body to coordinate the policies of its members. Plans for establishing only an economical union were also discarded, as the political side was supposed to lead the economical.

The concrete elaboration of these proposals was the product of both Nkrumah's thoughts and the work of other Ghanaian radicals. The BAA had already published in September 1962 the pamphlet "Awakening Africa" in order to present Ghana's new Pan-African policy after Kulungugu. The booklet - distributed through the BAA channels - became the first draft of the Ghanaian proposals for Addis Ababa.<sup>548</sup> It included reflections on the heritage of the 1958 IAS Conference and on the need for a common continental foreign policy. Furthermore, it presented a clear attack against the so-called "neo-colonial" states in the wake of the Kulungugu events.<sup>549</sup> The author of part of the pamphlet was A.K. Barden, even if, according to Červenka, the real author was Ikoku.<sup>550</sup>

Barden himself had an important role in the preparation for the Addis Ababa conference. His articles on African unity were a constant presence on the BAA press but equally important was his work among the BAA contacts. Before Nkrumah submitted the first official proposal for Addis Ababa, Barden worked through his channels to win the favors of as many Africans as possible, being them freedom fighters or not. Some of Barden's letters from this period show Ghana's position on African unity as it was presented at Addis Ababa. For instance, in a letter to a Liberian supporter dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 1962, Barden introduced the core of Nkrumah's unity policy:

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<sup>547</sup> AGPL, BAA/429, "Speech by Mr. A.K. Barden, director of Bureau of African Affairs on the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Africa Freedom Day, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1963". See also A.K. Barden, "Why African Freedom Day" *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 2-4(1963), pp.37-38.

<sup>548</sup> See Review of "Awakening Africa" in *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 1(1963), p.40. For a quotation from "Awakening Africa" see "The evolution of African unity", *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 2-4(1963), pp.20-21.

<sup>549</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 317.

<sup>550</sup> *Ibidem*, Červenka quoted in Thompson.

“On the question of African unity, we the people of Ghana are not Radicals, Idealists or Moderates. We are cautious realists who believe that it is only upon the foundation of political unity that scientific, economic and cultural advancements can be built. We also believe that any attempt at Pan-Africanism by means of economic association, as some so-called moderates believe, will subject that unity to the strains and stresses of internal political instability and disruption, and external collective imperialism and neo-colonialism. A study of the Organisation of American States, the Common Market, the Outer six and the Warsaw Pact countries reveals that all these associations have been based first and foremost on a measure of political cohesion either explicitly enunciated or implicitly conceived”.<sup>551</sup>

Just a few days before the coup in Togo, Nkrumah officially presented its project to the heads of the Independent African States, explaining in detail its structure.<sup>552</sup> Nkrumah’s proposal was a union of states run by an Upper House (with two representatives from each state) and a Lower House (with proportional representation). Interestingly, the union was supposed to be called Union of African States, a clear way to present the new body as the heir of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union project. Still, Nkrumah wanted also to reassure the moderate African states that the new union would not deprive its members of their sovereignty. In his speech, he claimed: “This proposal does not in any way interfere with the internal constitutional arrangements of any State”. Moreover, he wanted to be clear that he did not want to rule the organization. For this reason, he proposed the Central African Republic as the best seat for the government.<sup>553</sup>

In January, Nkrumah sent emissaries all over the continent in order to discuss a model of charter close to his position. At the time, a charter based on Ethiopia’s and Liberia’s designs was ready to be presented at the conference. Thus, the Ghanaian President wanted to prepare an alternative draft charter before May.<sup>554</sup>

Nkrumah appointed a new ambassador to Addis Ababa in order to be sure to have the right man to submit the charter before the conference and to make Ghana’s case

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<sup>551</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BG-Liberia, Letter, Barden to T. Doe, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1962.

<sup>552</sup> Quotation of Nkrumah’s proposal to the heads of Independent African States (1<sup>st</sup> January 1963) can be found in the text of the lecture on Nkrumahism held at Winneba the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 1963 by Gaituah. See AGPL, BAA/437, Lecture on Nkrumahism by Comrade Gaituah, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1963.

<sup>553</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>554</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, 318.

convincingly. The appointee was Ebenezer Debrah, a name suggested by Barden. Debrah was even sent to Winneba before going to Ethiopia in order to be tested on his ideological convictions.<sup>555</sup> In such way, Nkrumah could be sure to have a true “Nkrumahist” ambassador in Addis, ready to work for African unity. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the AAS had been once again bypassed by the Bureau.<sup>556</sup> On 28 April 1963, Debrah presented to Selassie the Ghanaian official proposal for the “Creation of a Political Union of African States”.<sup>557</sup>

Just before the conference, Nkrumah made his last move. He published his most famous book, *Africa Must Unite*.<sup>558</sup> It was, *de facto*, a *vademecum* of all his thoughts on African unity, including his proposal for the establishment of an effective Continental Union Government. Interestingly, the book included also many references on Ghana, such as its road to independence and its path towards socialism.

On May 24th, Nkrumah officially presented his ideas at the conference. First of all, he cleared the air from any possible misunderstanding. His vision of a united Africa was not an association of economic cooperation. The development of Africa needed a strong political basis: “The social and economic development of Africa will come only within the political kingdom, not the other way around”.<sup>559</sup> For those who knew Nkrumah’s speeches and writings, this sentence was clearly referring to a phrase pronounced during Ghana’s struggle for freedom. Indeed, it was paraphrasing his famous statement “Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all else shall be added unto you!”. Once again, as it was the case with the book *Africa Must Unite*, the Ghanaian experience was put virtually at the service of Africa.

Despite Nkrumah’s efforts, the conference was a political disaster for Ghana. Nkrumah’s proposals were only backed openly by Uganda. Algeria, Mali, UAR and Tanzania supported to a certain extent African unity, but none of their leaders backed

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<sup>555</sup> Interviews with K.B. Asante and D. Bosumtwi-Sam.

<sup>556</sup> At the time, another diplomat had already been selected by the AAS for the post of ambassador in Ethiopia. He was even waiting at the airport for a flight to Addis Ababa, when the BAA informed the Secretariat that Debrah had already been appointed to the post. Interviews with K.B. Asante.

<sup>557</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p. 319.

<sup>558</sup> Nkrumah, K., *Africa Must Unite*, Heinemann, London, 1963

<sup>559</sup> Z. Červenka, *The Organization of African Unity*, p.9.

officially Nkrumah's proposals.<sup>560</sup> On the contrary, many leaders introduced the question of the respect for sovereignties, attacking directly or indirectly Nkrumah's Ghana. African unity at a political level was rejected.<sup>561</sup> None of the African countries apart from Ghana and Uganda was willing to sacrifice its sovereignty for a continental entity. From this point of view, the OAU was based on a concept of Pan-Africanism far from the one imagined by Nkrumah and Padmore.

The OAU not only rejected the project for a political union but it supported the creation of regional regroupings.<sup>562</sup> Nkrumah strongly opposed this decision. Indeed, he had always opposed regionalism (and he had been criticized even by Padmore on this matter) as he thought that such projects would have slowed the process of unity of the continent. Moreover, he had always considered such projects as Trojan-horses of the old colonial powers for controlling the African territory through small and weak federations. From Nkrumah's point of view, the case of the Central African Federation had proved him right. The OAU was exactly going in the opposite direction. For instance, the OAU sponsored the establishment of the East African Federation, a project which Nkrumah considered only as the product of a colonial plan.

Nkrumah lost another fundamental battle in the quest for African liberation. This time, the attack against Nkrumah was clear and direct. The OAU established a Liberation Committee, made of nine members, in order to coordinate all the efforts of its members in the struggle for African freedom. Ghana was completely excluded from the committee, even if Accra had been for years one of the main shelters for African freedom fighters. The members were: Algeria, Ethiopia, Guinea, Congo (Leopoldville), Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, the UAR and Uganda. The headquarters were in Dar-Es Salaam. The official reason for Ghana's exclusion was that its territory was far from the frontlines of the Liberation struggle. In reality, the reason was merely political, since also other members of the committee were indeed far from the frontline. The other members of the OAU wanted to reduce the influence of Ghana on African liberation movements. With the Liberation

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<sup>560</sup> Z. Červenka, *The Organization of African Unity*, p.9.

<sup>561</sup> See I. Wallerstein, *Africa: the politics of unity, an analysis of a contemporary social movement*, Random House, New York, 1967, p.111.

<sup>562</sup> Z. Červenka, *The Organization of African Unity*, pp. 139-169 on regional regroupings.

Committee, everything was bound to be coordinated from above and the center of the operation was bound to be far from Accra. According to Thompson, the mind behind the choice of the nine members was Keita and the exclusion of Ghana was also the result of the protests of several freedom fighters against the methods of Barden and his BAA.<sup>563</sup>

The OAU was nothing like what Nkrumah had planned. Still, he could not attack it directly. He was politically too weak at the time for rejecting the whole organization. He had to act differently, by strengthening a Ghanaian independent liberation policy and by struggling against the two main products of the OAU: regional regroupings and the liberation committee. For these reasons, the day after the conference the entire Ghanaian machinery was set in motion.

#### **5.4. Ghana's Pan-African Policy after the OAU: the Leading Role of the BAA**

After the ratification of the OAU charter, Nkrumah had to reconsider completely its Pan-African policy. The liberation Committee became a new rival in the African scene. Ghana had to multiply its efforts to attract politically the African freedom fighters on its side. Moreover, Nkrumah had also to counteract the influence of the OAU in the struggle for African unity. In this new phase, the Ghanaian radicals gained even more power inside the state. The BAA emerged once again as increasingly influential in the foreign policy machinery.

In 1963, the AAS, the BAA, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs discussed on how to manage their relations to cope with the new political phase. With the appointment of Kojo Botsio as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs in March 1963, the terms of the balance between the BAA, the AAS and the Minister itself were put under revision. Botsio called a meeting between him, Dei-Anang (head of AAS), Barden (head of the BAA) and Kwesi

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<sup>563</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 327. Once again, however, Thompson fails in producing sources to back his statements, which seem based primarily on the personal opinions of his informants.



Armah (one of the key figures of the Ghanaian diplomacy) in order to discuss on the tasks of the three institutions.<sup>564</sup> As Armah himself wrote in his *Peace Without Power*, the meeting had two main effects. First of all, the Minister gained back some power on African affairs from the AAS. Secondly, the BAA was confirmed as a body completely independent in matters of African liberation and the other two institutions were called to support its activities using all the means at their disposal.

In the meantime, the Bureau got involved in the final discussion on the signing of the OAU charter. Barden and Habib Niang both opposed it.<sup>565</sup> Indeed, for radicals like them, the new organization could deprive Ghana of most of its influence towards the liberation movements. Moreover, the OAU was considered a loose association, not the kind of continental government that was the goal of Ghana's Pan-African policy. Even if Nkrumah finally decided to sign the charter, he also demanded the Bureau to intensify its activities to strengthen Ghana's influence in Africa.

As a result of the meeting between Botsio, Dei-Anang, Barden, and Armah, the BAA had strengthened its position toward the AAS and the Ministry. Thus, Barden informed the diplomatic staff of the AAS of the new political phase and of the increasingly important role the BAA was going to play in Africa. For this purpose, Barden gave a speech at a meeting of the Ghanaian ambassadors of African countries.<sup>566</sup> This speech was crucial. For the first time, Barden was directly explaining to the staff of the diplomatic missions of Ghana the work of the Bureau and he was asking for their support. First of all, he underlined the "liaison" with the AAS, even if the two institutions had "partially divorced". Then he presented Ghana's new approach to the use of violence in the liberation process, outlining the role played by the BAA in supporting armed rebellions. The message to the missions was clear. The diplomats should not interfere with the operations of the BAA. On the contrary, Barden asked the diplomats to support the missions of the BAA at all costs,

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<sup>564</sup> K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.29.

<sup>565</sup> They assumed that if Nkrumah did not sign it, then the OUA could collapse. In W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 322. Habib Niang was a Senegalese Marxist who worked with the Bureau and was in close contact with Nkrumah.

<sup>566</sup> AGPL, BAA/430, "Speech by A.K. Barden, Chairman/Director of Bureau of African Affairs to the Meeting of African Ambassadors", undated.

even if they included military operations in dependent or independent African states [italics by the author]:

In areas where the liberation movements are engaged in paramilitary activities, we do our very best to get at the actual nature of their struggle and give whatever assistance we think we should give to ensure victory. We discourage bloody fight between Africans. *We do not however rule out the struggle against Africans who represent colonialist and neo-colonialists interests.* We always try to use our good offices to settle differences between political factions. [...] Where situations are even dormant we do our very best to stimulate activity and organization and stress the crisis involving Africa today. Practically every day we do our very best to gain insight into the organizational problems involved in building a free united Africa and learn the need for new and specialized approaches to different situations in Africa. We always do our best to accumulate many techniques for developing the African struggle. The most important discovery we made is that the great wave for the total liberation of Africa is gathering everywhere and *practically every African country is willing to take up arms against colonial rule.*

Interestingly, Barden reminded the ambassadors of the constant communications between his office and Flagstaff House. The BAA depended only on the Office of the President and *not* on the AAS:

[...] we always insist that you should consult us on the refuge question. [...] I must state that it is necessary for you to rely on us in solving most of the intricate political situations in Africa, because we are almost always involved in every phase of the African struggle. You must not forget that we always discuss every situation with Osagyefo and take guidance from him.

With the message to the ambassadors, Barden claimed a leading role in the new political phase for the BAA. The AAS was called to support the Bureau in the fulfillment of its duties. Nkrumah himself had given Barden this power.

With a renovated strength, the Bureau was ready to fulfill the mission of extending Nkrumah's influence in Africa. The "Pan-African" institution had two immediate targets to achieve. First of all, it had to sabotage the East African Federation, the very symbol of

African regroupings and also a strong political instrument in the hands of Nkrumah's rival Nyerere. Secondly, it had to work for weakening the influence of the OAU on the liberation struggle (through the Liberation Committee) by reaffirming Ghana's presence on the battlefields. In both missions, the Bureau could use all the political strength acquired in Ghana, counting on the support of the other institutions.

### **5.5. The Bureau and the Work against the East African Federation**

After the establishment of the OAU, Nkrumah demanded Barden to accelerate the work against the East African Federation. It was one of the crucial points of Nkrumah's new strategy in Africa against regional regroupings. At the time, the BAA had already set up a mission to accomplish this target. Barden's man Bosumtwi-Sam had already been appointed high commissioner in Uganda to work against the federation. Thus, after the endorsement of the OAU to the Federation, he was asked to multiply his efforts to sabotage the project in the shortest time possible. Bosumtwi-Sam's mission is as a perfect example of the work of the BAA in this period. It is also one of the most interesting cases of "political appointment" of diplomatic staff in the history of Nkrumah's Ghana.

Ghana was officially opposing any project of regional federation. According to Nkrumah, the biggest danger for Africa was its "balkanization". From his point of view, projects like the East African Federation were only obstacles towards the establishment of a Continental Union Government. Nkrumah considered it similar to the Central African Federation. Quite the opposite, his UAS project had always been presented as the basis for a continental union.

