THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF THE GOLD COAST UNDER BRITISH COLONIAL RULE, 1897-1956: A STUDY IN POLITICAL CHANGE

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Department of History, University of Toronto

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ABSTRACT

THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF THE GOLD COAST UNDER BRITISH
COLONIAL RULE, 1897-1956: A STUDY IN POLITICAL CHANGE.

Ph.D. 1996, N.J.K. Brukum

Department of History, University of Toronto.

This thesis is about the political changes that occurred in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast under British colonial rule. It deals with how the British strengthened the institution of chiefship where it existed and created it in areas it was non-existent. The work also examines how the Northern Territories were turned to a labour reserve for the rest of the country and the efforts made to isolate the North from what the British regarded as the "disruptive" influence of the south. And to implement this policy western education and Christian missionaries, its main agents, were controlled.

After acquiring the area through treaties with chiefs, Britain realised that it could not effectively rule such a wide area with the skeletal administration at its disposal. Unfortunately, the existing empires had been weakened either by civil wars or by the activities of Samory and Babatu. The British recreated these empires by strengthening the powers of the paramount chiefs and subordinating the hitherto almost independent divisional chiefs to them. The establishment of Native Administrative Authorities in 1930 with their Native Treasuries and Tribunals under the ambit of indirect rule, was the peak of this policy. Meanwhile, to isolate Northerners from the rest of the country where - British colonial
rule had been established since 1872 - and turn their area into a labour reserve, the introduction and spread of western education was controlled.

But the North did not remain isolated for long. Disturbances in the south in the wake of economic hardships which followed the Second World War, thrust the Gold Coast bound for independence. First, a consultative council dominated by chiefs was established in the North in 1946. Within two years of its formation, the council had become dominated by literates since most of the chiefs who were illiterate in English could not follow debates in English. In 1951, the North was for the first time represented in the Legislative Assembly. This first group of Northerners entered the Assembly with the aim of defending Northern interests and fighting for rapid socio-economic development of their area. But they could not achieve much. The Northerners also found the rapid drive for internal self-government of Southerners distasteful. Their response was either to delay the regaining of independence until the North had caught up with the rest or devolution of power to the regions. But with the success of the Convention People’s Party at the 1951, 1954 and 1956 elections, independence for the Gold Coast could not be delayed any longer. Reluctantly, the under-developed North joined the rest of the country on 6 March 1957 for independence.

Dealing with the changes introduced in the North by the British, this work points out that the political changes were to benefit the elite who soon supplanted chiefs as leaders although the latter are not yet a spent force.
cells to support the bioactivation of xenobiotics through the P450 peroxidase system.

2. The naturally occurring hydroperoxide, hydrogen peroxide, was found to be particularly effective at supporting cytochrome P450 1A2-catalyzed activation of the heterocyclic aromatic amine, 2-amino-3-methylimidazo[4,5-\(f\)]quinoline (IQ), to genotoxic metabolites. The addition of hydrogen peroxide or tBHP to rP4501A greatly enhanced the yield of histidine prototrophic (His\(^+\)) revertants, which was inhibited by \(\alpha\)-naphthoflavone, a P450 1A inhibitor. Hydrogen peroxide was the most effective peroxidase cofactor, particularly with human P450 1A2-containing microsomes (hP4501A2). The hydroperoxide-supported activation of IQ formed an adduct with 2'-deoxyguanosine similar to that of the well characterized DNA adduct formed (in vivo or in vitro) by the P450-catalyzed bioactivation system.

3. Organic hydroperoxides are believed to be primarily bioactivated to cytotoxic radical species by non heme iron. However, various P450 inhibitors were found to prevent cumene hydroperoxide (CumOOH) metabolism and subsequent cytotoxic effects including antimycin-A resistant respiration, lipid peroxidation, iron mobilization, ATP depletion, and cell membrane disruption. These results suggest that P450 enzymes in hepatocytes bioactivate CumOOH to form reactive radical metabolites or oxidants that cause lipid peroxidation and cytotoxicity.
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ABBREVIATIONS

Principal abbreviations used in the text and notes.

C.C.N.T. Chief Commissioner, Northern Territories.
C.N.P. Commissioner, Northern Province.
C.N.E.P. Commissioner, North-Eastern Province.
C.N.W.P. Commissioner, North-Western Province.
C.S.P. Commissioner, Southern Province.
CPP Convention People’s Party.
C.U.P. Cambridge University Press.
JAH Journal of African History
M.A.P. Moslem Association Party.
NAG. National Archives of Ghana.
NAGT. National Archives of Ghana, Tamale.
N.L.M. National Liberation Movement.
NPP Northern People’s Party
O.U.P. Oxford University Press.
UGCC United Gold Coast Convention.
W.A. West Africa

GLOSSARY

Bawkunaba Chief of Bawku
Bimbilla Na Paramount chief of Nanun
Bolewura Chief of Bole, one of the Gonja divisions
Bongonab Chief of Bongo
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dagbon</td>
<td>The kingdom founded by Dagombas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakpema</td>
<td>Chief of Tamale town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Gate&quot;</td>
<td>Royal lineage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gbonlana</td>
<td>Regent of a king in Dagbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grune</td>
<td>The language of Grunshis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isala</td>
<td>The language of Sissala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kambonaba</td>
<td>Government appointed headman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaga Na</td>
<td>Chief of Karaga and a duke in Dagbon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasawulewura</td>
<td>The custodian of land among Gonjas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konor</td>
<td>Title of the paramount chief of Krobos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koro</td>
<td>Suffix koro stands for chief among the Isala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpembewura</td>
<td>Chief of Kpembe a Gonja division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamprugu</td>
<td>Kingdom founded by the Mamprusi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mionlana</td>
<td>Chief of Mion and a duke in Dagbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na</td>
<td>Chief among the Mole-Dagbani hence Karaga Na means chief of Karaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nab</td>
<td>Suffix nab stands for chief among the Builsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam</td>
<td>Chiefly authority among Mole-Dagbani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanun</td>
<td>Kingdom established by the Nanumbas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasaara pang</td>
<td>Government appointed chief armed with arbitrary power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayiri</td>
<td>Paramount chief of Mamprusi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navropio</td>
<td>Chief of Navrongo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okyenhene</td>
<td>Paramount chief of Akyem Abuakwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omanhene</td>
<td>Divisional chief among Akans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pio</td>
<td>Title of chief among the Kasem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandemanab</td>
<td>Chief of Sandema and paramount chief of Builsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tindana</td>
<td>Custodian of land among the Mole-Dagbani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tintentina</td>
<td>Custodian of land among the Isala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumukro</td>
<td>Chief of Tumu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuluwewura</td>
<td>Chief of Tuluwe, a division of Gonja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasipewura</td>
<td>Chief of Daboya, a division of Gonja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wura</td>
<td>Suffix which stands for chief among the Kwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yagbumwura</td>
<td>Paramount chief of Gonjas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya Na</td>
<td>Paramount chief of Dagombas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yo Na</td>
<td>Chief of Savelugu and a duke in Dagbon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER 1.

The dynamic character of Western capitalist societies is such that their expansion to non-Western societies inevitably results in the reconstruction of the latter along modern lines.¹

This thesis is a study of political change in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Although there is no generally accepted dividing line between the "north" and "south" of Ghana, the term Northern Territories as used in this study, is conterminous with the Northern, Upper-East and Upper-West Regions and the Attebubu and Krachi Districts of modern Ghana. They are the areas which lie mostly to the north of the Black Volta River. Approximately 38,000 square miles according to the 1948 census, it consisted of five districts with a population of 1,076,696.² As an administrative unit, it lasted from 1897 to 1960 when it was split to create the Northern and Upper Region.

As a study based primarily on government documents, this work seeks to investigate the political changes which occurred in the Northern Territories since 1897 through a series of case studies: how the pre-colonial states came under British rule, the establishment of and consolidation of an administrative machinery and the integration of the area into the rest of the Gold Coast. These reflect change and continuity under British rule. Historical research and study have always tested some theories and


²Gold Coast Census Population for 1948, p.15.
conceptions to illustrate the subject under study. I intend to use a few of them to explain what I mean by political change.

**Theory of Political Change.**

The first wave of studies of African politics which was oriented to the national level, traced the evolution of politics in many countries, the emergence of political leaders, parties and movements and the role of national institutions such as bureaucracies, the army and trade unions. In the 1970s, some attempts were also made to analyse the politics and political change at the local, village, town and district levels in Ghana. Some social science literature dealing with the phenomena of political, as well social and political change, equated political change with the concept of "modernisation". Writers of this school equated "change" with the "modernity/traditional" schema. In this sense, "modern" and modernisation" are implicitly, if not explicitly, defined in terms of the social, economic and political life in industrialised society. This schema is inadequate to

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explain the changes that occurred in the North during the period of our study. This is because British administrators were constantly concerned to insulate the North from the modernising forces of the South. They wanted to keep the "innocent Northerner" from contamination from what they regarded as the Southern "virus". Indeed the only "modern" amenities introduced by them were the construction of a few roads, hospitals, schools and a Westminster form of government. Some writers of the 1980s also saw "modernisation" in terms of economic growth and have explained it in terms of Dependency or Marxist theories of development. These approaches also do not fully explain developments in the North except to highlight the exploitation of Northern labour in the mines, cocoa farms and on railway lines in the South. This led to the economic neglect of the area hence its relative backwardness.

Whitaker has pointed out that the use of the concept of modernisation to explain political change is an inadequate tool for analysis, at least in terms of its universal applicability. He


7Whitaker, op cit. p.7.
asserts that the principal objection to the prevailing notion rests on a strictly *a priori* assumption that for all societies there is only one direction of significant change and this culminates in something similar to modern Western society. This conceptual attachment to the unilinear model of change according to him, is rooted in a naive faith in social evolution or the inevitability of "progress" and arbitrarily places certain societies at the top of a descending scale of human virtue. Whitaker further points out that the constituent elements in any process of change are assumed to be mutually supportive and consistent both in respect to various spheres of society (economic, politics and culture) and to various aspects of any action within a given sphere. In other words, once any significant new element is introduced into society, a host of changes follow which are all in keeping with the character and impact of the initial innovation. Modernisation theorists argue that a traditional society which accepts one major feature of modern society must accept virtually all of them. Whitaker argues, however, that a range of alternatives exist for a traditional society. These include total rejection of modernity and total retention of tradition; total acceptance of modernity and total replacement of tradition; partial acceptance of modernity and partial retention of tradition; partial rejection of modernity and total retention of tradition; partial replacement of tradition and total acceptance of modernity and lastly, total retention of

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*Whitaker, *op cit.* p.3.

tradition and total acceptance of modernity. The Northern Territories falls in line with Whitaker's schema three because with the introduction of "modernity" the people retained certain aspects of their tradition such as the selection of chiefs from certain "gates." Many of the chiefs however realised that since illiterates could not cope with debates, election manifestos and parliamentary procedures they gave way to non-chief elites and literate chiefs. However, the elite needed the support of the chiefs to be successful. In order to maintain stability in the North, the British maintained chieftaincy, the most important element of the traditional system and at the same time promoted modification of both traditional and modern institutions such as parliamentary, judiciary and legislative systems.