Nkrumah also thought that the East African Federation was in reality a project backed by the UK on a model of federation which dated back to colonial times. Such a project was believed to having been designed by the British to defend their interests and the ones of the white settlers in the three territories. These were the reasons why Nkrumah decided to work

against the project.<sup>567</sup> On the other hand, Nkrumah's detractors thought that the real reason behind his opposition to the project was his fear of being overshadowed by Nyerere and Kenyatta.<sup>568</sup>

Nkrumah and Barden had been already aware of Nyerere, Kenyatta and Obote's plans before 1963. The project, indeed, had begun to have a concrete shape after the establishment of the East African Common Service Organization in 1961, which was inheriting the functions of the former East African High Commission of 1948.<sup>569</sup> Nkrumah had already criticized this project. The next step was to have a man on the ground to work against the federation.

Barden convinced Nkrumah to give this mission to David Bosumtwi-Sam, at the time executive Secretary of the BAA. His "political" appointment was the most evident proof of the power of the Bureau.<sup>570</sup> At the time, the Bureau had a strong influence on Ghana's foreign policy and also on the running of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the AAS. Thanks to the daily and personal contact between Barden and Nkrumah, the BAA could also extend this influence to the appointments of diplomats. The BAA could not appoint directly its own ambassadors. However, Barden had a great influence on the appointment of diplomats of the AAS. He could recommend names or he could point out those who were not fulfilling a successful Pan-African policy, pushing for their removal.<sup>571</sup> Debrah was one of the ambassadors "recommended" by Barden. The BAA used this type of influence for the appointment of David Bosumtwi Sam as High Commissioner in Uganda. The ex-executive secretary of the BAA became soon the key men of the Bureau in East Africa.<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>567</sup> Interview with K.B. Asante, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

<sup>568</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1692, report "The Influence of Ghana in East Africa", Stather Hunt (British High Commissioner in Uganda) to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

<sup>569</sup> E.H. Kloman Jr, *African Unification Movements*, p.398-400.

<sup>570</sup> As a matter of fact, as any other political appointee, Bosumtwi-Sam was sent to Winneba to "check" on his ideological conviction. Interviews K.B. Asante and Bosumtwi-Sam. As Armah underlines, the one of Bosumtwi-Sam was the Bureau's prominent ambassadorial appointment. K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.29. From this point of view, it can be considered as the most important political appointment in the diplomatic corps ever occurred in Ghana.

<sup>571</sup> Interviews with K.B. Asante and D. Bosumtwi-Sam.

<sup>572</sup> As Armah underlines, the one of Bosumtwi-Sam was the Bureau's prominent ambassadorial appointment. K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.29. From this point of view it can be considered as the most important political appointment in the diplomatic corps ever occurred in Ghana.

Bosumtwi-Sam's mission in East Africa began in October 1962, some months before the official launch of the project of the East African Federation.<sup>573</sup> The first part of the mission was to establish contacts with Obote and his party and to work for deepening the relations between Ghana and Uganda. The second part consisted in convincing Obote to withdraw his country from the EAF. It began after June 5<sup>th</sup> 1963, when Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika officially announced the plan for the Federation, by signing a declaration of intent.<sup>574</sup> The EAF received the endorsement of the OAU and Bosumtwi-Sam's work against the Federation became a priority.

Of the three states involved in the project of federation, Uganda was the easiest one for Ghana to attract politically. The ex-administrative secretary of the BAA had begun working within the UPC ranks in order to support the most radical elements of the party. The Ghanaian money and the personal relationships built by the Ghanaian High Commissioner in Kampala proved quite successful. He became soon a friend of Obote and he got very close to some UPC party members.<sup>575</sup> Thanks to these close relationships, he could extend almost immediately the political influence of Ghana to Uganda. One of the first ways to do that was by sponsoring a pro-Ghanaian and anti-British propaganda.

In September 1963, the British High Commissioner in Kampala D.W. Stather Hunt, reported to London that Bosumtwi-Sam had worked immediately after his arrival to support the establishment of a political paper: the *African Pilot*. Created by the UPC radical Paul Muwanga, the paper was published both in English and Luganda. Stather Hunt had no doubt that Ghana was behind this anti-British and pro-Ghanaian publication. Indeed, Paul Muwanga was not only the editor of the *African Pilot*, but also the agent of distribution of *The Spark* in Uganda. Moreover, the motto of the paper was the same of CPP's: "Forward Ever Backward Never".<sup>576</sup>

In the meantime, Bosumtwi-Sam kept working within the UPC party ranks and the Ugandan Trade Unions. His mission was to attract politically as many Ugandans as

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<sup>573</sup> He first came to Uganda on the celebration of Uganda's independence on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1962. Interviews with Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

<sup>574</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 331.

<sup>575</sup> Interview to Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

<sup>576</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1692, report "The Influence of Ghana in East Africa", Stather Hunt (British High Commissioner in Uganda) to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

possible on Ghana's side. He also sponsored the political model of Ghana. The aim of the Ghanaian High Commissioner was to attract Kampala towards Nkrumah's socialist and Pan-Africanist positions. In September 1963, the British High Commissioner commented Bosumtwi-Sam's work in Uganda: "He has made strenuous and successful efforts to gain influence with the Youth Wing of the ruling Uganda People's Congress and frequently appears on UPC platform, in one occasion with Dr. Obote. At a Press conference he gave a few months ago he spoke in favor of one-party rule for Uganda on Ghanaian lines".<sup>577</sup>

Bosumtwi-Sam was not acting alone, anyway. At the time, several agents of the BAA were working in Uganda both to "sabotage" the federation and to connect the BAA with freedom fighters of the East African area. The mission against the East African federation was planned to have two main effects. On one side, it could provoke the failure of a dangerous political project. On the other, it could damage the power held by Nyerere's Tanganyika as the seat of the Liberation Committee.

A net of agents, both Ghanaians and indigenous, was sent by Barden in the three countries involved. The first references to this net date back to October 1963. Barden, Ofori-Bah, and David Bosumtwi-Sam were the minds behind it.<sup>578</sup> The latter, however, had immediately to regret his decision. In late 1963, the first BAA agents reached Uganda. Being asked not to reveal to anyone outside the Bureau the details of their mission, they did not even inform Bosumtwi-Sam. Even worse, they spied on him and they later accused the Ghanaian diplomat of not fulfilling a "Nkrumahist" policy in Uganda. The High Commissioner was surprised of this behavior because Barden had sent the agents after consulting him on the matter. The question was finally solved by Obote who expelled the agents from Uganda.<sup>579</sup>

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<sup>577</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1692, report "The Influence of Ghana in East Africa", Stather Hunt (British High Commissioner in Uganda) to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

<sup>578</sup> AGPL, BAA/402, Letter, Ofori-Bah to Barden, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1963. In the letter, Ofori Bah wrote to Barden, at the time hosted in the Ghanaian embassy in Kampala, and he suggested to create a net of agents in order to keep the embassy far from the dangers of being involved in the secret missions of the BAA. Ofori Bah wrote: "If I may offer any view at all, I would like to suggest for your consideration that in view of the situation with regard to the safety of our Embassy staff in Kampala, that they work through indigenous agents and other channels and less by themselves. In the present circumstances, it would be safer and certainly far more discreet to establish in East Africa a network of agents. I am merely selling this idea but I am sure you and David know better".

<sup>579</sup> Interview to Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

At the time, Barden himself travelled incognito around East and Central Africa in order to coordinate the activities of the Bureau there.<sup>580</sup> While Ghanaian agents were being sent to Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, Barden acted also through the press to back their mission against the federation. For instance, in December 1963, *Voice of Africa* published one article against the EAF.<sup>581</sup> The article made reference specifically to Kenya, the seat of Bosumtwi-Sam's next mission.

In late 1963, after one year and half in Uganda, the Ghanaian High Commissioner could be satisfied with the work done. Obote was getting closer to Nkrumah's position and the two presidents had signed a strict political alliance. Even the UPC had proved very close to the CPP political model. The proof of Uganda's close relationship with Ghana was the endorsement made by Obote to Nkrumah's proposal at the OAU. No other countries apart from Kampala had showed a clear support to the Pan-Africanist plans of the Ghanaian President. Obote's close alliance with Nkrumah led also the Ugandan President to increase his opposition to the federation.

Bosumtwi-Sam's next mission was in Kenya, where he was transferred in 1964. Even there, he had to sabotage the EAF and to promote the Ghanaian political model. In January, another article concerning Nkrumah's opposition to the East African Federation was published in *Voice of Africa*.<sup>582</sup> In the article, Nkrumah was once again rejecting all the accuses of plotting against the East African governments to let the federation project fail. Still, in the meantime, in Nairobi, Bosumtwi-Sam was replicating the work he had done in Uganda. The work of the diplomat included the sponsorship of the one-party model of state, the same Ghana itself adopted in January 1964.<sup>583</sup>

In reality, Bosumtwi-Sam's did not have to work hard to break the last resistances of Nyerere and Kenyatta to keep the idea of the Federation alive. Already in the first half of 1964, the project could be considered failed. Obote's criticisms had finally worked in breaking an already weak plan.

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<sup>580</sup> AGPL, BAA/402, Letter, Ofori-Bah to Barden, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1963.

<sup>581</sup> "Africa periscope: Kenya's Imperialist Paper Sunday Post", *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 12(1963), pp.29-32 and 36.

<sup>582</sup> "East Africa and Dr. Nkrumah", *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 1(1964), .pp.38-40.

<sup>583</sup> Interview with Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

Ghana could not be considered the only responsible of the failure of the EAF. Bosumtwi-Sam had probably played a secondary role in this failure. However, his mission proved that the Bureau could effectively interfere with the politics of other African independent states in order to support Nkrumah's Pan-African policy. Barden had also proved that he could extend his control to the Ghanaian embassies to the point of choosing the diplomats. Moreover, he proved that he could make use of a net of BAA agents which was already wide and strong. Bosumtwi-Sam had been also able to export Nkrumah's political ideas and the CPP model to another African country, namely Uganda. He did the same – but with less success - in Kenya.

## **5.6. The Struggle for Influence in Africa and in Ghana after the Establishment of the OAU**

After fighting against the East African Federation, the BAA had to fulfill the other important mission of the new course of Ghana's Pan-African policy: counteracting the influence of the Liberation Committee. At first, Nkrumah tried to obtain a seat at the Committee. When he failed, he decided to work outside traditional diplomacy, involving the BAA to regain the prestige lost by Ghana towards the liberation movements after the Addis Ababa conference. This policy was not unchallenged. On the contrary, after the OAU, the clashes between Ghana and its rivals increased.

At the OAU, Nkrumah had suffered the hostility of the majority of the African moderate states. He had been cut out from any important commission created by the new body. Moreover, he also failed to create a special commission for discussing a path for establishing a Continental Union Government. In the summer of 1963, all the Ghanaian diplomats worked to support this project, but every effort was vain. Again, only Uganda supported Nkrumah's proposal.

Even the relationship between Ghana and the new Liberation Committee (or "Committee of Nine") proved complicated since the start. At first, at the OAU conference,



Nkrumah had even welcomed the establishment of the Committee.<sup>584</sup> Then, after Ghana had been excluded, Nkrumah strongly criticized the management of the new body. In reality, he was worried of losing influence at the advantage of Nyerere's Tanganyika, since Dar-Es-Salaam became the seat of the Committee. Obviously, he could not accept that African freedom fighters could be attracted far from Accra.

Initially, after the conference, Nkrumah pushed for having Ghana represented in the committee. Bosumtwi-Sam tried to use the good relationship with Obote to reserve one of the three positions of undersecretary, but he failed.<sup>585</sup> Thus, Nkrumah abandoned any hope to control the body and he launched a campaign against the committee itself, criticizing it constantly in the Ghanaian press and the *Spark*.<sup>586</sup> Moreover, he also refused to send the committee any fund, even if he had promised differently at the OAU. Instead, he instructed the Bureau to keep track of all the activities of the body through the freedom fighters hosted at the Centre.<sup>587</sup>

Since the summer of 1963, Nkrumah invested huge resources to support liberation movements in Southern Africa and in the Portuguese colonies. The BAA activities had been expanded in both the areas in order to counteract the increasing influence of the liberation committee. There, the Bureau pushed for the unity between nationalist parties of the same countries and tried to find any radical movement which was willing to endorse Pan-Africanism as part of their political program. As a result, parties like Neto's MPLA and Cabral's PAIGC deepened their relations with Accra and, in exchange, they received strong support.

In August 1963, Cabral spent 15 days in Accra, where he also met AK Barden.<sup>588</sup> There, the Bissau-Guinean leader signed a pact of collaboration with Ghana. The Bureau showed immediately its goodwill by supporting Cabral's criticism of a speech made by

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<sup>584</sup> See M. Wolfers, *Politics in the Organization of African Unity*, Methuen, London, 1976, p.167.

<sup>585</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 328.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>587</sup> The BAA was informed about every communication between the liberation movements and the Liberation Committee. In some cases, these types of communication were between the offices of representation of the liberation movements in Accra and those in Dar Es-Salaam which had become the new headquarters of nationalist parties in Africa. Similarly, liberation movements in Accra and in Cairo were exchanging information.

<sup>588</sup> "Cabral Leaves", *Ghanaian Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1963. He left Accra on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August after a period of 15 days.

Salazar in the same period.<sup>589</sup> The move proved successful as Cabral publicly showed appreciation for the concrete help provided by Accra and, instead, criticized the lack of response of the Liberation Committee. In the press release of the PAIGC, he stated:

The bureaucratization of the aid to the nationalists risks comprising the efficacy and reasonableness of this aid. We are convinced that African States have to help immediately the fighting organizations, like our Party, by giving us financial and material help in the fight and by helping to form the cadres. Internationally, the time has come for the anti-colonialist forces to give us concrete help, something more than pious intentions.<sup>590</sup>

Even if Cabral did not quote Ghana and Guinea in his speech, he was clearly making reference to the material help granted by them.

In the same period, even the MPLA requested direct aid from Ghana. Since July 1963, the Angolan party (based in Brazzaville but with an important office also in Leopoldville) was working with the Liberation Committee in their “Mission des Bons Offices” at Dar Es-Salaam. In November, despite officially working under the wing of the Committee, Neto wrote directly to Nkrumah for assistance, showing in practice how strong was the link between his party and Accra.<sup>591</sup>

Nkrumah was winning a political battle. He had showed that his influence in the continent was not over. In Southern Africa, his rivals had failed to cut out Accra from the battlefields. The political exchanges between Accra and the frontline kept being as strong as before. Ghana was also taking advantage of the rivalry between moderate African states in the OAU. Radical liberation movements kept looking at Accra as a source of practical help and ideological inspiration.

Apparently, those who had reported Nkrumah politically “dead” after Addis Ababa proved wrong. At the time, wise personalities understood that Nkrumah’s failure at the OAU could be turned into a political victory. The British High Commissioner at Kampala

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<sup>589</sup> “Bureau: United Action against Salazar Justified”, *Ghanaian Times*, 16<sup>th</sup> August 1963.

<sup>590</sup> AGPL, BAA/430, “Press Release on the Speech of Mr. Salazar”, Amilcar Cabral, undated.

<sup>591</sup> AGPL, BAA/378, Letter, Neto to Nkrumah, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1963.

was one of them. In September 1963 he presented his thoughts to the Colonial Relations Office, warning of the dangers of underestimating Nkrumah's political strength:

"I have seen reports from a number of commentators which suggests that the Addis Ababa Conference was a defeat for Nkrumah. [...] I maintain, with respect, that if this was a defeat for Nkrumah it was a defeat more valuable than many victories. By the ordinary man in Africa, and in particular by the young men, he will be remembered as the man who said 'Africa must unite'; and though the old fuddy-duddies and Imperialist agents voted him down, and put water in the wine of his generous enthusiasm, his followers believe that his ideas will soon win through. Nkrumah is not interested in carrying with him Houphouet-Boigny in his gold and malachite palace, nor the Mwami of Burundi in his night club. His appeal is to the fierce young secondary school leaver out of a job, the Youth Winger or the struggling trade unionist. He knows that, in Africa, nothing succeeds like excess. [...] *We have a formidable opponent, equipped with every advantage short of nuclear weapons*".<sup>592</sup>

Ghana had clearly lost most of its political appeal towards moderate governments. However, the Bureau had worked successfully in improving its influence towards liberation movements and radical governments.

In this period, the BAA kept track of the radical organizations that backed Nkrumah's claims for African unity. The office also received suggestions on new solutions to proceed in that direction.<sup>593</sup> In the meantime, the Bureau kept using all the propaganda instruments (The Spark, Voice of Africa, Radio Ghana, etc.) for spreading Nkrumah's message throughout Africa. In November 1963, Nkrumah himself wrote in VOA an article to attack the Liberation Committee and the OAU as a whole.<sup>594</sup> According to the Ghanaian leader,

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<sup>592</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1692, report "The Influence of Ghana in East Africa", Stather Hunt (British High Commissioner in Uganda) to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

<sup>593</sup> See, for instance, AGPL, BAA/378, Letter, Maouhamadou Phogkou Nankam (Bafang) to Nkrumah (and other 16 heads of state), 19<sup>th</sup> October 1963 and Letter, Neto to Nkrumah, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1963.

<sup>594</sup> Nkrumah, K., "Since Addis Ababa", *Voice of Africa*, vol.3, 11(1963), pp.39-40. Quoting from the article: "The tempo of development in Africa, since Addis Ababa, has been such that this Charter is already being overtaken by events. It has become clear that we must move forward quickly, with a united voice, to a Union Government of Africa. In accordance with the spirit of the Charter, the African States have been able to present a unified front in the United Nations and at other international conferences. [...] It has been achieved as a result of tedious consultations involving long delays and even the risk of failure to agree. Our actions would have been swifter, bolder and more effective if there had been in existence strong, central political machinery for dealing with the wider problems affecting Africa as a whole".

the organization had proved inefficient to deal with African liberation. At the end of 1963, even A.K. Barden criticized the OAU as a “loose association”, infiltrated by “imperialist” agents.<sup>595</sup>

In the meantime, Ghana’s political rivals were making their moves. The press in the Western World and in moderate African countries campaigned strongly against Nkrumah’s government. Nkrumah’s project of a continental government was often presented as a Trojan-horse for the communist penetration in Africa. The Ghanaian President was openly accused of plotting for taking the power in the continent as a dictator.

After the OAU, Nkrumah showed that his political net was still wide. The BAA had also proved that it could counteract – to some extent - the influence of the Liberation Committee. It was time to move the battle on the field of propaganda.

## **5.7. The Institute of Winneba and the Political Press between 1963 and 1964**

While Nkrumah was launching a renovated Pan-African policy, radicalization gained momentum in Ghana. Nkrumahism became the official ideology of the state and Ghana was definitely turned into an “Nkrumahist” state. The “shift to the left” - began in 1961 and developed after the Kulungugu affair - reached its final evolution in January 1964 when Ghana was transformed into a One-Party state. Every chain of the propaganda machinery was put in motion to spread Nkrumahism and the so-called “African revolution” both in Ghana and in Africa. The CPP was promoted more than ever as a model nationalist party and the Ghanaian state itself became an example for all the radicals in Africa. Nkrumahism was proposed as an ideology for the whole continent.

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<sup>595</sup> AGPL, BAA/430, “New Year Message” by A.K. Barden, undated. Quoting from the text: “It will be folly on our part to imagine that the Organisation of African Unity is functioning smoothly. Border disputes, assistance to liberation movements and attitude to economic reconstruction have imposed strains on the Organisation. And so has the new imperialist strategy of paying lip service to African unity while using this cover to impose on some African States arrangements which are fundamentally opposed to African unity.”

In this new political struggle, the BAA – a stronghold of radicals - was again on the frontline. Barden activated the Bureau’s propaganda machinery to spread the Nkrumahist message among the freedom fighters. Moreover, he worked for updating the course at the Institute of Winneba to the new political course. As a consequence of this change of pace in the radicalization of Ghana, the Western world began to track every move of the Bureau and any activity organized at Winneba, while promoting a strong campaign against Nkrumah’s alleged communist plots to rule Africa under a Soviet-backed dictatorship. Since 1963 a sort of “propaganda war” between Ghana and the western world exploded.

Between late 1963 and 1964, Nkrumahism gained its final shape and it was adopted as the official ideology of the state. The ideology had been quoted for the first time back in 1960. However, only after Kulungugu it developed into a proper political philosophy. The BAA led this phase thanks to its propaganda machinery. Indeed, The Spark became the platform to discuss and spread out the Nkrumahist ideology.<sup>596</sup> In 1964, all the articles of The Spark on Nkrumahism were published by The Spark itself, in a booklet called “Some essential features of Nkrumahism”.<sup>597</sup>

Finally, in 1964, Nkrumah published a book on Nkrumahism. It was his famous “Consciencism”.<sup>598</sup> According to Thompson, the Bureau was once again behind the publication. Indeed, the radicals Habib Niang and Massaga - two of the most influential refugees under the wings of the Bureau - were probably involved.<sup>599</sup>

In the meantime, the Kwame Nkrumah Institute of Economics and Political Science had already begun teaching Nkrumahism to its students, both Ghanaians and foreigners. In the latter case, the aim of the institution was to form an intelligentsia that could spread Nkrumahism in other African countries. The new ideology became one of the main subjects taught at Institute.

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<sup>596</sup> The Spark had been established in December 1962 and edited by the radical Kofi Batsa. The name of the magazine was a clear reference to Lenin’s newspaper “Iskra”, published in early 1900s. Unlike VOA, this publication was made primarily for the distribution in the Ghanaian territory.

<sup>597</sup> VV.AA., *Some Essential Features of Nkrumahism – a compilation of articles from “The Spark”*, The Spark Publications, Accra 1964.

<sup>598</sup> On *Consciencism* see also S.G. Ikoku (Julius Sago), *Le Ghana de Nkrumah*, pp.81-83.

<sup>599</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.293. Thompson states that Consciencism “had long been written probably by Habib Niang and Massaga”. However, he does not quote any source for this statement. Habib Niang, a Senegalese communist, was one of Nkrumah’s most close and influential advisers. Massaga, who was close to Nkrumah as well as Niang, was the head of the UPC (Cameroon) radical wing.

A whole course on Nkrumahism was included in the two- year's diploma in Political Science. Even freedom fighters could attend it. The course included lessons on such as "Party Loyalty", "Supremacy of the Party", "African Unity", "Nkrumah's Political Ideology", "Collective Responsibilities", "Nkrumah's Un-comprising Stand Against Imperialism and Colonialism", all starting with an introductory review of Nkrumah's life and its political background.<sup>600</sup> The Institute offered also lessons on constitutional matters and on the functioning of The Ghana Young Pioneers. At the institute, Ghana and its ruling party were clearly presented as a political model. Nkrumah himself had stressed out the CPP model in "Consciencism".<sup>601</sup> The Institute was actualizing Nkrumah's indications; it was sponsoring the Ghanaian institutional and political models in order to influence the parties of the freedom fighters who attended the courses.

Even the shift to a one-party system was explained in a dedicated lesson. This solution was presented as the natural evolution of the African political system rather than as a shift towards dictatorship.<sup>602</sup> The first lesson on the one-party system took place on 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1964, at Cape Coast and was taught by A.K. Gaituah. The lecturer claimed: "The chief, his councilors and the people constitute a sort of one party in the state, everybody in the state belonging to this party".<sup>603</sup>

Ghanaian diplomats and BAA agents were also called to support the shift towards the one-party system abroad. For instance, David Bosumtwi-Sam - at the time ambassador in Kenya - explained the new political shift to both Ugandans and Kenyans. In the latter case, Kenyatta himself invited the diplomat to talk about the new political system. Unlike Obote, the Kenyan leader was quite interested. On the contrary, the Ugandan President had already too many problems to deal with relating to the ethnic unity of his country to follow that direction.<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>600</sup> See AGPL, BAA/437 for all the texts of the lectures quoted above. This program refers to a course which took place between October and November 1963.

<sup>601</sup> K. Nkrumah, *Consciencism*, p.100

<sup>602</sup> The shift towards the one-party system had been realized after a plebiscite organized in January 1964.

<sup>603</sup> AGPL, BAA-437, "Why one-party State", Lecture to Mfantsipim School, Cape Coast, by A.K. Gaituah, 24<sup>th</sup> January 1964.

<sup>604</sup> Interview Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

The shift towards the one party system was also presented to African freedom fighters as the only way possible to defeat neo-colonialism. In February 1964, *Voice of Africa* published two articles on this theme.<sup>605</sup> In the same issue, Barden explained also the reason why this system had been chosen for Ghana.<sup>606</sup>

The media were considered the best mean to bring the “African revolution” everywhere in Africa. The Institute of Winneba itself was involved in this operation. In November 1963, the second Conference of African journalists was held in Accra and men of the Institute were among the main orators. The aim of the conference was to put the basis for a Pan-African union of journalists in order to spread everywhere Nkrumahism and the “African revolution”. Addison (Dean of the Institute) opened the booklet published after the conference by the Institute with these words:

Africa is reborn and with the coming of Philosophical Consciencism, her ideology and ultimate destiny is more than clear. What is necessary now is the sympathy and understanding of all the masses of the continent. Nkrumahism holds that the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. In this respect, the African journalist has a great role to play towards educating the people to know where Africa is heading to, what she is about and the contribution expected from every individual African to achieve the goal of free, prosperous and united Africa under the banner of Continental Union Government.<sup>607</sup>

Among the authors of the booklet of the Conference, there were some of the most important radical ideologists of Ghana. Two of the articles were written by the most famous refugee in Ghana, Samuel Ikoku, who was also professor of economics at Winneba and who was often working for the BAA publications. He wrote on the use of press in Ghana and the use of propaganda through Radio and television.<sup>608</sup>

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<sup>605</sup> “Ghana’s Constitutional Changes – the One Party State”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 2(1964), pp.17-23 and K. Nkrumah, “What is to be done?”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 2(1964), pp.23-24 and 27.

<sup>606</sup> A.K. Barden, “Evolution of Ghanaian Society”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 2(1964), pp.25-27.

<sup>607</sup> W.M. Sulemana-Sibidow, (Ed. By), *The African Journalist*, Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute, Winneba, 1964.

<sup>608</sup> S.G. Ikoku, *Propaganda Through Radio and Television* in W.M. Sulemana-Sibidow, (Ed. By), *The African Journalist*.

Even Kofi Batsa wrote one of the articles of the booklet.<sup>609</sup> His magazine *The Spark* was directly involved not only with the Conference, but also with the courses. Indeed, in December 1963, four students of the Institute were sent to the *Spark* to assist Batsa in his work and to learn from him.<sup>610</sup>

The western powers were suspicious about Winneba. The Ideological Institute was reported as one of the most dangerous political training center in Africa, together with similar schools at Cairo, Conakry and Algeri. UK, USA and France thought that behind such Institutes there was the hand of the socialist world. In fact, in all these institutions, European communist lecturers were more than common.

A considerable percentage of the teachers were coming from communist countries in Europe. Between 1961 and 1964, they reached a maximum of 5 on 12 total lecturers. In the year 1963/1964 this figure increased to 6/11.<sup>611</sup> For instance, in late 1963, the lessons of Statistics and Political Economy at the Institute were taught by the European professor J.M. Peczynski.<sup>612</sup> The lessons in Political Economy were taught by the East German professor Grace Arnold.<sup>613</sup>

The British and American governments were collecting information about the Institute since its opening. However, only by 1963 they began to refer openly to alleged communist activities there. They knew that the Institute was controlled by the CPP and the BAA. Thus, they supposed it had been influenced by the wave of radicalization of the Ghanaian state.

London considered the institution as an instrument to support Ghana's subversions in Africa. As a matter of fact, before the 1963 Addis Ababa conference, the British wrote to France and USA about alleged Ghanaian plans to create a net of "Nkrumahist" regimes in the continent. Winneba was reported as the center of this plan.<sup>614</sup> Although the British knew

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<sup>609</sup> K. Batsa, *The Work of Pan-African Union of Journalists* in W.M. Sulemana-Sibidow, (Ed. By), *The African Journalist*.

<sup>610</sup> AGPL, BAA/423, Letter, Addison to Barden, 17<sup>th</sup> December 1963. At the time, *The Spark* was not controlled by the BAA anymore. See also PRAAD, SC/BAA/357, *Letter*, Barden to Nkrumah, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1964.

<sup>611</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, p.44.

<sup>612</sup> See, for instance, AGPL, BAA/437, lectures in statistics by Comrade Prof. J.M. Peczynski.

<sup>613</sup> See, for instance, AGPL, BAA/437, lecture in Political Economy by Mrs. Grace Arnold.

<sup>614</sup> BNA, DO/195/135, Letter, Wenban-Smith to Martin, 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1963.



that the Winneba Institute was not the only Ideological Institute to fear (the Conakry one was considered as effective as the Ghanaian one in 1963), they kept their eyes on it.<sup>615</sup>

Even the British diplomatic mission in Ghana was at work to study the radicalization of the Ghanaian state and, eventually, the influence of communism on the Ghanaian institutions. In May 1963, the High Commissioner to Ghana Sir Geoffrey De Freitas prepared a report on “Communist Penetration in and from Ghana” for the Head of Mission Meeting in London. He showed evidence of the close relationship between Ghana and the communist countries, especially the USSR and the existence of a “communist group” within the CPP and Ghana state.<sup>616</sup> According to De Freitas, the Bureau was able to influence African freedom fighters through Winneba and through its propaganda machinery (VOA and the Spark above all). Both the institute and the magazines were run by members of the “communist group”. Indeed, the Institute was headed by Addison, a known Marxist and also Honorary President of a Ghana/USSR Friendship Society.<sup>617</sup> Batsa, who also known to be a Marxist, was running the BAA press.