Though modernisation theory can be used to analyse some aspects of development in new states it is inadequate to explain all developments in the Northern Territories since 1897. First, the institution of chieftaincy - whether British created or not - was not completely "modernised" though the concepts of authority underwent a drastic change. For example, with the introduction of indirect rule particularly with the establishment of the Native Authority, the chiefs had a Native Police Force to implement their decisions thus strengthening their authority. There is no doubt that most of the chiefs became literate in English and therefore had a "modern" outlook to life. They could therefore participate actively in the innovations introduced by Colonial officials such

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as sitting on the Northern Territorial Council and discussing development schemes for Native Authorities. But the criteria for
the selection of chiefs and the institution itself remained the
same. Chiefs continued to be selected from certain "gates" and
lineages and few people without chieftaincy background could rise
to positions of prominence in the new structures.\footnote{The British tried unsuccessfully to introduce the Western
type of election in the selection of chiefs. See Chief
Commissioner, Northern Territories (hereafter C.C.N.T.), 24
November, 1920 to Col. Sec., Accra. ADM. 2/18, National Archives of
Ghana, Tamale (hereafter NAGT.) Officials recognised the danger of
gerontocracy presented by the Dagbon promotional system. As a rule,
chiefs were fairly old by the time they achieved high office; but
no matter how senile they became, custom forbade "deskinnment"
or
abdication. As early as 1930 one official wondered aloud if the
native system could actually be "made proof against deficiencies in
personnel. It is possible to envisage a situation where the younger
literate Africans in the Native Administration have become
inpatient at the incapacity or reactionary views of a chief thrown
up by the gate system." See "Some impressions of one's first tour
of service", 1930. ADM.1/250; NAGT.}

\footnote{However, Whitaker and Kilson have shown that they do not
necessarily clash. See Whitaker (1970) and Kilson (1966).}

\footnote{Hereafter NPP}

Secondly, although some modernisation theory talks of clashes between
tradition and modernity this is inapplicable to our area of
study.\footnote{However, Whitaker and Kilson have shown that they do not
necessarily clash. See Whitaker (1970) and Kilson (1966).}
Although this occurred in Asante and in the Gold Coast
Colony, in the North, the two interacted, coexisted, combined and
recombined in new and intricate ways. For example, without chiefly
support the Northern People's Party\footnote{Hereafter NPP} formed in 1954 could not have
achieved the success it did. Indeed, in most areas of the North
Eastern Province, the clenched fist which was the logo of the party
was said to be that of the Nayiri. This gave the party much support
in the province. This study therefore accepts the notion of a distinction between the traditional and the modern, but not the incompatibility of the two. In the Northern Territories, aspects of traditional societies accorded perfectly with the features of modern societies and the two existed without violence.

Nevertheless, the mode of adjusting indigenous holders of authority and power to the colonial state, whether direct or indirect, represented a key feature of political change. Once political change was introduced in the indigenous institutions these institutions themselves took on modernising functions which increasingly govern future changes in them. This explains why from the 1930s such functions as tax collection, the provision of labour, road construction were performed by chiefs in the Northern Territories simultaneously with their traditional functions.

The Context: The Colonialist Episode.

This study is about the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast under British Colonial rule. J.F.A. Ajayi has pointed out that colonialism was only an episode in African history. While this statement challenges the then prevailing view that African history began only with the arrival of Europeans, colonial rule did affect

\(^{14}\)As will be shown throughout this study the British utilised the services of the indigenous authorities and power holders in the administration, even if on a limited scale. This introduced political changes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.

\(^{15}\)See chapters 4 and 5.

many parts of Africa profoundly. The Northern Territories of the
Gold Coast was no exception. The British occupied the Northern
Territories just after the area was devastated by the slave raiding
of Samory and Babatu and civil wars that weakened the pre-colonial
states. Consequently, the most pressing consideration was the
adoption of simple measures to restore peace and confidence. The
first major change introduced in the Northern Territories was the
transformation of traditional authority. With a small staff and a
large area to rule, the British realised the expediency of ruling
through chiefs. Indeed, as early as 1898 Northcott, the first Chief
Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories pointed out
that the agency to be employed would be chiefs and that their
authority would be supported if they showed good behaviour. 17
However, problems arose in implementing this policy. Firstly, the
British did not find any "big chiefs " in the Northern Territories.
Sizable kingdoms such as Gonja and Mamprugu had been dislocated by
war. Dagbon, the other had been partitioned among the British and
Germans. In addition, all three kingdoms were highly decentralised
and the divisional chiefs operated independently of their paramount
chiefs. The British consolidated the authority of paramount chiefs
while reconstructing the kingdoms that had disintegrated. In this
process, the powers of the hitherto almost autonomous divisional
chiefs were drastically curtailed and they and other autonomous
chiefs were amalgamated under the paramountcy of "one really big

17Cited in Bening, R.B., "Foundations of the modern native
states of Northern Ghana" in Universitas, Legon, iv, 3, 1975,
p.118.
chief." The process of consolidating the powers of chiefs continued over several decades and was completed with the introduction of indirect rule in the early 1930s.

While the powers of chiefs had declined in some areas, to the dismay of officials they found out that many people, particularly in the north-west and north-east had no chiefs at all. The British created new chiefs in such areas. Between 1900 and 1910, the administration recognised a large number of chiefs as "paramount" over particular areas. The criteria for selection was often loyalty or service to the British. The net result of the creation and strengthening of chiefly power in the Northern Territories is that chiefs became more powerful than their predecessors and came to play an important role when western institutions such as political parties and parliament were introduced in the early 1950s.  

Economic growth in the South created the demand for labour. Those who governed the North had as their mandate to produce the labour the South needed. They were therefore reluctant to develop the North hence it became a "labour reserve" for the rest of the country. From the beginning the local administration drew on labour for its own requirements, principally porterage and road construction. In 1906, a party of men from the North was brought to the mining districts to be shown the work, rates of pay, way of life and the general treatment of the workers. Organised recruiting for the mines in which officials and chiefs played a major role

\[\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\text{However, it should be pointed out that in areas such as capital punishment their powers were greatly curtailed.}\]
began the next year. The number of recruits demanded from chiefs increased as government needed labour to extend the railway to Asante and also with the advent of the mining of manganese for the war effort. Chiefs who could not meet these demands were either fined, imprisoned or deskinned. These demands affected agricultural production and chiefs protested by recruiting either the aged or deformed people while the recruits themselves deserted or fled to inaccessible areas.

One other major change brought by the British in the North was the introduction of western education. But even in this sphere, it was a belated attempt. Compulsory recruitment of labour was possible in the Northern Territories because of the lack of a politically aware group of educated Ghanaians like the Aborigines Rights Protection Society. The British deliberately delayed the

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19C.C.N.T., 3 September, 1907 to Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/5; NAG, Accra.

In the Confidential Diaries of Commissioners of the North between January -December 1923, the activities of the chiefs in relation to labour recruitment have been recorded. In one particular instance the only comment on death of a chief was that he "gave us most useful help with public works labour. The causeway at Yamalga could not have been built so quickly without the 200 men he kept constantly on the work." Entry into Diary, C.C.N.T., 15 May, 1923; ADM.56/1/358; National Archives of Ghana, (hereafter NAG), Accra. But within the same diary was recorded the rebellious nature of some other chiefs and treatment that were given to them. For example, in December, 1925 an extract from the diary records "I put the chief of Charia on the mat (means being made to sit in the sun) because he has repeatedly disobeyed orders and won’t do anything (supply men). Fined him and ordered him to find 400 men for work on No. 6 Road." ADM.56/1/369; NAG, Accra.

introduction of western education into the North so as to turn it into a labour reserve. However, the administration opened the first school in 1909 two years after the White Fathers Mission had established theirs at Navrongo. The main stimulus for the early educational efforts was to provide for the needs of the administration, which hoped to train the next generation of chiefs by sending their children to school. Initially therefore, attention was to educate chiefs' sons. To this end, in 1908 four sons of chiefs were sent to the Government School in Cape Coast and subsequently to the Technical School in Accra. However, the growth of education in the North was slow because the Administration was unwilling to open many schools, but placed many restrictions on missionary activity. The White Fathers, the first missionary body in the Dependency, secured permission to operate in the North only after initial hesitation on the part of the administration which feared the "disruptive influence" and the French origins of the missionaries. Although the mission was staffed largely by French Canadians - hence British subjects - an atmosphere of suspicion if not hostility existed until 1929 when the Colonial Office directed that the White Fathers were to operate without any restrictions. By 1935 they had established four schools in present day Upper West and Upper East Regions as against five by the government.

Education in the North began to have real significance during the governorship of Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg in the mid-

\footnote{Der, G., "Church State Relations in Northern Ghana" in \textit{THSG}, xv, i, 1974, pp.41-51.}
1920s. Guggisberg saw in the vast and undeveloped area the opportunity to provide a new type of education which would avoid the "mistakes" made in Asante and the Colony where the unguided educational system led to the proliferation of "bush schools" and where the literates opposed chiefs. The Governor’s educational reforms for the Northern Territories aimed at advancing and strengthening traditional institutions while maintaining a high standard of education. Few schools were to be opened in the Protectorate with the senior school in Tamale serving as the apex of the educational ladder. In addition, the education had a strong practical bias. Pupils were instructed in agriculture, brick laying, carpentry and rope and mat weaving. With the introduction of indirect rule in 1930, and the establishment of Native Authority Schools the syllabus was designed to produce administrative auxiliaries required for government work: clerks, interpreters, veterinary assistants, works foremen, teachers, Native Secretaries, treasuries and court registrars. One would have thought that there would have been harmony between Northerners who had acquired western education and colonial officials. But this was not the case. The colonial regime did not trust the new elite and forced them to operate through the indirect rule system. It therefore meant that the course of modernisation sought by the regime was a very circumscribed one dependant on leaders whose interests were opposed to a deeper transformation. Nevertheless, western education introduced social mobility. Under the pre-colonial system social mobility was difficult. One was born either a royal or a commoner
and remained there. But with the introduction of western education people of commoner status rose to positions of prominence in the region.

Another source of change in the North was Christianity. Christian missions had worked in the Colony as far back as the 18th century. Although a few missionaries such as David Asante and Theophil Opoku had conducted preaching tours of the North, it was only in 1905 that the White Fathers Mission was allowed to open a station in Navrongo. Their activities were restricted to Navrongo and its environs ostensibly because most other areas had not yet been "pacified." From 1929, the White Fathers moved to Wiaga, Wa, Jirapa and Nandom areas to open schools and propagate the gospel. To advance their work, the mission established a catechists’ school at Jirapa in 1932. Soon catechists were planted in most of the major villages in both North-west and North-east Provinces. Their homes became the centres of activity in the villages as there was a mass conversion particularly in areas around Jirapa. The conversions however were looked at with alarm by chiefs and practitioners of traditional religion who believed their powers would be undermined. Other missionary bodies which followed the White Fathers were the Wesleyan, Presbyterians and Assemblies of God. Although the missionaries could not convert many people in the other areas they introduced changes through their educational efforts. Today the largest number of people literate in English are found in areas where the missionaries operated.

Pre-dating Christianity in the Protectorate was Islam which
was introduced first by merchants from the north-west and later from the north-east. Muslims played an important role in the courts of the paramount chiefs of Gonja, Dagbon, Mamprugu and Wa as counsellors and Imams and secretaries. Although Islam like Christianity could not replace traditional African religion, it influenced popular culture. Koranic schools were also established in important towns such as Wa, Salaga and Kete Krachi, the most prominent being that established by Al-Hajj Umar Ibn Abi Bakr b. Uthman al-Kanawi in Kete Krachi. Also, unlike Christianity, Islam was not opposed by colonial officials and indeed some Muslims like the Imam of Gambaga were used by the British to implement sanitation laws. But the most important contribution of Islam in the Dependency was the introduction of literacy in Arabic and therefore some of the earliest elite in the area.

**The Northern Territories in Literature**

The earliest known references to Northern Ghana in written literature were made by Arab writers and deal with the kola and gold trade in the fifteenth century. These early accounts, based on information obtained from Muslim traders, tell more about trade and Islam than about the local people and their social and political life.\(^2\) In the early 19th century some information on the area became known to the western world. This was mainly through the

writings of Bowdich and Dupuis. The two British envoys to the Asantehene's court wrote on Asante/Dagbon and Gonja relations, the trade between the north and Asante and Islam in Dagbon.

From the mid-nineteenth century, information about the "hinterland" of Asante became widely known through the writings of missionaries and colonial officials. Unlike the earlier writers, the latter described the form of government, religion and trade activities of Northern society. From the 1880s, European colonisers signed treaties with the kings and chiefs of the North. Like their counterparts a decade earlier, their descriptions of the people and their history have become an invaluable source of knowledge. Of all colonial officials, the accounts of George Ekem Ferguson, a surveyor are the most famous. Ferguson wrote in detail about the topography, mineral wealth, history and culture of the people than any of his contemporaries. He was also the first British agent to write about the non-centralised societies inhabiting the area between Mamprugu to the south and Mossi to the North.

The Northern Territories became better known with the onset of

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25 The most famous of the missionaries were David Asante, Thophil Opoku and G. Beck. The explorers were Bonnat, Glover and Gouldsbury. For a description of the areas and people they visited see *Salaga Papers, Vol. 1* compiled by Marion Johnson, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon (n.d. hereafter Johnson)

colonialism. One of the duties of the colonial officials was to write periodic reports about their districts. These were sent to the Chief Commissioner in Tamale who forwarded them to the Governor in Accra. The latter then sent copies to the Colonial Office in London. These reports also contain information on history, culture, economic activities and social life. In 1915 W.W. Claridge, a colonial official was the first to attempt a history of the Gold Coast.\(^2\) Although a Provincial Medical Officer in Tamale in the 1920s, Claridge made the North peripheral in his history. Indeed he only mentions how the Protectorate became British.

Studies about the North received a great boost in the 1920s when colonial administration contemplated the introduction of the indirect rule system to the region. Before the new policy could be launched a survey of the social and political structure of the peoples and their history was needed. Rattray was sent to undertake such a survey. The outcome of his study are two books *The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, Vols.1 & 2. They deal mainly with the culture and land tenure system of the people. Following the research, series of conferences were held between 1930 and 1933 which codified the constitutions, systems of inheritance and land tenure of the major states. The main shortcoming of Rattray’s research is that he gave little attention to history.

In preparing for the introduction of indirect rule, District

\(^2\)Claridge’s books were *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti* Vols. 1& 2. (Frank Cass & Co, Ltd.: 1915). Indeed the first history about the Gold Coast was C.C. Reindorf’s *History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti*. (Ghana Universities Press: 1966). It was written in 1896 when the Northern Protectorate had not been formed.
Commissioners were invited to study the peoples under their administration. The results were books by Tamakloe, Blair, Duncan-Johnstone, Eyre-Smith, Mackay and Kerr on Dagbon, Gonja, Mamprugu and Kusasi. The major weakness of these books is that they are more anthropological than historical. They did not concern themselves much about economic activities and did not view the North in a national setting. The general anthropological survey of Rattray was followed by an intensive study of the Tallensi by Fortes. The works of Rattray and Fortes served Manoukian in compiling her Tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.

Disturbances in the Gold Coast after the Second World War which occasioned its rapid political advancement to nationhood attracted the attention of political scientists and historians. W.E. F. Ward's A History of the Gold Coast was the first attempt to explain how the Gold Coast came to be what it is. Although Ward gives a good exposition of political developments in the country he only mentions the North when events in the area such as the formation of the NPP impinge on national politics. He did not

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28The outcome of their studies are books such as Tamakloe, F., A History of the Dagbamba People (Accra: 1931), Duncan-Johnstone, A.C., and Blair, H.A. Enquiry into the Constitution and Organisation of the Dagbon Kingdom (Accra: Government Printer, 1932); Eyre-Smith, St. J., A Brief Review of the History and Social Organisation of the Peoples of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast (Accra: Government Printer, 1933)

29The study resulted in the publication of Fortes, M., The Dynamics of Clanship Among the Tallensi (London: 1949)

discuss what led to the formation of that party and why it differed from the Convention People’s Party. Ward also ignored the isolationist policies of the colonial government in the North.

Two other works of relevance to the North are Bourret’s *The Gold Coast: A Survey of the Gold Coast and British Togoland* and Apter’s *Ghana in Transition*. They give detailed information about the land and people, their social systems and how the area became a British territory. However like the earlier books, they do not discuss the isolationist policies Britain pursued in the area, the failure to develop the human and natural and resources and more importantly, the reaction of the people to these policies.

The Northern Territories attracted the attention of graduate students from Ghana and Western European countries in the early 1970s and 1980s. Among them are Bening, Saaka, Frimpong, Marville, Nii-K Plange and Der. As a political geographer, Bening concentrated on the evolution of international boundaries, provinces (they became regions after independence in 1957) and districts of the Northern Territories. Bening also discusses in detail the acquisition of the North by Britain and the policies adopted during the formative years of the Protectorate. He makes the point that the naming of the districts after the names of some of the ethnic groups is inappropriate because it conceals their

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11Hereafter CPP

12See foot notes 30 and 31 for the titles of their theses. This list is not exhaustive. But these are those I was able to consult.
heterogeneity.¹³

Saaka was concerned with the development of a Northern consciousness and the role of Northern Parliamentarians in national politics between 1951 and 1954. Although he attributes the rise of a "Northern consciousness" to the first meeting of chiefs in 1938 in Tamale¹⁴ it is clear that it developed much earlier. Indeed, it started when almost all Northern chiefs convened in Tamale in 1908 at the official opening of the new capital. Of much importance about the relative socio-economic backwardness of Northern Ghana is Nii-K Plange's work. His main thesis is that the underdevelopment of the North was mainly due to the subordination of Northern interests to those of the Colony and Asante.¹⁵ Der concentrated on the impact of missionary bodies, particularly the White Fathers on

¹³Bening, R.B., "The Evolution of the Administrative Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1898-1965" Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1971, p.107. To a certain extent this is the underlying cause of the ethnic conflicts in the North since the groups after whom the districts are named erroneously think the land belongs to them. Marville's thesis falls in line with the first three chapters of Bening's thesis which concentrate on the acquisition of the North by Britain.

¹⁴Saaka A.Y. "The Evolution of Political Consciousness in Northern Ghana, 1900-1954." Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 1972, p.3. Although politics in the North was marginal to Frimpong's thesis he was at pains to show unity among Northern Parliamentarians before party politics was introduced to the area after 1954. This explains why according to him, they were able to "press the button" in their demands for a rapid socio-economic development of their area. See Frimpong, J.H.S., "The Ghana Parliament, 1951-1966, Ph.D. Thesis, Exeter University, 1970, chapter 4

¹⁵Plange(1976), pp.125-255.
society in Upper West Region.  

From the early 1960s through to the mid-1970s, political scientists and historians wrote text books on Ghana apparently targeted at tertiary institutions. Of these Kimble’s *A Political History of Ghana* (1963) and Austin’s *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960* (1964) are the most important. Kimble briefly discusses the administration of the North in its formative years, its paternalistic attitude towards education and the isolationists policies it developed for the Protectorate. However, he did not discuss attempts at integrating the area into Ghana because his period of study ends in 1928. While Austin did not concern himself very much with the politics of the early administrators, he discusses in detail how events of 1948 shaped politics in the Dependency. Austin’s major contribution to our knowledge of politics in the North is his treatment of the NPP in national politics. However Boahen and Agbodeka’s books ostensibly written for tertiary institutions in Ghana give the North a periphery treatment. While Boahen only briefly mentions the alliance between the NPP and the National Liberation Movement, Agbodeka only mentions the North with regard to Britain’s mandate over parts of


38Hereafter NLM
Togoland.

However, Ladouceur and Staniland deal with political developments in the North. Ladouceur seeks to explain the origins of the demands for autonomy for the region before independence. In doing this he examines the acquisition of the area by Britain, the policies pursued and attempts at integrating the North with the rest of the country. Ladouceur, however does not delve into the details of the isolationist policies adopted, the inception of indirect rule which further separated the area from Asante and the Colony and more importantly, the labour policies which made the Dependency the labour pool of Ghana. Staniland on the other hand was primarily concerned with the origins of the Yendi chieftaincy dispute. He gives a brief account of how Dagbon became part of British colony. He however, discusses in detail, indirect rule in Dagbon and how it shaped the future chieftaincy dispute. None of these works gives a complete account of the evolution of the North, but collectively they lay the foundation of our knowledge of the North. It is to fill the gaps in the various works that this work has been undertaken. Although most of the research was done in the National Archives in Accra, a few people were also interviewed. The interviews consisted of an open ended questionnaire I administered personally to the respondents. Their responses were recorded on a radio cassette which I later transcribed.

39See bibliography. I could not interview any of the many Northern political leaders who were still alive because the region had just witnessed a devastating ethnic war and most area were still in turmoil. All my respondents are from the southern-eastern corner of the North which was relatively peaceful.
AN ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF THE GOLD COAST.

By an Order in Council of 1902, the area which became known as the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast was constituted. This was after the Anglo-French and Anglo-German conventions of 1898 and 1899 respectively which defined their various boundaries. Even before the conclusion of the agreements, in 1897 the Northern Territories were divided into three districts centred on Kintampo, Wa and Gambaga. Under a scheme submitted by Lt. Col. Northcott, the first Commissioner and Commandant, the Northern Territories were divided into the Black Volta, White Volta and Kintampo districts. The first two were subdivided into seven subdistricts of Dagarti, Grunshi, Frafra, Mamprusi, Wa, Bole and Daboya. The main principles which guided the definition of the subdistricts were that:

1) the successful administration, "pacification" and development of these territories was "dependent upon the ubiquity of the white man."

2) the subdistricts could "be capable from their size, of being effectively regulated by an European"

3) the boundaries should "adhere as nearly as possible to the existing racial boundaries."

The period preceding the advent of British rule witnessed the destruction and exhaustion of both human and material resources of

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41 African (West) No. 564. Enclosure 1 in No. 143, p.252.
the country through war and slave raiding. The area between Wa in north-west, latitude 11 to the north and Mamprugu to the east and north-east was occupied by non-centralised people such as Kasem, Isala, Kusasi, Builsa and Frafra. Their area was the hunting grounds for slaves by Gonja and Dagbon to pay their quota of slaves to Asante. Life was therefore uncertain, the people were suspicious of all strangers, and the disturbed conditions discouraged both trade and agriculture. This made it impossible for them to offer resistance to any foreign conqueror although the Frafra made some uncoordinated attempts to resist the British. Consequently, after the British occupation of the area, the most pressing problem was the restoration of peace. For the effective control and uniform development of the country, the administrative units had to be compact and limited in area. The coincidence of ethnic and administrative boundaries, if these were possible, would have the double advantage of avoiding the possibility of conflict with the authorities of the various chiefs and ensuring ethnic uniformity and hence a higher degree of co-operation with administrative areas. Support for the authority of the chiefs was recognised early as the only practical and economic way for the effective control and rapid development of this large tract of territory.

The push to the interior and the attendant military operations shifted the centre of gravity of the disputed territory further north. The expediency of acting promptly at a distance from the headquarters, as well as the necessity for rapid communication with the scattered detachments to facilitate concentration of energies,
underlined the importance of the Officer Commanding being brought closer to the area of active confrontation. So from December 1897, Gambaga became for all practical purposes, the seat of the Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories, formally superseding Kintampo, as the headquarters in July 1898. Also, in 1902, the 1898 administrative arrangements were abolished by the creation of new administrative areas. This was in conformity with the rival scheme submitted by Governor Hodgson. Although the title and headquarters of the three divisions were retained considerable modifications were effected in their boundaries. A new administrative unit, the Gonja district was established with Salaga as its headquarters. Although the 1898 Northcott arrangements had been accepted as the basis for the administration of the Northern Territories, the establishment was chronically short of its complement of officers, essentially because of the difficulties of obtaining military personnel of the right calibre. The South African War of 1899 further depleted the staff serving in those territories, while the Asante Rebellion of 190042 not only prevented officers from proceeding to the North but focused attention on Asante.

The year 1907 marked an important step in the history of the Northern Territories. In that year the military administration was replaced by a civilian regime mainly because it was apparent that the military administration was inadequate for effective

42This rebellion is better known in the history of Ghana as the Yaa Asantewaa war. It is named after Yaa Asantewaa, the Queen Mother of Edweso and leader of the rebellion.
government. Although the three main divisions still existed, Tamale and not Kintampo became the headquarters of the Southern province. A year later the headquarters of the Northern Territories was transferred from Gambaga to Tamale because the latter was centrally placed and afforded a quicker communication with both the south and north than the former which was in the north-eastern corner of the territory. These territorial arrangements remained until 1921 when the number of provinces was reduced to two mainly for economic reasons. However, with the introduction of indirect rule in 1930, the three provinces were re-established this time, with Navrongo and not Gambaga as headquarters of the North-Eastern Province. This arrangement remained in place until 1960.