The UK kept track of the BAA activities and the ones of the Institute. Moreover, the British were getting ready to respond to the Ghanaian propaganda. A sort of “war of propaganda” between Ghana and London emerged.

London’s main weapon in this war was the Information Research Department (IRD), an office devoted to counteract the communist propaganda throughout the world. In September 1963, the IRD agent Hornyold was already at work to collect information on the Ideological Institute. Thanks to some contacts inside the institution, he could report interesting details back to London. For instance, he gained information on the courses, including the whole text of the lecture on Marxism-Leninism of the East-German professor Arnold.<sup>618</sup> At the time, both the British and the Americans were working on collecting information at Winneba. While Hornyold was at work for London, the Americans had already a paper on the Institute prepared by the CIA.<sup>619</sup>

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<sup>615</sup> BNA, DO/195/135, Letter, Wenban-Smith to Martin, 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1963.

<sup>616</sup> BNA, DO/195/55, Report “Communist Penetration in and from Ghana”, C.R.O., September 1963.

<sup>617</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>618</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1967, Letter, Biggin to Ure/Drinkall/Welser/Tucker/Duke, 16<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

<sup>619</sup> *Ibidem*.

The IRD was not only collecting information but it was also distributing anti-communist and pro-British propaganda. In 1964, this operation became increasingly difficult. Indeed, the Ghanaian press was almost totally controlled by radicals and every publication had to pass through their censorship.<sup>620</sup> However, the IRD did have a certain success. For instance, it was able to distribute its materials at the University of Ghana and at Winneba. In both institutions, the British could influence the new Ghanaian intelligentsia, in order to use it against Nkrumah.<sup>621</sup>

Between 1963 and 1964, the war for political influence in Africa was proving harsh. Ghana had powerful instruments such as the Institute, the BAA, and its propaganda machinery. However, even the Western world was ready to fight the battle and they had powerful instruments as well, such as the IRD.

## **5.8. The Work with African Freedom Fighters in 1963 - 1964**

Immediately after the establishment of the Liberation Committee, Ghana had increased its support to African freedom fighters. Between 1963 and 1964, new efforts were made in that direction. Radical parties were invited to deepen their relations with Ghana and not to count only on the OAU Liberation Committee. Ghana promised money, political and administrative training and, more importantly, it promised arms and military training. The BAA offered also its net of agents to support their struggles. In exchange, Ghana gained a relevant political return. Nkrumah could count on a net of friendly nationalist parties influenced by the CPP model. Through this net, Nkrumahism could potentially reach every corner of the continent.

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<sup>620</sup> According to the IRD agent Hornyold the speech of Nkrumah at the second conference of African journalist was a clear indication of the new wave of censorship that was going to characterize Ghana. See BNA, FO/1110/1828, Letter, Hornyold to Duke (CRO), 28<sup>th</sup> February 1964.

<sup>621</sup> See, for instance, BNA, FO/1110/1967, Letter, Biggin to Ure/Drinkall/Welser/Tucker/Duke, 16<sup>th</sup> September 1963.

Ghana's provision of political and administrative training to freedom fighters was not only limited to the intelligentsia which attended the courses at Winneba. Other members of the same parties were trained in administration in other institutions of Ghana. In such way, the Bureau was trying to grant the liberation movements with personnel for the state administration after independence. The Africanization of the civil service was considered a fundamental instrument to keep colonialist and "neo-colonialist" away from the newly independent countries. Thanks to this policy, Nkrumah could gain more political support in the continent. In particular, the parties could back his claims for the establishment of a Union Government and an African High Command. Moreover, the BAA could also count on the men trained in Ghana when operating in their countries. For all these reasons, the Bureau had to make Ghana the first choice of liberation movements in case of need.<sup>622</sup> Some examples will follow, in order to show the importance of the work with liberation movements in this period.

The first example is the one of the Basutoland Congress Party. At least since 1961, the party was already collaborating with Ghana. In 1963, this collaboration reached a new level and the political relations between Ghana and the BCP were strengthened. At the time, the BCP was working for shifting to self-government, the so-called "Responsible Government".<sup>623</sup> In this context, the party needed an African-run administration with a solid anti-imperialist imprint. As Qhobela - the representative of the BCP in Accra - pointed out to Barden on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963: "The Civil Service [...] though already 75% Africanized still requires to be freed from the grip of the undesirable factor of imperialist orientation. The future of Basutoland as an African country cannot be grounded on that rotten structure".<sup>624</sup> Barden was clearly interested in supporting the BCP in this mission, since one of the policies of the BAA had always been to support the establishment of a

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<sup>622</sup> Qhobela (representative of the BCP in Accra) wrote to Barden on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963: "This urgent appeal is based on the genuine assurance by Osagyefo the President [Kwame Nkrumah] to the B.C.P. Delegation during the Freedom Fighters Conference (June 1962) at Winneba when he, among other things, positively stated that whenever we urgently need any form of assistance for purpose of furthering our struggle against imperialism, we must always make it a point to contact him first". In AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963.

<sup>623</sup> The Responsible Government was the name given to the self-government of Basutoland which at the time (April 1963) was scheduled on June/July 1965.

<sup>624</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963

radical, African civil service. Thus, the Bureau offered to train several young BCP members in administration and stenography-secretary ship, while top rank party members were still being taught at Winneba.<sup>625</sup> In the meantime, Barden also proposed to train other BCP members in political activity, taking advantage of the existing structures of the CPP and the state. Qhobela was informed of the offer and, in the same period, he requested the permission to send members of its youth league to the Ghana Young Pioneers.<sup>626</sup> Thanks to this collaboration, Nkrumah could influence the political orientation of BCP, bounding it definitely to Ghana. In order to reach the same target, Accra also provided the BCP with funds for the upcoming electoral campaign for the Responsible Government.<sup>627</sup> As a result, Nkrumah could count on a precious political ally. Indeed, it must be remembered that Basutoland was close to the borders with South Africa. Through the collaboration with the BCP, the BAA could use the small African territory as a perfect base to launch attacks against the apartheid regime or to assist political refugees there.<sup>628</sup>

The second example is the one of Northern Rhodesia's UNIP, a case of collaboration in which Nkrumah's political return was even more evident. The party had a long-term relationship with Ghana. For years, the BAA had provided Kaunda's movement with everything from funds to political training to its members. In 1964, the Bureau planned to take advantage of this relationship, requesting the support of the party in a mission to be fulfilled in Northern Rhodesia which consisted in the creation of an alternative center of operation for the liberation movements of Southern Africa. Zambia was considered the perfect location where to work on such a plan and the UNIP was called to collaborate to the project.

In April, the occasion became propitious to launch the mission. At the time, Dar-as-Salaam was still weak after the mutiny of January and the BAA could take advantage of the

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<sup>625</sup> See AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1963; AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963; AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, "Special Course for Students from Other African States", Doku to Barden, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1963; AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1963; AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Mokhehle to Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative), 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1963.

<sup>626</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1963.

<sup>627</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>628</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Qhobela (BCP Ghana representative) to Barden, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1963. According to Qhobela, at the time, Ghana was the only country which offered the BCP training courses for its members.

difficulties of the Liberation Committee in that period. Barden's first move was to send Dwabeng - one of his men - to work to transform Lusaka in a center of operation for liberation movements. Dwabeng was sent months before the independence of the country (planned in October), with the understanding that he would become ambassador immediately after the event. Once again, the BAA proved influential enough in Ghana to send its own diplomat, surpassing the authority of the AAS. The one of Dwabeng was only the last of a series of political appointments planned by Barden.

The Bureau counted on the collaboration of the men of the UNIP in order to accomplish the mission. At the time, some of the most important personalities of the party had been taught at Winneba. Interestingly, Dwabeng had been a member of the staff of the Ideological Institute. Thus, he was expected to count on of the strong relationship with his former students. On 21 April 1964, Barden wrote to Nkrumah to explain the situation and to propose Dwabeng for the mission.<sup>629</sup> Thanks to the letter, it is possible to understand Ghana's long-term strategy in associating with Kaunda's UNIP.

As you are no doubt aware, Mr. R. K. Dwabeng who is a member of staff of this Bureau and who *has a long association with the new Cabinet Ministers of Northern Rhodesia and influential politicians*, was suggested by the Bureau to be High Commissioner-designate to Northern Rhodesia until such time that the country would be proclaimed an independent state, when he will, in the normal diplomatic convention, present his credentials as a High Commissioner. Mr. Dwabeng's *association with Northern Rhodesian Freedom Fighters who are now Ministers, Ambassadors and key party functionaries, dates back to the time when he was a member of staff of Kwame Nkrumah Ideological School during its early formative days*.

Before Barden's proposal, Nkrumah had also received one from Botsio. The latter had suggested someone who was not an "activist but had more economic knowledge". Barden disagreed with him and supported Dwabeng. Indeed, this mission was part of the struggle for African liberation and an "activist" was necessary to deal with the delicate political

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<sup>629</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Barden to Nkrumah, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1964.

matters on the table. At the time, the Bureau had already put the basis for the mission Dwabeng was called to accomplish. Barden wrote to Nkrumah:

[...] I have had occasion to meet the Vice President of the ANC, Mr. Oliver Tambo, Mr. Tabata of the All African Peoples Convention, Representatives of the PAC, Representatives of the Indian Congress and the Coloureds Organisations and leaders of freedom movements from the High Commission Territories who matter, and all of them have expressed the view that with the accession to full Sovereign State of Northern Rhodesia very soon all Revolutionary activities of freedom movements which had hitherto not found full militant expression in Dar-as-Salaam, would rapidly be shifted to Northern Rhodesia. Already moves are being made to establish offices and underground movements in Northern Rhodesia.

Barden was not sure of Kaunda's attitude towards the use of Northern Rhodesia as the base for revolutionary movements. For this reason, he considered the political use of men of the UNIP trained in Ghana fundamental. The appointment of a "militant" like Dwabeng" was essential to manage these contacts:

[...] there exists in Kaunda's Cabinet a preponderant cadre of radical and militant nationalists trained in Ghana and elsewhere who could be relied upon to bring pressure on Mr. Kaunda to accept Northern Rhodesia as one of the subsidiary bases for political onslaught on South Africa. Tanganyika has now fallen and the attached newspaper cutting reflects the views of many. There is very proof that Northern Rhodesia is going to be an effective springboard for a final assault on the Union of South Africa. It is a unique strategic and geographical position. It provides an outlet for Freedom Fighters from South Africa and serves as the only outlet for the High Commission Territories. Presently the second outlet to South Africa and the High Commission Territories is Portuguese territory of Mozambique which is about to be blockaded by Portugal to all Freedom Fighters.

Closing the letter, Barden justified his interference in the appointment of the ambassador. In matters of African liberation - he argued - the BAA was the one institution to be trusted:

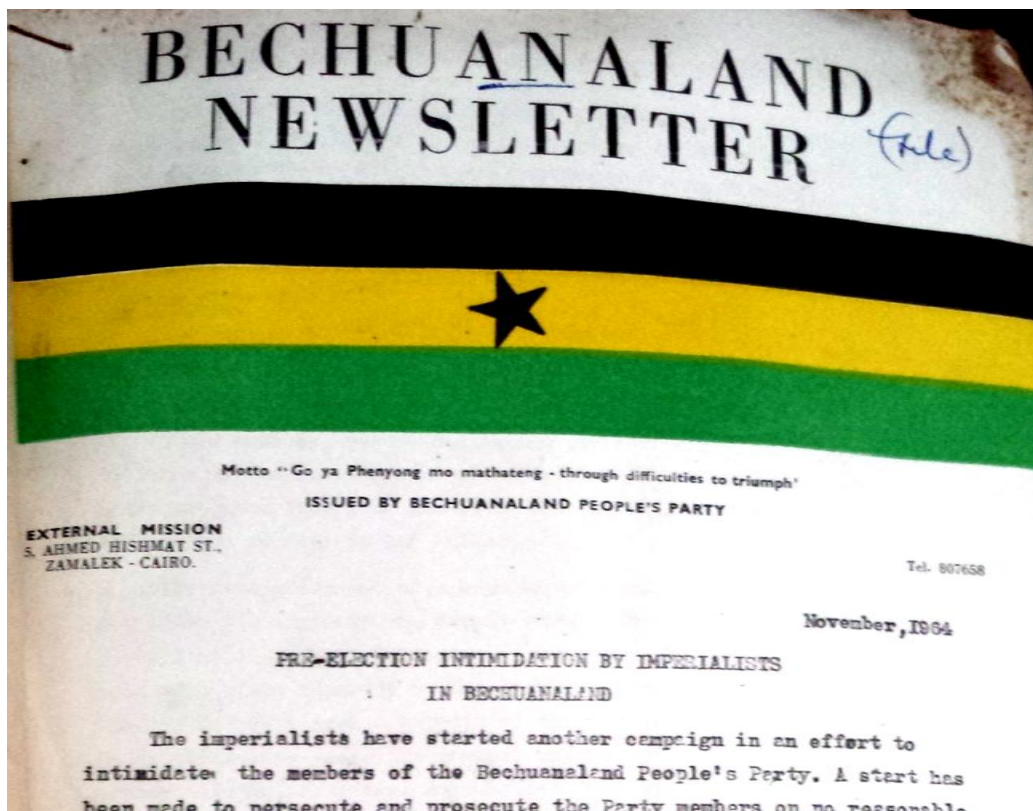
It is now clear that the Foreign Minister [Botsio] made his suggestion in good faith not realizing the potential importance and strategic value of Northern Rhodesia to militant wings of liberation movements. In this connection I will strongly suggest that Mr. Dwabeng's appointment must be reinstated. Our operations with liberation movements must be such that only our activists with a long association with the Bureau will understand and appreciate our objectives.

In the meantime, agents of the Bureau kept track of the situation in Zambia in order to outline plans of action to fulfill the mission. At the time of independence, in October 1964, an agent of the Bureau was at work to check on the moves of Kaunda's government and the ones of the main opposition party.<sup>630</sup>

A third case of fruitful collaboration with a liberation movement was the one with the Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP). The political organization was very close to Ghana to the point of adhering to the CPP structure. The BPP had been established after the Sharpeville Massacre (1960) under the influence of South African refugees (mainly ANC members). Ghana came into contact with the party, while the BAA was dealing with the question of refugees. Immediately after, Barden invited its members to be trained in Ghana and he provided the party with an office of representation in Accra. Symbolically, the BPP showed its link to Ghana by adopting a party flag that was halfway between the Ghanaian flag and the ANC one:

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<sup>630</sup> PRAAD, SC/BAA/357, Letter, Barden to Nkrumah 1<sup>st</sup> October 1964 and the attached "Report on Northern Rhodesia", submitted by a BAA "activist". The main opposition party was the ANC, namesake of the South African ANC.