Content.

This study is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 2 discusses the ethnography of the Northern Territories and how some of the aborigines living under their Tindanas were conquered first by the Mole-Dagbani invaders from the north-east and later by the Gonjas from the north-west. The invaders were better armed and had an idea of kingship. Both the conquered and conquerors were commercially in contact first with countries of Mediterranean world through Muslim Mande traders and later with the south. However, in the 18th century a new master, Asante came on the scene and reduced Gonja, Dagbon and Nanun into vassalage. Chapters three and four examine how the area came under British rule and how Britain consolidated her rule through wars of "pacification" and strengthening of chiefly authority. Chapters five to eight discuss the efforts made
to integrate the newly acquired areas into the rest of the country. First, the British turned the area into a labour pool for the rest of the country. In this connection no efforts were made to develop the economic potential of the area neither was the infrastructure developed except the few "political roads." Recruitment of people for the mines, railway construction, army and police was seen as the North's only contribution to national development. Efforts were also made to isolate the area from the rest of the country. To implement this policy, western education and its main agent, the missions were to be restricted in the North. To prevent what was regarded as the "untoward influence" of education, and again to prevent the "southern virus" from contaminating the "innocent Northerners" indirect rule was introduced and strengthened from 1935.

In West Africa, British colonial administrators worked on the assumption that they could reform traditional institutions to conform with western models. The role of the colonial power was to rule until such a time as the indigenous people could prove themselves capable of self-government in European (preferably British) fashion. The duty of the colonial officials also included the provision of instruments whereby colonial peoples could acquire the skills necessary for good government. For many officials, the most important such instrument was the system of indirect rule defined by one former colonial official as "governing local affairs
through the customary institutions of the people of the area." For the British indirect rule was truly ingenious as an instrument of colonial administration; as a precursor of self-government, however, it proved a disaster. It had two main weaknesses, the time scale it presumed and its assumptions as to who was to rule. According to Sir Andrew Cohen the:

method of applying indirect rule was based on the assumption that we had an indefinite time ahead which the system could grow and develop under our guidance. However, after 1945, it became clear that the unlimited time-scale on which colonial rule rested was no longer valid, nor were the practices which promoted traditional elements over the small but westernised elite which evolved. Thus one of the first casualties of the increased pace of change after the Second World War was indirect rule. In its place, the British attempted to implant a system of government modelled on that at home. At the level of colony-wide institutions, changes were introduced to transform legislative and executive councils into parliaments and cabinet respectively along Westminster lines. This was the unfortunate situation the Northern Territories found itself in after 1951. The nature of the colonial economy pursued, the distribution of social services, particularly education, the organisation of the colonial administration, and in some cases even the predisposition of some colonial officials created an uneven rate of change in the Gold

\footnote{Sir Andrew Cohen, \textit{British Policy in Changing Africa} (London, 1959), p.25.}
\footnote{Cohen, \textit{op cit.} p.25.}
Coast. And yet from 1951, all parts of the Gold Coast were supposed to march together towards imminent nationhood. One result of this was that the Northern Territories which had "lagged behind" in socio-economic development were pushed forward at an extremely rapid pace; political change was artificially induced or even imposed. It responded by emphasising regional particularities and resisted attempts to be dominated by the more advanced Asante and the Gold Coast Colony. But it fought in vain. Reluctantly, on 6 March 1957, it joined the rest of the country in nationhood.
CHAPTER II

THE PRE-COLONIAL STATES OF THE NORTH

2.1 ETHNOGRAPHY

The people of the then Northern Territories\(^1\) of the Gold Coast fall into two main language groups namely, GUR and KWA\(^2\) and also two political systems as outlined by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard\(^3\).

**THE GUR.**

**CENTRALISED.**

Mole-Dagbani. 292, 550

**STATELESS.**\(^4\) 589,980

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\(^1\)See Figs 1A & 1B and the population figures for 1960. Adopted from Ladouceur, *op cit.* pp.20 and 25.

\(^2\)The term GUR was adopted by Christler (Spracheproblemen aus dem Sudan. Z.A.S., 3, 1889-90) from a suggestion by G.A. Krause. It is derived from the names Gurma, Grunsi etc. because of its frequent occurrence among speakers of these languages. KWA of which Guan is a subgroup was also first used by Krause and propagated by Christler.

\(^3\)Fortes, M. and Evans-Pritchard, E., *African Political Systems.* (O.U.P: 1940). The two broad categories are:

a) states with centralised authority

b) those lacking these features and defined in local lineage rather than administrative terms.

\(^4\)Most writers on the history of Northern Ghana have always asserted that the only centralised states were those of Mamprugu, Dagbon, Gonja, Nanun and Wala. However, Tuurey has pointed out that others such as Manlarla of Kaleo and Wecheau based at Dorimol also existed even if they did not form large empires. See Tuurey, G., *An Introduction the Mole-Speaking Community.* (Wa Catholic Press: 1982) pp.38-46. Another ethnic group which could also come under this category will be the Nchumuru.
FIGURE 1A
LINGUISTIC MAP OF NORTHERN GHANA

GUR
KWA

kilometres
FIGURE 1B
LANGUAGES OF NORTHERN GHANA
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOCIETIES IN THE NORTH

2.2 Acephalous Peoples

The Northern Territories was and is now peopled by two groups of people, namely the indigenous people who were acephalous and the "invaders". According to Rattray, the:

majority of the tribes who inhabit the Northern Territories were .......... residents in or near the localities where we find them, centuries before the ancestors of those whose names many of the divisions now bear had arrived in this part of Africa. Upon these more or less autochthonous peoples, with their very primitive institutions, descended small bands of strangers better clothed, familiar with the idea of kingship or chieftaincy in our modern sense, in some cases conversant with the rudiments of Mohammedanism.5

The strangers superimposed their political institutions upon the indigenous population, who, even where their languages differed considerably, had certain characteristics in kinship and politico-ritual organisation. The first of these is that their societies lacked centralised authority and administrative machinery- that is, societies without "government". In a sense, they had no polity and

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5Rattray (1932), p.xii. The conquerors adopted the languages of the conquered since the former in most instances did not come with many women. A typical case is Gonja where the invaders from "Mande" came to speak Agbanyito the language of the conquered. Ward (1958) p.39. This thesis is supported by Goody, J. Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, West of the White Volta. (Colonial Office: London, 1954) p.9 and Wilks, I. The Northern Factor in Ashanti History. (Legon: 1961) p.8
no territorial units defined by administrative systems. Membership in local units and the rights and obligations which went with it were acquired through genealogical ties. The lineage system took the place of political allegiance and many lineages formed a clan. Major decisions were taken by lineage heads and conflicts between people from different lineages were similarly solved by them.

Another institution common to the aborigines of the Northern Territories is the Tindana, the Earth Priest. The Gur believed in and recognised the existence of an otiose high god whose name contains the root "Ngmin", "Ngmini" and in others "We", "Wuni". Below this god were tutelary spirits, the chief among them being the female earth deity known as Tenge. Tenge in a way was associated with Ngmin who blessed it. The Tindana was the priest or principal mediator between the people and the Earth God and the ancestral spirits of his particular area. For this reason the Tindana was regarded as having spiritual control over the lives of those residing within a Tengani.

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Rattray has argued that had they been left on their own, the Tindana would have evolved into types of rulers with both secular and spiritual power on territorial basis. Rattray, op cit. p.xi

Almost all the autochthonous people of the Northern Territories have this institution with a slightly different name. For example, it is known among the Dagartis as Tigatu, the Builsas as Tiertina while the Gonjas call it Kasawulewura

Tuurey, op cit. p.16

Tengani connotes a particular geographical area under a Tindana. For a more detailed account of the role of the Tindana and beliefs of the people see Fortes (1945).
OUTSIDE VARIABLES.

The savanna region of Northern Ghana with its diverse people was also a crossroad of cultural influences first, from the north-west and then later from the north-east. The influence from the north-west which came as a result of the extension of the Trans-Saharan trade to the fringes of the forest was via Muslim Mande traders from Mali. These enterprising traders carried Islam into the area as they extended trade routes southward in search of new and richer sources of gold and the development of Jenne as a commercial centre. Around the fifteenth century Bono-Manso, the earliest Akan state emerged. Bono-Manso offered security to the trade. The benefit it's rulers derived from the routes further helped to consolidate their power. Along this route developed towns like Takyiman, Bondouku, Kafaba, Tuluwe, Mpaha and Buipe. However, the north-west trade route was to decline in importance due to the increasing activities of Europeans along the Atlantic Sea board.

To replace the north-western trade route in importance was that of the north-east centred on the Hausa traders. Like their counterparts from Mande, the Hausa traders began coming into the Volta Basin in the fifteenth century. However, unlike the former the trade of the latter was centred on kola, also a forest product. Towns like Bawku, Gambaga, Sansanne Mango, Yendi and Salaga

10Levtzion (1968), pp.3-14.

11 The Kano Chronicle talks of "Merchants of Gwanja coming to Katsina, Beriberi". Levtzion, op cit. p.17
developed on this route too. Perhaps, it was to take advantage of
the trade that the Mossi-Dagomba states also emerged in that area.
The traders from both the north-west and north-east preferred to
transact their business in the savanna trading centres to avoid the
journey into the forest where beasts of burden could not survive
the climate. Even before the trade routes had crystallized,
mounted horsemen first from the north-east and then later north-
west with better political organisation and above all, better arms
entered the savanna region and imposed themselves on the indigenes.
The invaders were the forefathers of the founders of the kingdoms
of Mamprugu, Dagbon and Nanun and Gonja.

The presence of these Muslim traders some settled permanently
from both the north-west and north-east was to have a major impact
on the socio-political development of the Northern Territories. In
some states such as Gonja and Wa, the Muslims became integrated
into both the social and political system and became a segment

12Lonsdale mentions that apart from the additional cost in
going to Kintampo because of the embargo Asante placed on the sale
of kola to Salaga, the kola traders suffered through sickness and
death among their beasts of burden. Lonsdale R la T., *Kumasi and
Salaga* in Johnson. Rattray also mentions that Asantes did not
permit people from the North to trade beyond Salaga. Rattray, R.S.
M., and Wilks, I., "Qissatu Salga Tarikhu Gonja: The Story of
Salaga and the History of Gonja", Ghana Notes and Query,
(hereafter) *GNQ*, iii, (1961) pp.30-31. Also with the abolition of
the Atlantic borne slave trade it became more convenient for Asante
to buy clothing from the North where they could pay for it in kola.
Dupuis *op cit.* p.xxxv.
between the chiefly classes and the commoners. Because of this unique position, the Muslims played important roles such as installing the Nas and becoming their chief spokesmen. Also, certain offices such as the Imam of the state, the Yarna and a host of others became the preserve of Muslims. The presence of the Muslims also affected Northern culture. Most of the important festivals of the area such as "Damba" are Muslim in origin but have lost their Islamic trappings and have become political events at which all subchiefs come to pay allegiance to their superiors.

2.3 **THE MOLE-DAGBANI STATES.**

Mole-Dagbani as used in this section refers to the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Mossi and Nanun. Traditions of Mamprusi, Dagomba, Mossi and Nanumba claim that their ancestors came from the direction of Hausa or Bornu. On their way to the Middle Volta Basin they may have absorbed some elements of Mande culture from the people speaking southern Mande dialects in Busanga. They entered modern

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13In Gonja for example, the Muslims were involved in the wars of conquests and are said to have offered prayers for victory. The basis of this was laid in the contract said to have been entered into by Jakpa and one Fatigi-Morukpe. Levitzon (1967), p.52; El-Wakkad and Wilks (1961), pp.10-11.

14These offices included Yidam Kafa (who circumcised the royal males), Yidam Kambara (who washed the corpse of chiefs), Yidam Baba (Chief butcher) etc.

15The Damba festival for instance is supposed to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Mohammed.