Issue of November 1964 of the BPP “Bechuanaland Newsletter” – AGPL/BAA-639

Even more interestingly, the BAA worked for adapting the political structure of the BPP on the one of the CPP. The BPP program for the year 1963/64 - kept among the BAA papers - was in many ways based on the CPP model.<sup>631</sup> For instance, the party was organized with specific wings very similar to those of the CPP. Moreover, its program included “Positive Action” as the main instrument for achieving independence. Finally, the tactics of the party were clearly modeled on the aims and object of the CPP constitution of the year 1950 (see below the similarities between the 1950 CPP constitution and the 1963 BPP “tactics”).

<sup>631</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued file/BC-CONF. OAU 1965, “The BPP’s proposed programme for 1963/1964”.



## AIMS AND OBJECTS (NATIONAL)

(I) SELF-GOVERNMENT NOW and the development of (Gold Coast) Ghana on the basis of Socialism.

(II) To fight relentlessly to achieve and maintain independence for the people of (Gold Coast) Ghana and their chiefs.

(III) To serve as the vigorous conscious political vanguard for removing all forms of oppression and for the establishment of a democratic socialist society.

(IV) To secure and maintain the complete unity of the Colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories and Trans-Volta.

(V) To work with and in the interest of the Trade Union Movement, and other kindred organizations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party.

(VI) To work for a speedy reconstruction of a better (Gold Coast) Ghana in which the people and their chiefs shall have the right to live and govern themselves as free people.

(VII) To promote the Political, Social and Economic emancipation of the people, more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.

(VIII) To establish a Socialist State in which all men and women shall have equal opportunity and where there shall be no capitalist exploitation.

Extract of the Constitution of the Convention People's Party of the Gold Coast, 1950 in G. Padmore, *The Gold Coast Revolution*, pp.254-255, quoted in H. Khon and W. Sokolsky, *African Nationalism in the twentieth Century*, D. Van Nostrand Company, Princeton, 1965, pp.132-134.

## II. TACTICS

- (a) To fight relentlessly by all constitutional means for the achievement of full "S.G. NOW" for the chiefs and people of Bechuanaland.
- (b) To serve as the vigorous conscious political vanguard for removing all forms of oppression and for the establishment of democratic government.
- (c) To secure and maintain complete unity among the chiefs and people of all "Reserves"
- (d) To work in the interest of the trade Union movement in the country for better conditions of employment.
- (e) To work for a proper re-construction of a better Bechuanaland in which the people shall have the right to live and govern themselves as free people.
- (f) To assist and facilitate in any way possible the realisation of a United and self-governing Africa.

AGPL, un-catalogued file/BC-CONF. OAU 1965, extract of "The BPP's proposed programme for 1963/1964".

In the cases of BCP, UNIP, and BPP, the Bureau and the other Ghanaian institutions worked primarily on the political and administrative training of their members. As a result, the parties were influenced by Ghanaian political and administrative models and the BAA was able to take advantage of this fact. Still, it was not the only strategy to support and to influence African freedom fighters in this period.

For instance, the BAA also followed the writing of constitutions of other African countries. The channels opened between the Bureau and important nationalist parties allowed Barden to keep track of the evolution of the discussions. Thus, it was possible to provide the parties with support in the constitutional talks by the BAA or other Ghanaian bodies. It is not clear to what extent did the Bureau or any other Ghanaian institution influenced these talks. However, there is clear proof that Barden was very interested in following the writing of constitutions in some countries where the BAA supported a

nationalist group. For instance, both the NNLC for Swaziland and BCP for Basutoland kept Ghana informed about the proposals submitted at their respective constitutional commissions during the period between 1964 and 1965.<sup>632</sup>

The BAA did not only work with single parties, but sometimes it planned long-term strategies for whole groups of them. In this case, the influence of Ghana could be appreciated at a wider level. The most important of these strategies was the support to the establishment of united front of liberation movements, politically aligned to Ghana. One early example had been the attempt of creating a front of liberation movements in Accra shortly after the Kulungugu life attempt. In June 1962, a similar attempt had been done with the BCP and UNIP to create a common platform. The occasion was the Freedom Fighters Conference at Winneba.<sup>633</sup> In 1964, Ghana repeated a similar experiment by pushing NNLC and BCP to coordinate their activities on the field. In September 1964, the BAA sponsored a meeting between the party representatives to discuss the matter. In this case, the attempt turned into a success. Since then, NNLC and PAC planned to work in close cooperation, exchanging information on their common enemies through code-texts delivered by a special courier system.<sup>634</sup>

One last field in which Ghana deeply collaborated with liberation movements between 1963 and 1964 was the one of military training. It was also the most controversial question for Ghana as it involved not only freedom fighters from dependent territories but also members of opposition parties in independent African states. It also caused a long wave of resentments in the continent.

Ghana's attitude towards guerrilla warfare had changed dramatically since the defeat suffered in Congo between 1960 and 1961. Since then, the Bureau had developed a series of training camps, investing more resources in the military training of African freedom

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<sup>632</sup> On the constitution of Basutoland see AGPL, un-catalogued/BC-Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference 1965, Provisional Draft, 24<sup>th</sup> April 1964. On the constitution of Swaziland see AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, Letter, Carr to Polycarp, 26<sup>th</sup> January 1965 and AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, "National Liberatory Congress on 29/10/65".

<sup>633</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BC-*Letters* from Delegates to the Conference, "Confidential Memorandum Submitted to the Right Honorable, the President of Ghana Dr. Kwame Nkrumah from the UNIP and the BCP", undated.

<sup>634</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, "Minutes of the PAC-NNLC Leaders' Meeting held in Accra – Ghana on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1964". See also AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, "PAC-NNLC Code", 16<sup>th</sup> October 1964 and AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, handwriting, code message, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1964.

fighters. Even in this case, the political return was expected to be very relevant. Indeed, the African nationalist were not only trained in guerrilla warfare but also ideologically. Back on the battlefield, they could influence other freedom fighters and widen the net of supporters of Nkrumah's government.

The presence of freedom fighters from independent African countries was also an important political card for Ghana. By supporting opposition groups of rival nations, Nkrumah could put pressures on their governments. Between 1963 and 1964, most of these freedom fighters were trained not only politically but also militarily. This strategy often followed an open hostility of other moderate African states. For instance, in 1964, the Sanwi began to be trained in secret military camps only after the relationship with Houphouet-Boigny had reached its lowest level.<sup>635</sup>

However, this last type of "subversive" activities proved to be a political "boomerang" for Nkrumah. Despite all the efforts and the successes of the Bureau in the period 1963-1964, Ghana was targeted by an aggressive campaign by moderate African states and the West. Ghana's subversion became the main theme of most of the conferences in 1964, particularly the one of Cairo in 1964. As a result, Ghana's Pan-African policy emerged as weakened. All the work done with the liberation movements between 1963 and 1964 proved insufficient.

## **5.9. The Response of the West to Ghana's Radical Policies and Subversive Activities in 1964**

Between 1963 and 1964, the BAA had successfully attracted an increasing number of radical liberation movements towards Ghana. However, Barden's unorthodox methods had also worsened Nkrumah's relations with most of the African states and also with the Western powers. In 1964, UK and USA multiplied their efforts to counteract Nkrumah's

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<sup>635</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, p.4.

influence in Africa. They provided moderate African states with information on Ghana's activities pushing them to publicly attack Nkrumah. Moreover, they planned common strategies to counteract Nkrumah's "subversive activities". It was the beginning of an anti-Nkrumahist campaign which in two years was bound to bring Nkrumah's Pan-African policy to fail and Nkrumah's government to fall.

At the 1963 OAU conference, Nkrumah had already been the target of accusations from other independent African states. He was supposed to be the mind behind Olympio's murder as well as the one behind plots against Tubman, Houphouet-Boigny and Milton Margai. At the time, this accusation had been launched during the talks for the OAU and they were also channeled through the press.<sup>636</sup> The West was already supporting these allegations, trying to weaken Ghana's influence in Africa. In the following years, Ghana's radical Pan-African policy led the West to react even stronger.

One of the main arguments against Nkrumah was the presence of political refugees from independent African states in the Ghanaian training camps. The Sawaba Party, the Sanwi Movement, the Cameroon's UPC and all the other opposition parties were considered to all effects terrorists. Thanks to them - it was argued - Nkrumah wanted to subvert the governments of his political rivals in order to rule Africa as a dictator. From this perspective, the one Continental Government supported by Nkrumah was considered a cover for his real plans.

From the Western point of view, Nkrumah was even more dangerous, since with his policies he could have paved the way for the socialist world in Africa. This fear was based on the observation of recent facts in Ghana. At the time, Accra was deepening the relations with the East. The "reds" were promoting a strong economic cooperation with Ghana and they were also providing the BAA with weapons and military experts. Moreover, socialist countries like USSR, China and GDR were also offering scholarships to both Ghanaians and African freedom fighters. According to Western observers, Ghana was very close to become a communist Trojan-horse in Africa.

The first move of London and Washington was to spy on Ghana, in order to elaborate counter-measures to Nkrumah's plans. In 1963, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) - a

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<sup>636</sup> See, for instance, "Subversion Incorporated", *Newsweek*, 20 May 1963, p.41.

body of the British Cabinet responsible for coordinating the intelligence – had begun collecting information on Ghana. Among the main points of interest there were of course Ghana's activities in independent African states, the latest discoveries about its training camps, and the role of the East in providing arms and experts.

At the time, the question of Ghanaian subversion in Africa was also emerging in the Western press. Since 1963, American and British newspapers campaigned strongly against Nkrumah and his regime, raising accusations against his alleged plans of ruling Africa under the flag of the East. Ghana was listed among those radical countries which were trying to bring communism in the African continent.

While the JIC was preparing a detailed report on subversive activities in Ghana, the question emerged even in the British parliament. In December 1963, the British conservative MP Victor Goodhew raised the question of Ghana in a motion at the House of Commons on communist subversion in Africa. Goodhew - who was known to be a supporter of the South African and Rhodesian regimes - connected USSR and China's policies in Africa with the peculiar communist presence in Ghana.<sup>637</sup> Goodhew was basing his accusations on the information received by a former Ghanaian MP, John Amah, who had become a refugee in Nigeria, establishing there his own party.<sup>638</sup> This proves that political refugees were used both by Nkrumah and his rivals as political weapons.

Goodhew's speech had a certain political impact in Britain and in Africa. However, it was considered of scarce interest by the British Government. According to the Foreign Office, Goodhew's considerations regarding Ghana were considered neither interesting nor useful for the British cause. If Nkrumah had to be attacked by the press, it should have been on the ground of precise information on subversive activities in the country and on the communist influence there. The British intelligence agencies as well as the American one were working just to collect these information.

The first two reports of the JIC were prepared between the end of 1963 and the first months of 1964 and they tried to estimate the extension of Ghana's subversion in Africa.

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<sup>637</sup> BNA, DO/195/257, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1963. According to Goodhew, the connection between communist ideology and Pan-Africanism had to be dated back before 1957 and precisely to Padmore's activities in Russia and Germany in the 1920s.

<sup>638</sup> John Alex-Hamah's party was the Ghana Peoples' Democratic Party.

Their titles were respectively: “Ghana’s Subversion in Africa” and “Ghana: the Domestic Scene”.

In the meantime, in late 1963, the British government established a “Counter-Subversion Committee” (CSC), depending on the “Defence and Oversea Policy Committee” (DOPC). It was a body meant to study subversive activities in the world and report the findings to the DOPC.<sup>639</sup> Working groups for each region were formed. As for West Africa, Ghana was on the spotlight. The JIC report “Ghana’s Subversion in Africa” was discussed by the working group of the Counter-subversion Committee on two occasions, in January ’64 and March of the same year.<sup>640</sup> In the meeting held in March, the committee discussed how to provide help to the African countries which were under the attack of Ghana. According to the report of the JIC, at the time Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Togo, Cameroon, Niger, Upper Volta, Dahomey, Ivory Coast, Congo (Leopoldville) were all involved. As for Sierra Leone and Nigeria, they were already supported with information about Ghanaian activities in their territories.<sup>641</sup>

In the spring of 1964, despite some victories, Ghana was politically on the retreat. Nkrumah was increasingly isolated and his Pan-African policy was not producing any expected impact. At the time, Ghana tried to batten down the hatches by deepening relations with radical states (as Massamba-Debat’s Congo) and former rivals (as Albert Margai’s Sierra Leone).<sup>642</sup> Nkrumah’s strategy was to create a political platform to re-launch his Pan-African policy at the upcoming Cairo OAU Conference and at the Commonwealth Conference, both planned in July 1964. The Conferences, however, did not bring the results Nkrumah expected. Indeed, several moderate African states backed by the West attacked publicly Ghana and its interference in other states’ internal politics. In both

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<sup>639</sup> BNA, CAB/148-15, “Cabinet – Defence and Oversea Policy Committee, Composition and terms of reference”, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1963.

<sup>640</sup> See BNA, DO/195/213, Letter “Ghana-JIC Paper”, Martin to Chadwick, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1964 and BNA, PREM/11/4823, Counter Subversion Committee, “Working Group on Ghana”, record of a meeting held on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1964 at the Commonwealth Relation Office.

<sup>641</sup> BNA, PREM/11/4823, Counter Subversion Committee, “Working Group on Ghana”, record of a meeting held on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1964 at the Commonwealth Relation Office.

<sup>642</sup> Albert Margai had become Prime Minister of Sierra Leone in April 1964. He succeeded his half-brother Milton Margai, who had died in the same month. The change of premiership brought consequences even on the relationship with Ghana. Indeed, Albert Margai was more willing to cooperate with Nkrumah than his half-brother had been. For references on Nkrumah’s moves towards Albert Margai and Massamba-Debat in spring 1964 see W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, pp.346-347-

the conferences, the British supported criticisms against Ghana coming from members of the Commonwealth, which were even ready to involve the UN in the issue.<sup>643</sup>

Shortly after, in May, a second JIC paper called “Ghana: the Domestic Scene” was prepared and discussed by the Counter-Subversion Committee. The UK was still monitoring Ghanaian activities in Africa. London was prepared to provide its allies with all the support possible in order to counteract the Ghanaian subversive activities in their countries. Nigeria, for instance, was informed on the new JIC paper. On the contrary, Southern Rhodesia was not.<sup>644</sup>

The Western struggle against Nkrumah’s influence in Africa was turning into a success. Still, Americans and British had sometimes different opinions on the policies to perform against Nkrumah. In particular, the Americans criticized the attempts of the British to mediate with the Ghanaian President. Indeed, Washington was willing to perform a more effective policy to counteract Ghana’s moves in Africa. According to the Americans, the British were acting too “soft” with Ghana. Their opinion on the second JIC paper: “was critical of ‘the British attitude to Nkrumah’. [...] the British were altogether too soft on Nkrumah and tended to treat him as an erring child rather than as a political menace”.<sup>645</sup>

Despite their different approaches, London and Washington still shared the same views on the need to counteract Nkrumah’s influence in Africa. They worked together even on the NATO platform. As part of the military pact, London and Washington worked

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<sup>643</sup> The British were aware of the incoming attack to Nkrumah at the Cairo Conference months before it was held. The British High commissioner to Ghana, Sir Geoffrey de Freitas, was informed in April of the general resentment against Ghana by the new Kenyan Minister of State for Pan African Affairs (and old BAA East African representative) Koinange. According to De Freitas, Koinange had told him that “resentment of many independent African States at Ghana’s continued interference in their internal affairs had reached the stage when it was certain that in July at the African Heads of State Conference in Cairo when would be reeked possibly even publicity”. In the same occasions Koinange and de Freitas agreed also on the need for the UN intervention not only against white dominated African countries but also against “Ghana’s totalitarianism”. See BNA/DO/195/213, Telegram, De Reitas to CRO and others, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1964. For comments on the position of Ghana as emerged at the Commonwealth Conference see BNA, DO/195/213, Letter, Martin (CRO) to Kellick (British Embassy Washington), 27<sup>th</sup> August 1964.

<sup>644</sup> BNA, DO/195/213, Letter, Chadwick to Rogers and Martin, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1964; BNA, DO/195/213, Letter, Chadwick to Snelling, 1<sup>st</sup> June 1964; BNA, DO/195/213, Letter, Martin to Sir. Duke and Costley-White, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1964.

<sup>645</sup> BNA, DO/195/213, Letter, Owen (British Embassy, Washington D.C.) to Wool-Lewis (CRO), 15<sup>th</sup> June 1964. Owen referred on a note of the American State Department about the second JIC paper.



together in 1964 in order to collect information on communist propaganda channeled through Ghana and for programming an effective response to this threat.<sup>646</sup>

The Western world was not afraid of Ghana alone, but even more of the growing presence of the Chinese behind Accra's activities. After the break with Moscow in the early 1960s, Peking was showing its will to penetrate in Africa to compensate the Soviet presence. Thus, in the African continent, the West had to treat the Soviet and Chinese activities on two different grounds.<sup>647</sup>

UK and USA were aware of the growing importance of the Chinese in Ghana, especially in providing weapons and military instructors. After the Soviet experts left in 1962, the training camps of the BAA had been run by Ghanaians with poor results.<sup>648</sup> The arrival of the Chinese military experts in late 1964 brought the quality of guerrilla training back to a high level. Even the Western fears towards Ghana increased accordingly. Behind the secret agreement which brought the Chinese experts in Ghana there was, as usual, A.K. Barden.<sup>649</sup>

The work of the West was proving effective. In 1964, Ghana was increasingly isolated and any attempt of Nkrumah to re-launch the project of a Continental Union Government or an African High Command had failed. The accusation against his "subversive" plans multiplied during the year and the Ghanaian President lost most of his residual influence in the continent. In a last attempt to correct the route, Nkrumah had to put all the foreign policy system of Ghana under review.

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<sup>646</sup> BNA, FO/1110/1822, Letter, Ure to Drinkall and Barclay, 10th March 1964; BNA, FO/1110/1822, Letter, Clift (UK delegation to NATO) to MacLaren (IRD), 24<sup>th</sup> January 1964.

<sup>647</sup> Ure, an IRD officer of the British Foreign Office commenting on NATO papers on countering communist propaganda in Africa stated that "[...] it is no longer possible to lump the Russians and Chinese efforts in Africa together under the heading "Communist Bloc" [...] nor is it accurate to describe the distinction between Russian and Chinese activities as 'only differences of degree'". See BNA, FO/1110/1822, Letter, Ure (IRD-FO) to Goodschild (UK Delegation to NATO), 21<sup>st</sup> February 1964.

<sup>648</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, p.7.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7-8 and 18.

## 5.10. The Question of Subversion and the Fall of A.K. Barden

Ghana's growing political isolation was mainly caused by the BAA's "subversive" activities. Between 1963 and 1964, Barden's Bureau became equally infamous in the West and in most of the moderate African countries. This fact complicated Nkrumah's already weak position on the African scene. Any attempt to re-launch diplomatically a continental government failed. At the Cairo Conference, Nkrumah tried to correct the route by proposing Accra to host the next OAU conference to be held in the fall of 1965. However, the situation did not change. The attacks of the West kept being harsh and the BAA began to be heavily ostracized even by the Ghanaian Foreign Service. Eventually, in the spring of 1965, Nkrumah decided to make a clear turn in his Pan-African policy. He decided to dismiss Barden and to re-launch diplomatically the Union Government. In the meantime, he also kept supporting radical nationalist parties.

The roots of Barden's dismissal had to be found much before the spring of 1965. Nkrumah already knew that the work of the director was being criticized not only by the West, but also by moderate African countries and even within Ghana by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the AAS. Still, between 1963 and 1964, he kept counting on Barden to enlarge his net of supporters and to perform his radical Pan-African policy.

Most of the activities of the BAA were not depending totally by Nkrumah. For years, he had trusted Barden, like he had done with Padmore before. He only provided the director of the BAA with general guidelines to be followed. He did not have the time nor the will to follow every aspect of Ghana's foreign policy in the field of African liberation and unity, including the selection of the liberation movements to support.<sup>650</sup> For this reason, Barden was often granted with a free hand.<sup>651</sup> Not every move of the BAA was authorized in advance by Nkrumah. For instance, the net of BAA agents was managed autonomously by Barden and so were the military training camps in Ghana. As for the latter case, not even

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<sup>650</sup> Nkrumah was working on African Affairs in the morning and he was providing a general political line to the Bureau. The rest of the work was done by Barden alone. Interview with Asante, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibidem*.

other members of the BAA were informed about the camps, a matter which was followed personally by the director.<sup>652</sup>

Nkrumah began to be aware of the problems caused by the Bureau when the latter became not only the target of the attacks of the West and of “moderate” African states but also of the Ghanaian foreign service. According to them, Barden had failed to coordinate the missions of the BAA with those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the AAS. His free hand had had bad consequences in the credibility of the Ghanaian diplomatic network, since not even the Minister and the AAS were informed of the details of the missions of the Bureau in Africa.<sup>653</sup> Between 1963 and 1964, the diplomatic incidents involving the BAA increased, causing the question of Ghanaian subversive activities to explode in Africa. Criticisms against the Bureau mounted both outside and inside Ghana.

In early 1964, an incident occurred in Tanganyika caused a new wave of attacks against the BAA coming from the Ghanaian Foreign Service. The same event also caused the final political break between Nkrumah and Nyerere. At the time of the mutiny in Tanganyika (January 1964), Barden sent the BAA agent Ferguson to Dar Es-Salaam in order to deliver weapons and ammunitions for the liberation movements fighting in Southern Africa. These weapons were meant to pass through the Ghanaian High Commission to the front. However, the BAA had not informed the Ghanaian High Commissioner Joi Fo Mir, nor Tanganyika’s authorities, of the content of the boxes delivered to the High Commission. Due to the delicate political situation, the presence of weapons in the Ghanaian High Commission could have been considered as an act of war. The situation got even worse when Ferguson was seen organizing a party at the Ghanaian High Commission to celebrate the mutiny. The situation was finally solved by David Bosumtwi-Sam by involving Asante and Botsio.<sup>654</sup> Still, the conduct of Barden’s Bureau

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<sup>652</sup> Interviews with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012 and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

<sup>653</sup> Interviews with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012 and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012; Interviews with K.B. Asante, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

<sup>654</sup> Bosumtwi-Sam called the BAA in Accra in order to understand the situation, commanding also to send the weapons back to Ghana. Then, he went with Asante and Botsio to apologize to Nyerere, without mentioning him what happened with Ferguson. Interviews with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012 and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012

was put on trial. The question came immediately to the desk of Nkrumah together with a request for the dismissal of Barden.

Barden's free hand in Africa had overstepped the mark. The incident caused the country to be even more isolated, this time also among African radicals. Criticisms against Barden's un-orthodox methods mounted even among men of the government and members of the CPP. For the moment, however, Nkrumah kept supporting Barden, despite doubts on his conduct had begun to arise. Indeed, the mistakes of the director of the BAA were damaging the attempts of the Ghanaian President to re-launch Pan-Africanism in international gatherings such as the Cairo Conference of July 1964.

For the first time, the Bureau was clearly put on trial by the Ghanaians themselves. The Foreign Service was attacking Barden's whole management of BAA agents. The latter were damaging their work abroad. Moreover, there was the suspect, among the diplomats, that some agents were spying on them.<sup>655</sup> The accusations after the Tanganyika's incident were only the first step towards Barden's fall one year later.<sup>656</sup>

At the time, the director of the BAA felt isolated and thus he decided to write directly to Nkrumah in order to clear the air from the allegations against him. The letter written by Barden to Nkrumah on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1964 is a document of enormous importance.<sup>657</sup> It is a sort of summary of all the accusations made to the Bureau both inside and outside Ghana. For this reason, it will be quoted almost entirely hereunder. In the letter, Barden explained to Nkrumah his position towards the relations between the BAA, the Foreign Service and other bodies of the state. According to Barden, the campaign against the BAA within Ghana had its roots in the special duties assigned to the BAA after the Kulungugu life attempt:

“The Bureau's efforts, since then [Kulungugu life attempt], in assisting the State apparatus in unearthing plans and exposing the wicked intentions of people both within the country

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<sup>655</sup> In the case of Bosumtwi-Sam, this fact had been confirmed (see previously in the text).

<sup>656</sup> According to Bosumtwi Sam, the real cause for Barden's fall was the incident of Dar Es-Salaam, the last of a series of incidents which ultimately convinced Nkrumah that he could not rely anymore on the ex-serviceman. Still, Nkrumah waited another year before taking the final decision of dismissing him. Even Asante agrees with this interpretation. Interview with D. Bosumtwi-Sam, Accra, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012. Interview with K.B. Asante, Accra, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

<sup>657</sup> PRAAD, SC/BAA/357, Letter, Barden to Nkrumah, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1964.

and outside, have been grossly and wickedly misinterpreted and have consequently incurred the displeasure of many people in key positions. In order to obstruct the work of the Bureau, a group of people have been spreading vicious rumours to the effect that the Bureau is the ears of Osagyefo. This obviously is intended to bring the Bureau into disrepute both inside and outside the country. The campaign to soil the name of the Bureau has, of late, been intensified within the limits of Government and Party official circles with the result that members of the Bureau are ostracized during meetings and parties. [...] there is an avid desire to remove the Bureau from under the direct control of Osagyefo [...]"

The majority of the attacks against the Bureau came from the Ministry of foreign Affairs. Many members of the Ministry were criticizing the work of the BAA abroad, including the use of agents, seen by the diplomats as spies. Their presence was considered all in all "obstructionist" by the men of the Foreign Service. Interestingly, Barden openly accused the officers of the Ministry to be the minds behind the international campaign against the Bureau:

"In Government circles, in particular in the Foreign Ministry, officers have erroneously regarded members of the Bureau as spies, security officers, and subversionists. This unfortunate state of affairs results from the utilization of the external communication system of the Ministry by the Bureau in its secret exercises and operations with freedom fighters outside the country. Some of these officials have special delight in disclosing our activities to the public and foreign agents thus bringing the Bureau into public fear and hate. [...] I must say here that the idea of sending out Activists has not been very well understood both by the Foreign Ministry and by our Missions, and the activities of our Activists have been quoted as some of the obstructionist tactics of the Bureau."

Then, Barden had to respond directly to the accusations that followed the Tanganyika's incident. According to him, no serious problems were registered by BAA in East Africa:

"Externally, we have not been the darling of the foreign imperialist press. In America, the Bureau has been regarded as the C.I.A. and D.I.A. of Osagyefo's Government. In Britain the Bureau is known as a subversive organisation. [...] Some allegations have recently been made to the effect that the Bureau has not been altogether popular in East Africa. I do not believe it. I have yet to hear from East African leaders that the Bureau is not liked in East

Africa. Nor have any tangible reasons been given for this alleged extraordinary attitude, except for references to a few isolated incidents and publications in our newspapers [...]"

Barden closed the letter with an appeal for preserving the independence of the Bureau from the control of the Ministry or any other office or institution of the Ghanaian state. These few lines includes a clear definition of the work of the Bureau and the reason why - according to Barden - its missions and the ones of the Ministry were different and complementary at the same time.

"It is not realised that the Bureau is the only organisation in the country that can achieve political action to reinforce our policy that cannot normally be done through diplomatic processes and yet get away with it. To attempt to place the Bureau under the Foreign Ministry or integrate it with any other organisation is to embarrass the Ministry or organisation concerned and the Government. The Bureau is there to accept blame that would normally be directed against the Government.[...] The Bureau has doggedly adhered to the Government's policy on African Unity, not only because Osagyefo is dedicated to it but because we also believe in it and have worked towards its achievement.[...] Osagyefo is the only one competent to decide whether the functions of the Bureau are to be delimited or not."

With this letter, Barden admitted for the first time that the Bureau had become the target of the attacks of the West as well of some members of the CPP and the Government. Thus, he requested Nkrumah to be backed in order to keep working independently for African freedom and unity.

For the moment, Nkrumah decided not to take any decision concerning Barden or the BAA as a whole. Once again, the director was left free to operate in Ghana and in Africa. The Bureau kept also supporting the opposition parties of independent African states, despite the protests of their governments. According to Thompson, during this year, Barden

proposed to send activists in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Dahomey, Niger, Upper Volta, Algeria, Togo and Congo Brazzaville.<sup>658</sup>

In the summer, Barden also worked on guerrilla training. He signed an agreement with China for the supply of instructors for the secret camps, confirming the stand taken by Ghana towards the support of guerrilla warfare. In August he wrote to Nkrumah:

- a) Ghana has made it clear that the stage is reached where imperialism, apartheid and neo-colonialism must be fought by armed revolution.
- b) As the leading African nation fighting against these evils, Ghana must make available to the Freedom Fighters greater facilities for training.<sup>659</sup>

Even if Barden's strategy was being successful among the radicals, it was damaging Ghana's position in the rest of Africa. Indeed, in the same period, the suspects towards Accra caused by the BAA subversive activities overshadowed Nkrumah's attempts to re-launch diplomatically the Union Government and the African High Command as well as his attempts to recover some credibility among the ranks of the moderate OAU members. Both the Union Government option and the African High Command one were unsuccessfully presented at Lagos at the OAU Meeting of Foreign Ministers (24-28 February 1964) and at the Cairo OAU Conference of Heads of State (July 1964).

Still, at the Cairo Conference, Nkrumah decided not to slow down, but to raise the bar: he proposed Accra as the seat of the next OAU Conference of Heads of State, planned to be held in October 1965. Once again, however, this proposal turned into a political "boomerang" as the subversive activities of the Bureau became the main argument against Nkrumah's proposals in the next year and half.

In late 1964, the question of subversion mounted and it finally exploded after Sawaba party members trained in Ghana tried to assassinate Diori.<sup>660</sup> In January 1965, an incident happened at the border with Togo made the situation even worse.<sup>661</sup>

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<sup>658</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 359; Thompson makes no reference to any source for this statement.