16Mossi and Nanun will not be discussed in this section. Nanun did not form any large empire of significance and was often regarded as part of Dagbon. Mossi did not form part of the area known as the Gold Coast.
Ghana from the north-east, where they came into contact with local people speaking a Mole-Dagbani dialect, which the foreigners later adopted. The contact is represented in the traditions by the marriage of future chiefs’ ancestor to the daughter of the Tindana. In these terms the tradition explains the political revolution; the new comer murdered his father-in-law, the Tindana, and imposed himself on the people. According to Mole-Dagbani traditions, the subsequent history of the kingdoms is one of consolidation in their new environment and the eventual split in the family which led to the foundation of Mamprugu by Tohogu, Dagbon by Sitobu while Ngmantambu founded Nanun. The Mossi states of Yatenga and Wagadugu were created by Yantaure, a daughter of Na Gbewa. The early chronology of the Mole-Dagbani peoples is difficult to establish and there is some disagreement as to when the events described occurred. Fage and Wilks have postulated that they emerged in the mid-fifteenth century while Tait estimates that the dispersion


18Na in Mole-Dagbani means chief; the symbol of chieftaincy in the area to be discussed is a "skin" because chiefs sit on skins (similar to the stools of the Akan). "Pio" and "Koro" as in Navrongo and Tumu are the Kasem and Isala equivalents of the Mole-Dagbani "na" or "naba". The Gonja equivalent is "Wura" as in Yagbumwura. One also refers to "enskinment" or to "enstoolment" of an individual chief. The term "deskinnment", that is, to be removed from office is not used.

of the Mole-Dagbani people occurred some three or for hundred years ago.\textsuperscript{20} He believes that the Dagomba did not reach the present capital until the later part of the 18th century.

Mamprugu was the first of the Mole-Dagbani states to be founded.\textsuperscript{21} Although the Mamprusi lay claim to an enormous territory as far as Tumu and beyond as part of their kingdom in the past\textsuperscript{22} it was always a small and compact state in the north-east. It did not enjoy the same prestige as the younger state of Dagbon. Mamprugu was formed by Tohogu\textsuperscript{23} in the 15th century in the wake of a succession dispute which followed the death of Zirile. He and his supporters fled from Sitobu and moved into a territory which can be reasonably identified as the Gambaga highlands where the Mamprusi capital, Nalerigu still is. According to Mamprusi traditions the area was occupied by a race of people known as Zobzia (the red


\textsuperscript{21}Mamprugu stands for the state, Mamprusi for the people while their king is called the Nayiri. Similarly, Dagbon stands for the state founded by the Dagombas and the Ya Na is their king.

\textsuperscript{22}The Mamprusi claim that their territory extended to Bawku in the north-east and Lawra and Wa to the north-west. Mackay, G.F. \textit{Customs of the Mamprusi Tribe}. (Unpublished manuscript, n.d), pp.1-6. It is however doubtful if Tumu ever formed part of Mamprugu, much less areas as further west as Lawra and Wa. See Ladouceur, \textit{op cit}. p.30.

\textsuperscript{23}Tohogu was to have succeeded Zirile but this was contested by his junior brothers led by Sitobu hence the succession dispute which led to the creation of the four kingdoms. Zirile himself succeeded Na Gbewa.
hairy) who were driven out by the immigrants and disappeared.\textsuperscript{24} According to the traditions Tohogu's successors extended the empire to include the Frafra and the Kusasi to the north-east and Tumu to the north-west.

Mamprugu enjoyed prestige as a trading state. Its capital Nalerigu, lying near the confluence of the Red and White Volta remained up to the time of its occupation by the British (when the ravages of people like Samory, Babatu and Amariya\textsuperscript{25} had already affected the trade of the area) a sufficiently outstanding trading depot to merit the construction of a Government store.\textsuperscript{26} Mamprugu seems to have been important in the political history of the territories north of Kintampo. "Chiefs" in the Frafra district acknowledged the allegiance of the Nayiri. Also, the Ya Na and the Mogho-Naba\textsuperscript{27} appear to have continued some form of relation with the Nayiri, and to have looked upon Nalerigu his residence as their spiritual home. It is related that it was customary (at any rate until the advent of Colonial rule) on the death of a Mogho-Naba

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\textsuperscript{24}Another Mamprusi tradition however says that all the autochthonous people were killed except for one family of whom the present Tindana of Gambaga is said to be a direct descendant. Mackay further points out that one of the major fetishes of Gambaga is called Zobzia. Mackay, \textit{op cit.} p.2

\textsuperscript{25}Amariya was a Grunshi Captain in the army of Babatu but rebelled against his former master when the latter began to sell Awuna women into slavery. See Holden, J.J., "The Zabarima conquest of North-west Ghana" in \textit{Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana} (hereafter THSG), No.8, 1965, pp.60-81.

\textsuperscript{26}Lt. Col. H. Northcott Commissioner and Commandant, Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, Gambaga, 31 December 1898 to the Hon. Col. Sec., Accra. ADM.56/1/1; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{27}The Mogho-Naba is the Paramount Chief of the Mossi.
and the installation of a new one, to send a messenger with a present from the new Mogho-Naba to the Nayiri. In addition, it is recorded that the Mogho-Naba annually sent horses, shoes and clothing to the parent dynasty of Mamprugu. Before the advent of Colonial rule succession disputes in Dagbon were referred to the Nayiri. Although Mamprugu was not conquered by any state before the British occupation, disputed succession and the activities of Samory and Babatu had weakened the state to such an extent that it could not resist the British treaty of friendship.

Dagbon was the second state founded after Mamprugu. At the time of the Colonial partition in 1889, Dagbon spread over some 8,000 square miles of savanna plains of the Northern Territories. After the disputed succession Sitobu moved south and first settled at Walewale. He sent his son Nyagsi to present day western Dagbon to found a kingdom. There followed an extended campaign of conquest at the conclusion of which Nyagsi was invested by his father with the regalia of a new kingdom. Na Nyagsi then established his

28Mackay, op cit. p.6; Eyre-Smith (1933), p.29. Eyre-Smith in quoting Lt. Col. Northcott has however pointed out that in no case was the gift intended as tribute since the independence of both Mossi and Dagbon was recognised; Marville, R.O.G., The Formation Of The Protectorates Of Northern Ghana, (unpublished M.A Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon,1967) p.7

29The oral traditions collected by Blair on Dagbon say that there was a great confusion in Dagbon after the death of Na Gungobili because "all the Na-Bihe (princes) wanted to succeed to Yendi." Since there was no proper method of reducing the number of aspirants the case was referred to the Nayiri. Blair, H.A., History of the Dagomba. (Unpublished, n.d.) p.8.; Eyre-Smith op cit. p.29.

30The oral tradition of Mamprugu collected by Mackay talk of four disputed successions before the British occupation. Mackay, op cit. pp.2-5.
capital at Yendi Dabari after slaughtering the Tindana who claimed ownership of the land.\textsuperscript{31}

The conquest of western Dagbon was undertaken by Dagomba cavalry, who killed and replaced the indigenous Tindana with members of the royal dynasty and the Captains of the army. Although a large number of the Tindana were killed by the Dagombas, the institution itself was not destroyed. Indeed, in a few places the Tindana were allowed to remain as village chiefs under Dagomba divisional chiefs. An important example is Tamale where the chief, known as the Dakpema, seems to be descended from the earlier Tindana.\textsuperscript{32} Moreover, the imposition of new chiefs did not destroy the jurisdiction of the Tindana. According to some writers, the Dagomba chiefs assumed the authority of the earth-priests; the Ya Na himself wearing the regalia taken from them\textsuperscript{33}. The Dagomba state was not strongly centralised at this or any other period and the survival of the Tindana divisions may have helped in the emergence of a federal structure.

\textsuperscript{31}Ladouceur \textit{op. cit.} p.29. This accounts for the relative homogeneity of Western Dagbon unlike the Eastern Dagbon where the Konkomba, the aborigines still live hence the current clashes between them and Dagombas over land and chiefship.

\textsuperscript{32}The Dakpema and the Ya Na are supposed not to meet face to face. Blair, \textit{op. cit.} p.14. Perhaps this is to conceal some rivalry since though in theory all land in Dagbon belongs to the Ya Na, yet publicly, the Dakpema is the only recognised landowner. In 1925 the two were compelled to meet when the Governor, Sir Gordon Guggisberg addressed a meeting of chiefs. The Dakpema is reported to have died not long after the meeting while the Ya Na was also reported to have been taken ill for a long afterwards. See ADM 56/1/40; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{33}Cardinall, \textit{op. cit.} p.17
The westward expansion of Dagbon brought it into conflict with Gonja under Jakpa. Whether it was Ndewura Jakpa\(^{34}\) himself is not certain, though the date ascribed to these events fits conveniently with Gonja dates for the founding of their state. Further evidence of its being Jakpa is the capture of Daboya associated with Jakpa, who defeated the Ya Na Dariziogo and captured Daboya. For Jakpa, Daboya no doubt represented a convenient outpost from which to control or contain the Dagomba, while being an indispensable source of salt.\(^{35}\) Staniland has pointed out that there was an appreciable economic element in the Dagomba wars with the Gonja.\(^{16}\)

The conquest of Daboya from Dagombas by the Gonjas gave the latter the leverage to pressure the former into abandoning its capital and establishing another at the present site. However, internal rivalry and external pressure made Dagbon lose its independence. Internally there was disputed succession in the last decade of the nineteenth century in which some of the princes joined hands with the Zabarima.\(^{37}\) Asante, a forest power was the first to terminate Dagbon's independence in the mid-eighteenth century.

\(^{34}\)Jakpa is often regarded by the Gonja as the founder of their state. For a discussion on him see 2.3.

\(^{35}\)Daboya is the only place in Ghana where salt is produced in the interior.

\(^{36}\)Staniland _op cit._ p.5. Also see Wilks (1961); Goody (1964) pp.201 and 204. The Dagomba were active militarily in north-western Ghana before the Gonja invasion and it has been suggested that this activity was directed at the control of the Banda goldfield.

\(^{37}\)For the internal wrangling in Dagbon see Tamakloe _op cit._ pp. 29-33,; Blair _op cit._ pp.28-32.
century but the major loss of Dagbon power was European politics; this was the era of the scramble for Africa. The British, French and the Germans began to struggle for the territory that was to be known as Northern Ghana by sending out missions. The innocence of Dagbon about these Europeans persisted till 4 December 1896 when a Dagomba army estimated to be over seven thousand was routed by a small German force at Adibo near Yendi. As words of encouragement, the Ya Na is said to have told his soldiers to capture the Europeans saying "Seremiga yi-la kuom-na, o-nye la zaham" (the white man is come from the water, he is fish). Yendi was taken and the Ya Na went into hiding.

2.4 **THE GONJA KINGDOM.**

The Gonja kingdom like the Mole-Dagbani ones was also founded by a group of invaders. These invaders were Mande or Dyula warriors from Mali in the northwest. The traditional story of the origin

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38 Tamakloe, *op cit.* p.42. The Dagombas were said to have been killed in great numbers: heaps of dead bodies were to be found in all directions, with horses that fell under their riders. *ibid.* p.42.

of Gonja is that one Ndewura Jakpa migrated from "Mande" in the "west" at the head of a band of horsemen. By virtue of its discipline, superior weapons and the prayers of Fatigi-Morukpe, Gonja is said to have succeeded in conquering a large area from Bole in the west to Bassari in modern Togo. Jakpa is said to have "sat down" at Nyanga after dividing the conquered land among his sons and brothers. Today, each of the six divisional chiefs claims descent from Jakpa.

The divisional chiefs acknowledge the primacy and pay tribute albeit a nominal one, to the Yagbumwura. They on their part collected tribute from their subchiefs and the conquered people. The Gonja aristocracy was a relatively very small one imposed on

believed. Jones has pointed out again that the term Mande, in any case has no very precise geographical meaning. It could conceivably have been used to indicate any district west of or north-west of Gonja. He again says that the Buipe Chronicle does not mention any Mande origin at all. Jones, D.H., "Jakpa and the Foundation of Gonja", THSG) Vol. Vi. 1962, pp.1-29.