<sup>659</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, p.8; the book quotes this letter written by Barden to Nkrumah on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1964 concerning the Half-Assini project.

<sup>660</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p. 365.

The West and the moderate African states took advantage of the circumstances to launch another campaign against Ghana. Two questions were on the table: the presence of members of opposition parties as refugees in Accra and the increasingly dangerous relationship between the BAA and the socialist bloc. As for the first point, the majority of the independent African states threatened to boycott the OAU conference in Accra if the question of refugees was not solved. As for the second, the West began to study measures to counteract the growing presence of “reds” in Ghana, especially the Chinese. Both the questions involved Barden and his Bureau.

Between 1964 and 1965, the British and the Americans kept track of the activities of the BAA and of the Institute in order to check on the political and military exchanges with the socialist bloc. The British proved particularly active in this front. They were already fighting relentlessly against Ghana’s radical influence in Africa. They got even more involved in the issue when Ghana campaigned against London on the Southern Rhodesia question.<sup>662</sup>

In January 1965, a meeting of British High Commissioners and Ambassadors regarding counter-subversion in West Africa was held in Dakar. Interestingly, Nkrumah was listed among the most dangerous enemies of the West, among others such as Castro and Nasser.<sup>663</sup> On 12 January, the West Africa group of the British Counter Subversion Committee met. The meeting discussed the dangers of Ghana’s subversion and it proposed solutions, including materials to discredit Winneba. The reference on the links between Ghana and the socialist bloc is worth noting. The regional group of the Counter Subversion Committee stated that: “It would be highly dangerous if Ghanaian, UAR, Russian and Chinese subversive activities in Africa all joined together”.<sup>664</sup>

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<sup>661</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p. 368

<sup>662</sup> See, for instance, articles of VOA against the involvement of Great Britain in the Rhodesian question: “Give Southern Rhodesia New Constitution”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 2(1964), p.2; “Our Opinion: Sir Alex Conference”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 3-4(1964), p.1; “The Southern Rhodesian Issue”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 2(1964), pp.15-18. “Britain and Southern Rhodesia”, *Voice of Africa*, vol.4, 5-6(1964), pp.19-21 and 24-28.

<sup>663</sup> See, for instance, BNA, FO/371/176000, Letter, Kemp (British embassy, Lomé) to Millard (Foreign Office), 12<sup>th</sup> May 1964.

<sup>664</sup> BNA, CAB/148/42, “Counter Subversion Committee- Summary of recent activities of working groups ad hoc meetings – Ghana”, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1965.



At the time, the British were particularly worried of the Chinese influence in Ghana. As underlined before, Barden had signed an agreement with Chinese experts in 1964 and the same pact was confirmed and made official even by his successor.<sup>665</sup> The arrival of the first Chinese military experts in August 1964 was only the first step towards a closer association between Accra and Peking, while the USSR was losing its influence. In November '64, a group of six Ghanaians were sent to China in order to take part to a 90 days course to become “instructors” and “assist to the struggle” for African freedom.<sup>666</sup> Even Kwame Nkrumah showed a growing interest for Maoist theories on guerrilla warfare. The concept of people’s army was becoming more and more interesting to the ears of Ghanaians.<sup>667</sup>

The question of Ghanaian subversion in Africa was discussed again by the British in February.<sup>668</sup> In April, a new paper of the JIC updated those of 1963 and 1964 with the latest news on Soviet and Chinese activities in Ghana. The paper, named “Supply of Soviet Bloc and Chinese Arms to new Commonwealth Countries”, included information on the movements of arms and weapons from the socialist countries to Ghana. According to the JIC, Nkrumah’s government was running out of funds for any new weapons coming from the East. Still, the economic aid of the West was strongly discouraged. It could only encourage Ghana to keep planning military actions abroad to the advantage of the socialist bloc. In this case, as the JIC report stated:

She [Ghana] would be encouraged to overawe her weaker neighbors; she would be tempted to send troops abroad – to the Congo for instance – to aid the rebels. Though it is unlikely that Nkrumah would use his forces in the furtherance of his aim of African unity, there is always the possibility that in the case of the overthrow of a regime in a neighboring

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<sup>665</sup> AGPL, BAA/357, Letter, Ofori Bah to Nkrumah, 28th April 1965; see also NLC, *Nkrumah’s Subversion in Africa*, pp. 18-20.

<sup>666</sup> AGPL, BAA/359, Letter, Wilson (Ghana’s Embassy Peking) to Barden, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1964.

<sup>667</sup> At the time of the coup which overthrown Nkrumah (21<sup>st</sup> February 1966), the NLC staff found a draft copy of Nkrumah’s new book on Guerrilla warfare which was later published in 1968: “Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare”. This book was strongly influenced by Maoist theories on guerrilla warfare war and the use of People’s army. See NLC, *Nkrumah’s Subversion in Africa*, p. 42 and NLC, *Nkrumah’s Deception of Africa*, p. 14.

<sup>668</sup> In such occasion, the JIC papers on Ghana’s subversion written in 1963 and 1964 were considered outdated, especially since they did not include the latest news on USSR and Chinese advancements in Ghana. See BNA, DO/195/213, Note, Wood Lewis to Rogers, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1964.

country, Nkrumah might not be able to resist a call from the insurgents for Ghana's armed intervention. The British interest at the moment is to see that Ghana does not expand her forces.<sup>669</sup>

Fortunately for UK, Ghana's army was still partially supported by London through the BJSTT (British Joint Services Training Team). Thanks to this, it was unlikely that Ghana would turn completely against the western world and its allies.<sup>670</sup> However, it is interesting to note how the attention on Ghana was high and how the UK was working for isolating the country politically and militarily.

London's work against the influence of the East in Ghana and its strategies to counteract the military activities of Accra had the common denominator in the struggle against the Bureau. Barden's office was considered as the most dangerous of the Ghanaian bodies since it was controlled by radicals and it could count on a vast net of agents. In the meantime, the campaign of independent Africa against Ghana reached its apex. Nkrumah was completely isolated politically and most of the OAU states kept threatening to boycott the summit of Accra in October 1965.

It is in this context that Nkrumah finally decided to dismiss Barden from his post at the Bureau. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1965.<sup>671</sup> This decision was made as part of a plan to re-organize the Bureau in order to build a more efficient and discreet institution. Moreover, it also worked to cool down the situation in Ghana, since the Foreign Service was increasingly dissatisfied with the work done by the Bureau. Barden had become too much powerful and unpredictable to count on him anymore for the execution of Ghana's Pan-African policy. His dismissal was the perfect solution for solving the problems caused by the Bureau. However, apparently, it also contradicted Nkrumah's radical approach towards African liberation and unity embodied by Barden's Bureau. As a matter of fact, the dismissed director felt betrayed by Nkrumah by being treated as a scapegoat for the failure of Nkrumah's foreign policy. Barden reacted vehemently, to the point of showing signs of

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<sup>669</sup> BNA, DO/195/213, report, "JIC (65) 35 – Supply of Soviet Bloc and Chinese Arms to New Commonwealth Countries – GHANA".

<sup>670</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>671</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*, p.3.

madness. Eventually, he was placed in a mental hospital and his place was taken by Ofori Bah which held the position of director until the time of the coup.<sup>672</sup>

The arrival of Ofori Bah brought a general revision of everything concerning the BAA and its activities. The new director had to resist the attempts of the Foreign Service to attack the already weakened institution and he also had to reorganize it.<sup>673</sup> Still, the office maintained its duties, even if they were carried out more carefully. Ghana had to recover its position in view of the conference of Accra. The summer of 1965 signed the beginning of the last season of Ghana's Pan-African policy.

### **5.11. The Last Season of Nkrumah's Pan-African Policy**

With the fall of Barden and the reform of the BAA, Nkrumah and his government could now work to recover a better position for Ghana in the international scene. This does not mean that Ghana had abandoned its path towards the achievement of radical Pan-African goals. During the last months of his rule – while he had to face an increasingly harsh economical crisis in Ghana – Nkrumah promoted two different approaches to African liberation and unity. Both the Foreign Service and the Bureau were called to work for the goals of a continental government and the independence of the continent. The BAA acted more carefully with regard to its subversive activities in independent African states. As a result, Ghana gained back some credibility. Such credibility was used to re-launch - even this time unsuccessfully - African unity at the OAU conference of Accra in October '65.

At the same time, during 1965, Ghana showed also its will to keep the road of radicalization straight. This policy was reflected by a stronger relationship with China and by an increasing involvement of Ghana into the struggles for liberation in southern Africa, particularly in Southern Rhodesia. Just few months before the coup of February 1966,

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<sup>672</sup> PRAAD, SC/BAA/357/KN-294, Letter, Nkrumah to Barden, 10<sup>th</sup> June; PRAAD, SC/BAA/357/KN-294, Letter, Barden to Nkrumah, 10<sup>th</sup> June 1965.

<sup>673</sup> PRAAD, SC/BAA/357/KN-294, Letter, Ofori Bah to Nkrumah, 30<sup>th</sup> June; PRAAD, SC/BAA/357/KN-294, Letter, Ofori Bah to Osei (auditor-general), 30<sup>th</sup> July 65.

Nkrumah was preparing a military expedition to Smith's country as an extreme attempt to re-launch a revolutionary path towards liberation.

The main mission of the whole system of foreign policy of Nkrumah's government in 1965 was to work for the Accra OAU Conference. This gathering was the last crucial occasion for Nkrumah's government to put the Union Government and the African High Command options in practice. It was also an occasion to strengthen the position of Nkrumah's government internationally and internally, considering that the unrest caused by the increasing economical crisis in the country was mounting day after day. Nkrumah was so aware of the importance of the Conference and so confident of its positive outcome as to invest huge resources for transforming Accra into a sort of "alternative capital city" of the OAU.<sup>674</sup> The project of a £8 million complex for the dignitaries to be hosted in Accra – the so-called "Job 600" – was sketched by Nkrumah himself during the Cairo OAU Conference of July 1964.<sup>675</sup> According to Michael Dei-Anang, Nkrumah made every effort possible to have the building completed before the Accra Conference, pretending that the structure was erected in a short time span with almost every material that had to be imported.<sup>676</sup> It was an extreme attempt to show to the OAU members and the rest of the world that Ghana was still a wealthy country and that Nkrumah's government could be still considered as a model for other African countries.

The African Affairs Secretariat worked through the Ghanaian missions in Africa in order to convince all the Heads of States of the OAU to accept Nkrumah's proposal for the establishment of a Continental Union Government and an African High Command. Several trips were undertaken by Ghanaian delegations during 1965 in order to achieve this target.<sup>677</sup>

However, another problem was putting at risk the whole organization of the Conference: it was the presence of political refugees from independent territories in Ghana. As underlined in the previous sub-chapter, the question of subversion exploded after Accra was accused of being involved in a life attempt against the Nigerian President Diori in late

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<sup>674</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.358.

<sup>675</sup> M. Dei-Anang, *The Administration of Ghana's Foreign Relations*, p.3.

<sup>676</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>677</sup> K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.22.

1964 and after Ghana was involved in the last of a series of border incidents with Togo at the beginning of the new year. A front of moderate African states led by Ivory Coast threatened to boycott the Accra Conference in case Nkrumah would not expel all the “terrorists” from Ghana. Houphouet-Boigny was the most important leader of this group as he was one of the first African heads of state to denounce Ghana’s subversive activities. He was also the one who had been responsible for the inclusion of a specific clause of the OAU charter (1963) against subversion.<sup>678</sup>

On 13 February 1965, thirteen African French-speaking countries met at Nouakchott to discuss the establishment of the *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache* (OCAM), an organization which the BAA immediately labeled as a means for destroying the OAU and for bringing Africa “under the egemony of US imperialism”.<sup>679</sup> The summit was the occasion the denounce publicly Nkrumah’s subversion and to announce that the majority of the moderate African states would not attend the OAU Conference in Accra unless the Ghanaian government would not expel all the members of opposition parties hosted in its territory.

At first, Nkrumah rejected all the allegations of the Ghanaian subversive activities as well as the presence of secret military camps, defending his choice to welcome political refugees for humanitarian reasons. Paradoxically, as Armah points out, the Ghanaian government turned to the Nigerian government for help.<sup>680</sup> Alex Quaison-Sackey, then Ghanaian Foreign Minister, promised the Nigerian Prime Minister Balewa to guarantee the safety of all the Heads of State invited at the conference and he asked him to support Ghana against the threats of boycott. Balewa himself worked through the OAU to organize an extraordinary Council of Ministers in Lagos on June 1965 in order to discuss about the threat of a boycott and the possible measures to solve the problem.<sup>681</sup> Even at the Lagos Conference, the Ghanaians, represented by Botsio denied any involvement of the BAA or any other Ghanaian body in any subversive activity. Even the existence of secret training

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<sup>678</sup> The clause was the following: “unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighboring states or any other states”. See W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.333.

<sup>679</sup> K. Batsa, *The Spark*, pp.33-34.

<sup>680</sup> K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, pp.159-160.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibidem*, p.160.

camps was again denied.<sup>682</sup> A definitive solution was not achieved, but it was clear that Ghana had to get rid of the refugees if Nkrumah wanted to gather all the moderate African countries at the Conference.

Nkrumah had already commanded to move some of the Sanwi refugees from Ghana to Algeria just shortly after the Nouakchott meeting. It was a first attempt to show the goodwill of Ghana to Houphoet-Boigny, who was the most influential leader of the group of moderate African states.<sup>683</sup> In the summer of 1965, immediately after Lagos, Nkrumah commanded to move other members of opposition parties hosted at the African Affairs Center outside Ghana, at least for the duration of the Conference.<sup>684</sup> The new director of the BAA dealt with the question. With this move, the Ghanaian President wanted to present again the BAA and the AAC as “Pan-African” instruments rather than centers of “subversions”.

In the meantime, Nkrumah requested also the Bureau to work for strengthening Ghana’s position among the liberation movements in order to get to the appointment of the OAU summit with a sufficient number of supporters. Clearly - as it has been in the previous years - the focus of the BAA mission was on Southern Africa and on the Portuguese territories. With regard to the latter, in early 1965 Kofi Batsa proposed to produce a Portuguese version of the Spark to be distributed among the Lusophone liberation movements. Nkrumah accepted the proposal and asked the BAA to provide assistance for this special edition of the journal.<sup>685</sup> According to Nkrumah, the Spark could have been a useful instrument for the struggle in the Portuguese territories: “in order to back up the militancy of the nationalist forces with powerful ideological warfare and press exposure”.<sup>686</sup>

Despite the economical crisis in Ghana, Nkrumah’s government kept supporting radical nationalist parties and liberation movements. In exchange, they were expected to

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<sup>682</sup> On the Lagos Conference see W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.377-381.

<sup>683</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah’s Deception of Africa*, pp.10-11.