**His full name is Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa. Ndewura is derived from two Gonja words viz "Nde" meaning towns and "Wura" connoting owner. Ndewura therefore means master of many towns or conqueror. A number of Mande rulers are listed in the traditions. They are in order of seniority. This is the tradition recorded by R.B. Hall from one Mallam Abdullah in 1929. Jakpa was therefore not the first ruler but perhaps Gonja attained its greatest glory during his reign. However, according to the Buipe Chronicle Jakpa was a peaceful ruler and died at an advanced age. Because of these discrepancies about Jakpa, Jones is of the view that Jakpa was a mere label which conceals the individuality of a series of historical leaders. To him the stories related about Jakpa represent a whole historical episode rather than the career of a single hero. Jones, op cit. p.14.**

**The Yagbumwura is the Paramount chief of the Gonja traditional area. The word should have been Ayagbumwura meaning master of a multitude.**
what was called the local Nyamase. Control over Nyamase was
maintained by strictly observing pre-existing Nyamase boundaries
and even creating chiefs among them, who acted as middlemen in
Gonja rule over the Nyamase. Nyamase elders also played a role in
the election of divisional chiefs. Thus the Nyamase were kept out
of final power by being actually allowed to participate in the
lower levels of Gonja administration. Gonja like Dagbon lost its
independence first to Asante and much later to the British.

2.5 **THE WALA KINGDOM.**

To the north of Gonja and northwest of Dagbon and west of
Mamprugu lay the Wala state of Wa. The origin of the state and its
extent, like its people is in doubt. All stories of origins refer
to the founders as foreigners and the original inhabitants as Lobis
who were chased across the Black Volta into an area now in the
Republic of Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso.

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42The Nyamase were the conquered commoners. It is probably
derived from the Mandingo word "nyama" meaning refuse. Jones. *op
cit.* p.6. Although the Gonjas referred to all their conquered
subjects as Nyamase, they never used it on the Nchumuru and Nawuri
who they claim to have migrated from Mande with. See ADM.56/1/240;
NAG, Accra. This claim by Gonjas should not be accepted in its face
value as it is known that both Nchumuru and Nawuri are indigenous
to the land they occupy. See Report to the United Nations on the
Administration of Togoland, 1949, p.5.

43Jones; *op cit.* p.7.

44For the story of the origins of the Wala kingdom see Read,
M., *Wa or Wala?* (22 November, 1908) p.3; Eyre-Smith *op cit.* p.12;
Origins of the Mossi-Dagomba States" *Research Review.* (Institute of
African Studies, Legon), Vol.7 No 2, 1971, pp.95-113; Wilks, I.,
The Wa state which was almost like a city state grew much slower than her counterparts and in effect remained a large mainly Muslim town. The first agent of the Government of the Gold Coast Colony to visit the capital testified to its distinctive appearance. "Wa is not a walled city" wrote Ferguson in 1894, "but the flat roofed buildings and the date palms represent an eastern appearance. It is the capital of Dagarti." Wa in fact was a large trading town strategically situated in the middle of the acephalous people. It was a significant outpost in the trade which ran along the Black Volta but unlike Gambaga, its military jurisdiction did not extend into the countryside. According to Read, Wa's military weakness is shown by the fact that its people were compelled by Gonjas to make Gonja facial marks.

Unlike other states, the countryside was often in conflict with the town because the townsfolk needed slaves from the former while the latter found it lucrative to rob passing caravans. Wa experienced the same fate as its counterparts. First, the sofas of Samory occupied the town to be followed by Babatu who destroyed

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"Arhin op cit. p.137. Though Walii is a dialect of Dagari, the former did not conquer the latter.

"According to Read the king of Wa "seems not to have been very powerful and one of them was told by Jakpa then king of Gonjas, that he was in Gonja territory and that if he wanted to stay he must put Gonja marks on his children and this explains why Wa people have Gonja marks". Read; op cit. p.4. Although this explanation is too simplistic, it shows the cultural similarity between the two people. The military weakness of Wa is further attested by the fact that Ferguson did not sign treaties with Wa during his first trip because the Bole-Wura claimed that Wa was his vassal. Arhin, op cit. p.137."
the town. Wa finally became part of the Northern Territories when the Protectorate was formed.

2.6 NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS: ASANTE AND THE NORTH.

The north was in economic contact with the south since the 15th century. While Gonja and Dagbon were struggling among themselves for supremacy to control areas of economic opportunity, they were soon called upon to meet a more formidable foe in the Asante Empire and ended by being incorporated within the structure of Greater Asante. The absorption of these two savanna kingdoms within the Asante Empire started in a series of stages, probably beginning with western and central Gonja in the 1730's. Between 1744 and 1750 eastern Gonja, Dagbon and Nanun had come under Asante tutelage. They were forced to pay tribute in the form of slaves,

Babatu suffered one of his rare defeats when the people of Sankana, only twelve miles from Wa defeated his forces. People regarded the defeat as retribution for his "Wa crimes", that is, the massacre of Muslims. Apparently, Babatu believed this himself hence he is reported to have asked the Ulama to obtain God’s forgiveness for him. Wilks (1989), p.116.

See 2.1

Ghanaian historians have not yet agreed on the exact relations between Asante and Dagbon. While some like Tamakloe (1931), Wilks (1971) and Fage (1964), have asserted that through the conquest and intervention, Dagbon became a "vassal state" of Asante, others like Duncan-Johnstone and Blair (1932) and Iliasu, A.A., "Asante’s relation with Dagomba" Ghana Social Science Journal. Vol.1 No. 2 (1971), pp.54-62 are of the contrary view. Iliasu sees the relations "as one of politico-economic symbiosis rather than conquest" and further adds that Asante presence in Dagbon was "highly profitable to both sides". ibid. pp.54-58.
livestock and cotton cloth. Bowdich, who visited Kumasi in 1817, reported that Gonja was forced at various times to pay an annual tribute to Asante consisting of 500 slaves, 200 cows, 400 sheep, 400 cotton cloths and 200 pieces of silk.\(^5\) After reviewing the various available sources, Wilks concludes that "a figure 1,000 slaves annually per division appears to have been the basic assessment."\(^6\)

The need to supply Asante with slaves resulted in more intensive pressure on the acephalous people since the states always raided the latter to provide the slaves. Talking about how Gonja, and perhaps this could apply to Dagbon as well, met its quota of tribute in slaves, Goody asserts that:

> the non-centralised societies to the north and east formed a pool of manpower that the Gonja raided to supply themselves and Asante with slaves. The cavalry of the savanna states was no match for Asante firearms, but it could easily dominate people whose only weapons were bows and arrows......... Finally, such acephalous peoples formed the buffers between states and as well as a pool of human resources. These areas could be raided by parties of soldiers without trespassing upon the rights of neighbouring states; they formed regions of free enterprise for bands of state-controlled warriors, whose prize lay in the people rather than property.\(^7\)

However, Asante domination of Gonja and Dagbon brought peace and some measure of prosperity to both conqueror and the conquered as the north-east trade gained in importance. The growth of the

\(^5\)Bowdich *op cit.* p.321.


trade saw Salaga develop first as the biggest slave and later kola market in the interior of the Gold Coast. It attracted caravans from far and wide as Asante directed all its kola trade to the Salaga market. The increased prosperity did not remove the hostility in the relations between Asante and Gonja. This attitude of fear and hatred was expressed as early as in 1750, in an obituary note written by a Muslim on the death of Asantehene Opoku Ware, conqueror of Gonja and Dagbon. He wrote:

In this year Opoku King of Asante died, May Allah curse him and place his soul in hell. It was he who harmed the Gonja, oppressing them and robbing them of their property at will. He reigned violently as a tyrant, enjoying his authority. The people of all horizons feared him greatly.

Asante itself was defeated by the British in 1874 and Kumasi the capital was destroyed.

One consequence of Asante influence particularly in Dagbon was the creation of a wing of Asante-trained musketeers within the state army. It is unclear whether these musketeers were originally

53 For a detailed and accurate description of the Salaga market see the accounts of Bowdich, Dupuis, Gouldsbury, Bonnat, Asante and Opoku in Johnson. Bonnat for example asserts that at the peak of the trade Salaga had a population of 45,000 with 10,000 strangers entering the town daily. See acc.no.SAL/2/1 in Johnson.


55 A major consequence of the defeat of Asante was that all her former vassal states in the North rebelled and in Salaga all Asantes were massacred. According to Theophil Opoku, "on an appointed day in Salaga the people banded themselves together and killed many hundreds of Kumasi people, who were living among them as officials, weavers and traders. Some of the skulls and the bones of the murdered men were still to be seen strewn on the waste land on the plains where the corpses had been prey for jackals." Theophil Opoku in Johnson; acc.no.SAL/33/1
trained in Kumasi or were trained in Yendi through Asante "technical assistance". This wing of the army was to lead to the creation of five chieftaincies within which titles of offices and organisations show marked Asante influence. The incorporation of the northern states into Greater Asante was also accompanied by the rise of Muslim influence in Asante itself. Asante valued the Muslims for their ability to record events and communicate on behalf of their potentates, but more importantly, for the magico-religious attraction of Islam.

Asante domination over some of the northern states led to intermittent revolts which were crushed with a heavy hand. This domination was made possible by the possession of firearms and by a system of resident commissioners and traders, visiting representatives and periodic expeditions combined with a more complex military organisation. Nevertheless, the day to day administration was in the hands of the traditional rulers. The pattern of pre-colonial relations between the north and south created the myth of a southern superiority which still exists in

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56Staniland, op cit. pp.7-8. These chiefs, for example, use stools rather than skins as symbol of office. The Gonjas also had the Mbongwura who served as captains of the various army divisions. Although Mamprugu was not conquered by Asante nor is it known that Asante trained its army, yet the formation and titles of its army officers closely follows that of Dagbon. See Mackay, op cit. pp.14-16

57Asantes in particular valued the amulets said to be able to protect the wearer against charms and even bullets. Hutton, W., A Voyage to Africa. (London: 1821), p.323. Osei Kwame one of the Asantehene was deposed because of his attachment to the Muslims and his "inclination to establish the Koranic law for the civil code of the empire." Dupuis, op cit. p.245.
modern Ghana. The oppression and hostility underlying these relations influenced certain aspects of British colonial policy towards the north; that of reserving the latter as a labour pool for the former. Perhaps, it also explains the failure to combine and rule the two newly acquired territories together.

The breakdown of Asante power and the increasing weakness of the kingdoms founded by the invaders saw the emergence of new warlords in the north. These new warlords were Samory, Babatu and Amariya. Babatu, one of the warlords established an empire in "Grunshi". This was the Zabarima state or asalin Zabramawa. In the early 1860's a small group of Muslim Zabarima horsemen came to Dagbon as traders, mercenaries, or Mallams, or perhaps as all the three. Their activities were transferred to the north-west when

58 Samory and Amariya will not be discussed in this section because while the activities of former affected only Wa and Bole the latter did not operate in the area under discussion.