<sup>684</sup> AGPL, BAA/383, Letter, Ofori Bah to the General Manager Ghana Commercial Bank, 30<sup>th</sup> July 1965 and AGPL, BAA/383, Letter, Ofori Bah to the General Manager Ghana Commercial Bank, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1965. The first letter refers to a Sawaba member. The second one to an UPC member.

<sup>685</sup> AGPL, BAA/357, letter, Batsa to Nkrumah, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1965; AGPL, BAA/357, letter, Nkrumah to Batsa, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1965.

<sup>686</sup> AGPL, BAA/357, letter, Batsa to Nkrumah, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1965.

support Ghana's political positions, especially at the OAU conference. For instance, the BCP was provided with funds for the elections of April 1965 (5000£), similarly to what Ghana had done just earlier with the BPP in Bechuanaland.<sup>687</sup> In the same period, Nkrumah's government granted also the BCP with scholarship for courses in administration, security and intelligence.<sup>688</sup> At the time of Nkrumah's overthrow (February 1966) the BCP together with a number of other parties was still strongly backed by Ghana, particularly for activities on the field.<sup>689</sup>

The parties supported by Accra were paying respect to Nkrumah both politically and symbolically. The BCP defined the Continental Union Government as their "cherished ideal".<sup>690</sup> The NNLC was using the CPP slogan "Forward Ever Backward Never".<sup>691</sup> The PAC and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) - both backed by Ghana for their entry into the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization at the AAPSO conference in Winneba (May '65) - supported Ghana's position towards African liberation and unity. At the conference, the PAC referred to the campaign culminated in 1960 with the Sharpeville Massacre as the "Positive Action Campaign", a clear way to underline the legacy with Ghana and the CPP.<sup>692</sup> Few months later, at the OAU conference in Accra (October) the

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<sup>687</sup> Ghana granted the BCP with 5000£ for the elections, see AGPL, BAA/357, handwriting, "Financial Assistance", BCP, 29th April 1965. In the meantime, even the BPP had been financed by Accra but it registered a bad outcome. The representatives of the BCP in Accra wrote to Barden to assure him that the same defeat was not going to be repeated with their party. They stated: "Through lack of effective political organization of the broad masses of the people, the Pan-African forces have suffered a terrible setback in Bechuanaland. But with regard to Basutoland, we can confidently assure your government that, all things being equal, we can see no reason why the progressive forces should not stage a brilliant performance which will redound to the credit of all African freedom fighters." See AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Mohale, Mpet, Qhobela to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1965.

<sup>688</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Mokhele to Ofori Bah, 9<sup>th</sup> November 1965; AGPL/BAA/393, Letter, Mohale to Ofori Bah, 15<sup>th</sup> November 1965; AGPL/BAA/393, Letter, Mpet to Ofori Bah, 10<sup>th</sup> December 1965; see also AGPL, BAA/393, "general meeting Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 1965".

<sup>689</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Chakela to Ofori Bah, 27<sup>th</sup> January 1966.

<sup>690</sup> AGPL, BAA/393, Letter, Molale, Mpet, Qhobela to Barden, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1965.

<sup>691</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, Letter, Khoza (NNLC) to Makoti (PAC), 1<sup>st</sup> March 1965.

<sup>692</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, "Memorandum of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) of South Africa submitted to the fourth Afro-Asian Conference held at Winneba, Ghana, from May 9 to May 16, 1965".

PAC proposed also the establishment of united fronts for the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Such point was one of the pillars of Ghana's Pan-African policy.<sup>693</sup>

Once again, Accra invested money and resources in the support to liberation movements not only to achieve the goals of its Pan-African policy but also to gain back a political return. While the Accra conference was approaching, Ghana was facing a terrible economical crisis within its borders and a political crisis abroad. Isolated internally due to the accusation of subversion, Ghana had to count on its prestige among the liberation movements as it had done in other occasions.

The 1965 OAU conference in Accra was the perfect stage for Ghana to show its strength in the arena of African liberation. The list of delegates to be invited clearly reflected Ghana's influence as the host of the conference. Most of the parties invited were supported by Ghana and had their offices of representation in Accra.<sup>694</sup>

As for the liberation movements hosted at the conference, Nkrumah wanted to be sure of their political stand. Consequently, the BAA monitored the liberation movements during their stay in Accra. The duty was fulfilled by the "new" Bureau of Ofori Bah. The BAA had to send officers to welcome and meet freedom fighters in Accra. The assignment of the officers was the following:

1. Lobbying of Freedom Fighters. [...] The officers are going to act as guides to the Freedom Fighters. Every morning the officers will go to the residence of the Freedom Fighters and convey them to the conference.
2. Officers will have to explain the situation at the Bureau now.
3. Officers will discuss with the Freedom Fighters the need for a Continental African Government and then try to let them accept the idea and support.
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<sup>693</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued/BK-Accra to Maseru Headquarters, Press release, Pan-Africanist Congress, 24<sup>th</sup> October 1965.

<sup>694</sup> AGPL, un-catalogued file/BC-CONF. OAU 1965, "invitation to the nationalist movements", undated. The liberation movements invited were [in brackets the number of delegates]: PAIGC (2), Liberation Committee of Sao Tome and Principe (2), IPGE (Idea Popular de la Guinea) (2), MPLA (2), SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) (3), SWANU (2), PAC (3), ANC (3), Unity Movement (1), NNLC (2), SPP (1), Imbokodvo National Movement (2), Basutoland National Party (2), BCP (3), Marematlou Freedom Party (1), Marematlou Party (1), Bechuanaland Democratic Party (3), Bechuanaland People's Party (2), Botswana Independence Party (1), Liberation Movement of Comoro Island (2), COREMO (Comité Revolucionario de Moçambique) (3), FRELIMO (2), ZANU (3), ZAPU (3).



The Officers will as well watch the movements of all representatives. 5. Daily report will be submitted to the office by officers.<sup>695</sup>

This assignments had two targets. On one side, Nkrumah wanted to be sure about the identities of the freedom fighters hosted in Ghana as he feared spies to be among them. On the other side, he wanted also the freedom fighters to be perfectly instructed by the BAA on their statements about Ghana at the conference. Nkrumah's main target for the conference was indeed to act as a guide for African liberation movements, trying to recover a certain prestige among the other members of the OAU.

Still, when the day of the Accra summit arrived, nothing that Nkrumah had planned could be turned into practice. Although the Ghanaian President had moved some of the most important political refugees out of Ghana, eight countries did not attend the Accra OAU summit as a protest against the Ghanaian subversive activities. They were: Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Dahomey, Niger, Togo, Gabon, Chad and the Malagasy Republic.<sup>696</sup> Even the presence of several friendly liberation movements did not change much the position of Ghana at the Conference. Nkrumah was still politically isolated and no one in the continent – apart from several radical liberation movements – was willing to support a Continental Union Government. For this reason, the Conference – which Nkrumah had seen during 1964/1965 as a last attempt to re-launch a political union – became rather unsatisfactory for the Ghanaian plans. Nkrumah himself had to drop the proposal for a Union Government and, instead, he accepted the project for the creation of an OAU Executive Committee of a few Heads of State as the only concession towards a stronger political union.<sup>697</sup> The accusations of subversion did not end with the expulsion of the members of opposition parties from Ghana, even because some of them went back to Ghana immediately after the conference.<sup>698</sup>

The last diplomatic attempt to support Nkrumah's Pan-African policy failed with the OAU conference of Accra. At the time, Ghana was also in a deep economical crisis which

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<sup>695</sup> PRAAD, SC/BAA/357, Letter, J.A.K. Kyiamh to the Secretary of the BAA, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1965.

<sup>696</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.384.

<sup>697</sup> K. Armah, *Peace without Power*, p.22.

<sup>698</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy*, p.385.

was bringing the country to a disaster. In this difficult political and economical situation, Nkrumah played his last card: he launched the idea of sending a military expedition to Southern Rhodesia in order to support the struggle for freedom there.

Few day after the conference the news of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Salisbury (11<sup>th</sup> November 1965) turned into the perfect *casus belli*. On 26<sup>th</sup> November 1965, the column of the CPP newspaper “The Party Chronicle” published a call for volunteers to Southern Rhodesia:

All Branch Executive Committees are requested to carry out a campaign within their various areas to rouse the masses of the people to join the Volunteer force, otherwise known as the People’s Militia, in order to get the whole of Ghana mobilized in Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s call for combat-readiness to help liberate Southern Rhodesia. At Branch Meeting throughout the whole of next week the Executive Committees should start to organize the masses to join the Militia in their thousands. All District Commissioner should called meeting to the District Executive Committees and they should all go into action in the usual Party dynamic way. No Party district should lag behind in these hours of the Parties clarion call.<sup>699</sup>

In reality, no mission was ever launched to Southern Rhodesia. Nkrumah was so politically weak that he had to align Ghana to the OAU resolutions on this question.<sup>700</sup> In the last months of 1965 and the beginning of 1966, the Ghanaian President made other attempts to re-launch his vision of African politics, but he had no success. The coup of the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1966 brought Nkrumah’s rule to an end and, and it consequently crystallized any further action of Ghana in the fields of African liberation and unity.

With the coup, Nkrumah’s political project, including his attempts to export Pan-Africanism and the so-called “African Revolution” throughout Africa could be declared over and defeated. The end of Nkrumah’s government signified also the end of his Pan-African policy and the end of the “Pan-African” institutions. In one single day an entire system was destroyed. Years and years of political developments were cancelled. Any

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<sup>699</sup> “The Party Chronicle”, vol.2, 12, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1965.

<sup>700</sup> W.S. Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p.393.

effort to re-launch a continental government had failed as well as a last attempt to transform the support to liberation movements in a revolutionary war.

The National Liberation Council was able to announce to the Ghanaians that their country had been freed forever by the former regime. The military authorities could also declare to the whole continent that the new Ghana would never follow the step of the deposed President. Accra was ready to collaborate with those same governments Nkrumah had threatened in the past the years. Immediately after the coup, backed by the Western powers, the NLC launched an anti-Nkrumah campaign in order to legitimize their putsch and counteract the residual influence that the past government could have still claimed in Africa. This operation began with an exposure of the subversive activities Accra had enacted between 1957 and 1966, the evidences of which were collected in the two booklets *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa* and *Nkrumah's Deception of Africa*. The booklets - both published in 1966 - presented Nkrumah's Pan-African project as a way to conceal his actual plan of ruling the entire continent.<sup>701</sup> Indeed, Nkrumah's Pan-African policy was described as contradictory, especially since the Ghanaian President had strongly opposed the OAU, the only organization that could actually embody Pan-Africanism. According to the NLC, the worst crime of Nkrumah's regime had been to work against the governments of other independent African states, threatening the independence that they had conquered just some years before.

Both the publications of the new government focused especially on the activities of the Bureau of African Affairs, the African Affairs Centre, and the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute of Winneba, the institutions which were presented as the most effective instruments of Nkrumah's subversive plans in Africa. Few references were made to Nkrumah's support to African liberation movements, and when the question was discussed, the work of the BAA was described as counter-productive if not detrimental. Quoting from *Nkrumah's Subversion in Africa*:

The arrogance that Nkrumah himself displayed towards other Africans was closely reflected in the Bureau's attitude towards refugees from dependent and

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<sup>701</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's subversion in African*, p. iii.

independent countries. People who had come to Ghana for help were so provoked as to become openly hostile. [...] As a result of this kind of treatment, by 1963 few leading African nationalists remained in Ghana. Most of those who did stay on were opportunists tied to Nkrumah by dependence on him for small handouts of cash and occasional gifts.<sup>702</sup>

The reality was different. At the time of the coup, the most influential liberation movements still had their offices of representation in Accra, even if their headquarters were in Dar-es-Salaam, Lusaka, or Leopoldville – that is – close to the battlefields of the African liberation struggle. Despite the opposition of the great part of the African independent states, Nkrumah could still claim a vast support among African nationalists. On the eve of the coup, the liberation movements with offices of representation in Accra – excluding the opposition parties and including a representation of the Popular Republic of Congo – were: Pan-Africanist Congress, Basutoland Congress Party, Ngwane National Liberatory Congress, *Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe*, National Unity Democratic Organization of South West Africa, *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde*, *Idea Popular de la Guinea Ecuatorial*, All-African Convention Unity Movement of South Africa, African National Congress, *Comite Revolucionario de Mocambique*, Bechuanaland People's Party and the Zimbabwe African National Union.<sup>703</sup>

The work of the Bureau, the AAC, and the Institute in support of African liberation and unity might not have produced the results Nkrumah expected, that is, to create a network of Nkrumahist nationalist parties sincerely devoted to the unity of the continent. However, the Ghanaian President had undoubtedly succeeded in keeping the freedom fighters close to Accra, even after the establishment of the Liberation Committee and the transfer of the frontline to Southern Africa. Such an achievement can be hardly reduced to a mere mercenary relationship between the freedom fighters and Accra. Nkrumah's target had been accomplished after considerable monetary sacrifices made to support the freedom fighters,

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<sup>702</sup> NLC, *Nkrumah's subversion in Africa*, p. 3.

<sup>703</sup> AGPL, BAA/9, "Nationalist Organisations Representatives in Accra" undated, but referable to February 1966.

but also after a constant and effective political work promoted within the ranks of the liberation movements. These efforts would have been worthless without an efficient system such as the one Nkrumah and Padmore had modeled since 1957 and – to some extent – even before.

## **5.12. Conclusions**

It is difficult to trace a balance of the period between 1963 and 1966. In this period, Nkrumah passed through a series of successes and defeats, dictated by different approaches in the performance of his Pan-African policy. The peculiar aspect of this phase was a growing radicalization which affected all the spheres of the political life of Ghana, including the management of its “Pan-African” institutions. The attempt to transfer the “African revolution” to the whole continent was successful only with regard to radical liberation movements. Still, it is interesting to observe that Nkrumah’s influence was still strong in several political circles in Africa practically until the coup of 1966.

Nkrumah was defeated mainly by the government of those African countries that were already independent, who saw the revolutionary agenda of Nkrumah as a pretext to rule the continent. They could not believe in the sincerity of his support to African liberation and unity, since the BAA had threatened their countries sponsoring “terrorists” groups. In fact, the sponsorship of opposition parties was part of Nkrumah’s Pan-African policy.

In this period, even the Bureau itself had been defeated by enemies both outside and inside Ghana. Barden’s “unorthodox” methods had brought the West to counteract vehemently its activities through propaganda and through a strict political and military collaboration with the “moderate” African countries. Inside Ghana, the Foreign Service also pushed for Barden’s removal. It was the same service which had criticized Padmore at the time of his appointment and which had suffered for the growing power of a body perceived as external to the “traditional” state. Still, not even the removal of the controversial figure of Barden had worked to modify the position of Ghana in Africa.

Unfortunately for Nkrumah, his vast net of supporters among the liberation movements was not able to save him nor his government from falling. With the coup of 1966, any attempt to convert Ghana into a revolutionary state and to export its political model crashed with the internal unrest that was mounting in the country. From his exile in Guinea, Nkrumah had plenty of time to think what went wrong, especially with regard to his dream of liberating and uniting the continent under one flag.