59 The term Grunshi is used in modern Ghana to describe the people around present day Bolgatanga who speak the Grune language. According to Read the word Grunshi derives from Grunga which in the Songhai language means fetish because in raids for slaves in the latter by the former the Grunshis were found to be idol worshippers. Read; op cit. p.10. But as used in most of the documents, it refers to the area north-west of Ghana, that is, north of Gonja and west of Mamprugui and extends to the borders of Mossi. Included in the "Grunshi" area are the Sissala, Nabdam, Kassena, Builsa, Prafra and Tallensi. All these were acephalous and including Dagarti and Konkomba were the main hunting grounds for slaves by Dagomba, Asante and Gonja. See Ladouceur, op cit. p.33.; Hilton, T.E., "Notes on the History of the Kusasi", THSG. Vol., Vi, 1962, pp.79-86, Holden op cit. pp.60-81

60 Binger reports that the Zabarima were first invited by the Nayiri to help him punish some Grunshi villages but the Muslims of Walewale prevented it. Quoted in Holden, op cit.p.63. Tauxier however mentions that the Zabarima came to Yendi as "straightforward" mercenaries. ibid p.64. However, there is a tradition in Dagbon that they came as horse sellers and stayed back
they accompanied the Karaga Na on slave raising mission as mercenaries and as Mallams. The success of this expedition, made possible by the use of the gun made the Zabarima decide to stay in the Grunshi country. Seeing that the area was populated but with no centralised authority, they realised that they could make their fortune. Led by Alfa dan Tadano, the Zabarima moved into the area at the invitation of Dolbizan, an influential Isala chief and after assisting their host overcome his enemies began to carve an empire for themselves. They were later joined by the Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, Mossi and even Grunshi. After numerous conquests the Zabarima made Kasana their capital. Though never numerous themselves they were able to secure the services, and for a long period, the loyalty of others and it was on this basis that they were able to build their power. The strength of the state rested in the main, on the Grunshis themselves. The Zabarima state reached its peak under Babatu, Hano’s successor and Kasana, the capital, flourished and soon became a centre for trade particularly of slaves. The Zabarima conquest brought a greater degree of security for commerce if not peace and prosperity, and a more diversified trade network than had existed before.⁶¹

The Zabarima state like those before it disintegrated as a result of foreign pressure. The empire might have lasted a bit longer if the confidence of the Grunshi had not been undermined by

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⁶¹ Holden op cit. p.64
the high-handedness of the Zabarima leadership. Prosperity made them arrogant and Grunshi towns and villages which had enjoyed Zabarima protection and exemption from tax began to lose even this. But what finally incensed the Grunshi soldiers was the imprudent way the Zabarima leaders began to sell into slavery Grunshi women who followed and served the columns. This led to a revolt in 1895 led by Amariya, a Grunshi Captain in their service. It was around this time that Europeans began to arrive on the scene. The first were the French, followed by the British and the Germans, who began to sign treaties of friendship with people of the interior. With their base at Wagadugu, the French declared a protectorate over "Grunshi", an area Babatu regarded as part of his empire. The French mounted pressure on him and finally caught up with him and defeated him at Kanjarga in February 1897.\textsuperscript{62} The British began to move northwards and finding himself hemmed in, Babatu and his force took the only route that was left open to them - on into Dagbon - and retired to Yendi where he is said to have died of a spider bite.\textsuperscript{63}

At the beginning of our period the state of affairs in the north was thus; Mamprugu, Dagbon and Gonja, the kingdoms founded by the invaders had been weakened both by succession disputes and by the activities of Samory and Babatu. They could not thus exercise effective control over the acephalous people they claimed to be their subjects. The power of Asante which had been their sovereign

\textsuperscript{62}Holden, \textit{op cit.} p.83

\textsuperscript{63}Holden, \textit{op cit.} p.85.
was broken by the British and Babatu and Samory had also been defeated and exiled to Yendi and Gabon respectively. The north-east trade had dwindled to a trickle because of an Asante embargo on the sale of kola to Salaga which had been its mainstay. The area therefore seemed ripe for new masters. The French, British and Germans came to fill the vacuum they had helped to create.
CHAPTER III

THE RACE FOR THE NORTH.

3.1 THE ERA OF TREATY MAKING.

The shape of modern Ghana, in so far as the northern part of the country is concerned, is largely due to the efforts of George Ekem Ferguson, a native of Anomabu, who negotiated all the treaties made by the British Government with northern potentates, who reported on the movements of other Colonial Powers and who urged the government to call for positive action to secure the hinterland.¹

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century the British were the only Europeans operating on the Gold Coast, however their activities were still confined to the coastal region. The British made no efforts to go beyond the northern end of the Asante kingdom which was vaguely referred to as the "hinterland" of the Gold Coast. Two main reasons account for this. First, Britain was hesitant about extending its authority into the interior of the Gold Coast in the 1870s. She did not wish to bear the expense of formal administration, particularly in those areas where it was not clear that local revenue could support the cost of administration. She wanted to promote trade but through the exercise of informal influence over local chiefs² and an occasional show of force such


²Robinson and Gallagher are the leading proponents of this argument which has come to be known as the "Imperialism of Free Trade". See Robinson, R. and Gallagher, J. with Alice Denny; Africa
as was seen in the periodic dispatch of special commissioners into the interior of the Gold Coast, following the defeat of Asante in 1873-74. Secondly, until her final defeat in 1900-1901, Asante still remained a barrier between the coast and what was considered the interior of the Gold Coast; and until British authority had been established in Asante, the area beyond it could not effectively be brought into the British sphere of influence. The British were also still trying to grapple with what was referred to as the "Asante problem".

However, after weakening Asante power Britain now became

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Basically the Asante problem was the indecision of the British as to whether or not incorporate Asante into the Protectorate. Even after defeating Asante in the Sagrenti war of 1873-4 the British had not yet formulated a policy towards Asante. Britain was only compelled to declare a protectorate over Asante in 1901 because of the activities of the French to the north-west and north of Asante.
interested in the area to the north of it.\textsuperscript{5} This was mainly because she feared encirclement by France and Germany who had begun to acquire territories along the coastline and in the interior. The French began to operate from Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso (Upper Volta) in the west and north respectively while the Germans were moving in from the east. In a desire to link the British possessions of the Gold Coast to Lagos, Governor Ussher of the Gold Coast placed Cotonou in modern Benin, under Britain in 1879. Ussher was abiding by a memo from merchants in London to the Colonial Office, in which among other things, they pleaded with the Colonial Office to adopt measures to prevent further annexation of any territory between the Gold Coast and Lagos by any other foreign power.\textsuperscript{6} This action naturally led to a swift reply from France. Within four years, a French flag had been planted on the coastline of Benin and Agege, both regarded as subject to Goldie’s Royal Niger Company. Anglo-French rivalry east of the Gold Coast had commenced.\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{5}The Asante kingdom was in turmoil after her defeat by British and allied forces in the 1873-74 war. Most of the original members of the federation such as Dwaben, Kokofu, Bekwai attempted to secede and this led to endemic war. Also, the conquered states such as Tekyiman, Gonja, Krachi and Dagbon declared themselves independent. Attempts by Mensa Bonsu, the new Asantehene to regain these lost territories led to constant wars which disrupted trade. See Wilks (1975), pp. 280-290 and 514-523 on Mensa Bonsu’s attempts to regain the lost territories.

\textsuperscript{6}Memorial of Merchants in the city of London engaged and interested in the trade with the Gold coast and Lagos, London, 7 December, 1883 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.}, pp.413-415.

\textsuperscript{7}Robinson and Gallagher have suggested that until the British invasion and occupation of Egypt in 1882, there had been collaboration between the two powers in West Africa. Robinson and
A further attempt by Britain to control the interior to the east of the Gold Coast involved her in clashes with Germany, a late comer in the Colonial field. The smuggling activities of German traders along the Beh Beach adversely affected British trading interests in the region of the river Volta. A report of June 1884 said that while the trade at the Beh Beach was continuously growing, that at Keta was declining. The report concluded that it was therefore necessary to acquire the beach.\(^8\) Assistant Inspector Firminger of the Gold Coast Constabulary was sent to and concluded treaties with the chiefs of Beh Beach.\(^9\) However, Gustav Natchigal, an explorer persuaded a number of chiefs to sign treaties ceding the coastline to the Germans.\(^10\) The Germans then declared that Agotime, Kove and Tovie near the Volta River belonged to them. The need to avoid the isolation of the various coastal possessions from the trade and trade routes of the interior led first, to the creation of the neutral zone in 1888 and later to the definition of the spheres of influence by the Colonial powers.\(^11\)


\(^8\)W.A.Young, Accra, 30 June, 1884 to the Earl of Derby in Metcalfe op cit. p.415.

\(^9\)Provisional Agreement with Togo chiefs, 23 June 1884 in Metcalfe, op cit. p.416.

\(^10\)Young to Derby, Accra, 9 July, 1884 in Metcalfe op cit. pp.415-416.

\(^11\)To avoid a clash between them Britain and Germany decided to create a buffer zone between their territories. The area known as the neutral zone, lay between a conventional line drawn East and
The Germans did not limit their activities to the coastal region. In 1886 and 1888, German expeditions were sent to the north. The first, under Krause, passed through Savelugu in July 1885 on its way to Wagadugu, and the second, led by Captain Von Francois, visited Yendi, Salaga, Gambaga, Karaga and Nanton between March and May 1888, and signed treaties of protection with the chiefs. To the west of the Gold Coast Colony, Anglo-French rivalry in the interior was concentrated at three places namely, from the coast to Nogua, from Nogua through Bona to the north-western and north-eastern borders respectively. Lieutenant-Colonel Tyrell, the British Colonial Engineer had reported that the boundary decided on by the French Commissioner and Mr. Schnerr, the Dutch engineer, in 1863 "had been done with the greatest laxity." The French refused a British request to have the boundary shifted three miles to the west. Britain was worried that:

no doubt there is much gunpowder, guns, and spirits (which) pass up the Tano Lagoon and Tandu (Tano) river into our district of Wassaw...... and also north to Ashanti.

West at the confluence of the Volta and Daka Rivers and 10 N latitude.

12Staniland, op cit. p.9; Colonial Office, Africa (West), 479, Enclosure 1 in No. 42 in the Iliasu Papers; German Treaties with Salaga, Confidential despatch from Governor Hodgson to Sec. of State, 29 September, 1889, in Johnson, acc. no.SAL/81/1.

13The demarcation had become necessary in view of the exchange of forts and castles between the British and the Dutch which took place in 1868. For the exchange of the forts between the nations and its aftermath in Gold Coast history see Kimble, op cit. pp.223-263.

14Extract from Report on the Gold Coast Colony by Lieutenant-Colonel Tyrell, Colonial Engineer, 1877 and dispatch no.10, p.10
In 1889, the two governments reached an agreement defining their borders in the west from the coast to Nogua in the interior. Soon however, the French dispatched the Binger and later the Monteil missions into the interior.¹⁵ This did not lead to a scramble for territories until later. However, the rivalry between the two nations made imperative the immediate demarcation of boundaries. One such settlement was reached in 1891 where the British succeeded in extending the boundary to the 9th parallel of north latitude in the hope that:

the French will at all events be prevented from extending their influence eastward into the territories behind Asante and along the upper waters of the River Volta.¹⁶

The establishment of British rule in Asante, and particularly beyond it was forced upon the Colonial Office by the merchants. In 1891, a trade deputation informed the Colonial Office that they did not only want to keep a large area of the West African Colonies to themselves but to have them well defined.¹⁷ This was followed by another resolution, this time from the West African Section of the London Chamber of Commerce. They also urged the British Government to secure to the Gold Coast Colony without delay pointing out that:

¹⁵In 1888-9 Binger visited Wagadugu, Mamprugu, Dagbon, Gonja (Salaga) and Kintampo on his way from Bamako to the sea. Similarly, Monteil visited Wagadugu in 1891 where he was (erroneously) believed to have secured a protectorate treaty before getting to Say and Bornu. Binger, L.G., From the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea, in Johnson, acc.no.SAL/19/1.

¹⁶Africa (West) No. 418, no. 5a.

the territories as far back as the Niger which is the natural boundary to the north of the 9th parallel of north latitude as a British sphere of influence.18

Lastly, they urged Britain to impress upon the Gold Coast Government to dispatch an officer to make treaties with "native tribes between the said parallel and the meridian of longitude of the coast limits of the Colony."19 This seeming alarm was justified because the Germans had pushed inland to take Agotime, part of Krepi (Peki) which the British claimed by right of purchase from the Danes.20 Also, in May 1892, the French proposed that the boundary between the British and their spheres of influence in the north should:

start from Say passing the north western corner of the so-called Anglo-German neutral zone, about the 10th parallel of latitude, crossing the 9th parallel where it is intersected by the Black Volta and terminating at Bondoukou.21

This news compelled Lord Knutsford, the Secretary of State for

19Ibid.
Colonies, to instruct Sir William Brandford Griffith, Governor of the Gold Coast Colony to secretly dispatch a mission to the interior to sign treaties with the chiefs.\(^{22}\) In 1892, Governor Griffith chose George Ekem Ferguson, a Gold Coaster, for this important mission.\(^{23}\) Ferguson was to endeavour to make treaties especially with Gonja, Dagbon, Grunshi and Mossi. The treaties were not to imply protection but "friendship and freedom of trade", with a commitment "not to make any treaty with or accept the protection of any other power without the consent of Her Majesty's government."\(^{24}\)

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\(^{22}\)Knutsford to Griffith, 5-4-92, Pro. Co 879/38 in Iliasu Papers. Dr. A. A. Iliasu was until his untimely death in 1978, a Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon. He collected a number of documents on Northern Ghana from the Colonial Office to teach a Special Paper for History final year major students. These papers have since been named after him. I was allowed to consult them with the kind permission of the History Department at Legon. Hereafter, any citation from those papers will be referred to as Iliasu Papers.

\(^{23}\)This was not the first time the Gold Coast Government sent a mission to the interior. The first occurred in the second decade of the nineteenth century when two missions—the Bowdich and Dupuis—were sent to Asante because of increasing differences between the Asantehene and the coastal government. These missions led to the publication of their books. Also disturbances within the Asante Confederation made Governor Straham dispatch two missions led by Dr. Gouldsbury to the area between 1875 and 1876. The success of these missions established precedents to be followed in Gold Coast Colonial policy. In a tribute on the death of Ferguson in 1897, Governor Maxwell stated among other things that as a "native Ferguson could travel with a small following and remain in the bush for long periods whereas the ordinary British Colonial Officer (supposing that he had Mr. Ferguson’s knowledge of surveying and geology) would have required a special escort, a doctor and interpreters." Quoted from Thomas (1972), pp.181-215.

\(^{24}\)Sir W. B. Griffith to G.E. Ferguson, Accra, 25 April, 1892. in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp. 454-455.
There was no reciprocity from the states but apparently the chiefs signed the treaties because they saw the British as protectors from Samory and Babatu. The British reserved to themselves the right to treat with whoever they liked, including the local and commercial rivals of any particular signatory. In other words, the British, and unavoidably Ferguson as their representative, worked in terms of two levels of sovereignty, the "natives" and the rival Colonial Powers. The "native" chiefs as legitimate sovereigns saw no such distinction. Adherence to the foregoing clause was to justify the British treating the people of the Northern Territories like a conquered people. Ferguson was to ensure that chiefs with territory inside the neutral zone only signed the treaty with regard to territory outside the zone. Accompanied by a few men of the Gold Coast Constabulary who served in a dual function as guards and interpreters, and taking with him several hundred pounds in silver coin and other gifts for the chiefs with whom he signed the treaties, Ferguson set off for the north. Between 1 June and 26 August, 1892 year, Ferguson signed treaties with Tuluwewura (Trugu of the records), Bolewura who claimed sovereignty over Wa\textsuperscript{35}, Wasipewura (chief of Daboya), the

\textsuperscript{35}Ferguson to Griffith, Christianborg, 19 November, 1892 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.455-456. The Bolewura claimed Wa had been given to him by Gadiari (Gazare) leader of the Zabarima. Arhin \textit{op cit.} p.85. But this would seems unlikely since it is doubtful that Gazare who was attempting to build a state easily do so. It later turned that Bole went to the aid of Wa when it was under siege from Gazare. As a reward for this help the people of Wa gave yearly presents to the Bolewura. \textit{Ibid}. However, Wilks has pointed out that at no time was Wa under Bole. To him some people of Wa took refuge in Bole when Babatu made Wa the headquarters of his empire. Wilks (1989), pp.118-9.
Ya Na and Bimbilla Na. Although his goal had been to reach Mossi, this was not possible because of the jealousy of the Ya Na who refused to give him guards.26

There is a French "bias" of the report Ferguson submitted to Governor Brandford Griffith on November 19, 1892.27 Ferguson argued that according to Binger's map, French influence was limited to the Comoe River, and the territories of Gonja, Dagbon, Lobi and Grunshi were not as far as he could ascertain, under the rule of any territory on the east of Comoe. Other important information Ferguson gave about the interior were that Wa, an important town on the Kong-Bondouku route was also the converging point of trade routes from Bole, Bouna, Lokusu and Daboya. He also pointed out that Africans would not like their territories to be divided hence he urged Britain to secure Comoe as the boundary in the northwest.28 Ferguson also noted that Salaga which had trade connections with Mossi, was a great market for kola nuts and trade goods and

26 Arhin op cit. p.79. Other reasons which prevented Ferguson from continuing his journey were that the goods he requested had not arrived but more importantly, he stated that the area between Mamprugu and Mossi was occupied by barbarous people who often attacked caravans. This observation is interesting because it indicated that the defeat of Asante had led to the resurgence of violence in the area since the Mogho Naba reported in 1894 that during the hey day of Asante Empire "no one dared violate the trade routes." The Naba concluded by saying that he hoped the "English as successors to Asante power in Salaga will regulate Salaga affairs, foster the existence of commercial relations between them and Mossi." Arhin op cit. p.114


28 Ferguson to Griffith, Christianborg, 19 November, 1892. in Metcalfe op cit. pp.455-456.
three-fourths of the European goods were of British manufacture.\textsuperscript{29} The Official reaction to Ferguson's first mission was mixed. The War Office declared that his treaties rendered it impossible for the French to establish their influence in any part of the neutral zone\textsuperscript{10}, but the suggestion of Comoe as a boundary, while a good one, was impracticable since the French were at Indenie.\textsuperscript{31} The Director of Military Intelligence on his part remarked that with the exception of Bole, the capitals of all chiefs with whom Ferguson made the treaties lay in the neutral zone. To him the political importance of these treaties with regard to territories outside the neutral zone depended entirely upon the extent of the territory immediately under the sway of the treaty chiefs and the political relations existing between these chiefs and the neighbouring ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{32} The Director of Military Intelligence further remarked that while it was clear that by these treaties, the French had been kept from the neutral zone, it was not clear that the treaties established British influence outside the zone to the extent claimed by Ferguson. He rightly pointed out that Bole's suzerainty over Wa was a recent phenomenon and recommended signing

\textsuperscript{29}On Salaga as a great inland trading centre see Bonnat, M.J., in acc.no.SAL/1/1; Gouldsbury, V.S., in acc.no.SAL/11/1; Asante D., "A New Route to the Upper Niger" Geographische Gesellschaft zu Beon, II, 1880-1; acc.no.SAL/3/1 all in Johnson

\textsuperscript{30}African (West), no. 448, Dispatch no. 57, dated 23 April, 1893 in Iliasau Papers.

\textsuperscript{31}ibid.

\textsuperscript{32}Observations by the Director of Military Intelligence on Mr. Ferguson's Report, Queen Anne's Gate, 28 February, 1893 in Metcalfe op cit. p.460.
a treaty with Bole, in spite of its new status, because its occupation by the French would effectively cut off connection between the Gold Coast and the Niger Company's territories. There were protests on the German side against the signing of treaties east of the zone, and the British proposal to divide the Neutral Zone was rejected until it was agreed that the Ferguson treaties affecting territories "in the German sphere of influence" be declared invalid.34

In 1894 Ferguson was dispatched once again to the interior to secure treaties with Bouna, Wa, Lobi, Mamprugu, Mossi and Chakosi as the British Government was anxious not to lose any of the hinterland of the Gold Coast and thus the money which had already been invested in the effort to secure it.35 He was also instructed to re-sign the treaties in the neutral zone, excluding France from any possibility of settling in the area, while explaining that German subjects were entitled to the same rights of trade and friendship as the British.36

Ferguson signed treaties of friendship and trade with Bouna, Daboya, Tuluwe, Salaga, Debre all within the neutral zone between 12 April and 19 September 1894 as well as with Mamprugu, Mossi, Chakosi and Busunu. The second Ferguson Mission had, unlike the

33Ibid.

34African (West) no.76 of October 19 1893 and dispatch no. 77 of November 3 1893.


first, a "German" bias. This was because during the second mission he treated with chiefs in the neutral zone to which Germany was a party. He suggested the Oti River in the east as the natural boundary, while cautioning that the strip of land between the Black Volta and Oti Rivers belonging to both Dagbon and Nanun should not be given to the Germans. 37

German reaction to the Ferguson treaties was swift. Although Count Hatzfedt, the German Ambassador in London did not object to the proposed mission in May 1894, his government was most dissatisfied with the Ferguson treaties. 38 In reaction to the German protests, Brandford Griffith sent Ferguson back to the neutral zone in January 1895 to make alterations in Article 3 of the treaties made there, specifying clearly that the Germans had the same rights as the British in the area.

Although Ferguson’s second mission to the interior seemed to have been more successful than the first, it was attacked by Figaro, Temps, and Estafette French newspapers. 39 Her Majesty’s Minister in Paris sent cuttings of these reports to the Foreign Office which in turn sent them to the Colonial Office. The extracts were forwarded to the Gold Coast with requests for comment from

37 For a detailed information of Ferguson’s suggestions about the interior see Ferguson to Griffith, Yendi, Dagomba, 18 August, 1894 in Metcalfe op cit. pp.465-7.

38 Marville op cit. p.40.

39 For the attacks on Ferguson by the French newspapers see Thomas (1983), pp.201-202
Ferguson, in his report, strongly denied the press allegations. He made the reasonable assertion that although rulers in the Volta Basin claimed to be Muslims they could not read Arabic. He went on to show contradictions in *L'Estafette's* report which stated that the "natives" all refused to enter into treaty with him because he was black while *Le Temps* also reported that the people of Bouna did not want to have anything to do with white men. In spite of Ferguson's eloquent defence of his treaties, the French still denied their authenticity. For example, they failed to understand how Ferguson succeeded in signing a treaty with the Mogho Naba when Binger, Crozat and others had been refused. They attributed this to his colour. While this might have been a contributory factor they forgot one thing; the British defeat of Asante in 1874 and therefore the prestige attached to it. For example, in spite of the Tuluewwura's disquiet about the neutral zone, he was still prepared to sign the Ferguson treaty since the British "had rid him of paying a thousand slaves annually to


41Arhin *op cit.* p.110. Ferguson claims that when he gave those who claimed to be Muslims an advertisement in Arabic of Dr. Gruner's treaty none could translate it. *Ibid.*

42Arhin, *op cit.* p.111

43Arhin *op cit.* p.XVIII; Thomas (1983), p. 201. The British also pointed out to the French that from Monteil's and Binger's accounts of their visits there was little evidence to suggest that they were on good terms with the Mossi ruler. Thomas, *op cit.* p. 203.
Similarly, at Wa which, according to Ferguson, had been invaded by Gardiari (Gazare), the "people desired an alliance with the white man (the English) who conquered Ashanti."  

While Ferguson thought he was serving British interests by signing treaties with chiefs, which gave the British "influence" without responsibility, the chiefs also thought that by signing the treaties they were serving their self interests. In other words, both looked at the treaties from different perspectives. One major area of concern to most of the chiefs was the defence of their territories and the activities of Samory and Babatu. For example, at Bole the chief wanted to know whether Ferguson had guns and gunpowder for sale while at Daboya, the Wasipewura hoped that Ferguson would not give gunpowder or munitions of war to "Gadiari"

44Arhin, op cit. p.84. Indeed at Tuluwe he reminded the chief how Asante had prevented him and others from trading directly with the coast. Arhin, op cit. p. 83. Similarly at Salaga, the king spoke bitterly about the way Asante treated his people when they were subjects to them. The people, he said were willing to forgo the lucrative trade to keep out Asantes. See acc.no.SAL/21/1 in Johnson. Gouldsbury claims to have seen many ruined villages on his way to Salaga because all the inhabitants had been sold by Asantes into slavery. Ibid. Buss a German traveller asserts that he was told by the messengers of the king of Kpembe that "every year we had to send 1,000 of our brothers to the Kumasi knife, and to the Kumasi king all our money without complain". See Buss, P., "Buss in Salaga, 1878" in acc.no.SAL/9/1 in Johnson.

45Nkami, 21 December, 1895, to the Governor, in Enclosure in Gold Coast, No. 35 of February 1896 in Iliasu Papers.


47Arhin op cit. p.83.
(Gazare). The Wasipewura also professed his interest in trade which would make him a "rich and respected chief".48 Even the Ya Na whom Ferguson described as "great and despotic"49 refused to give Ferguson guides to Mossi because it was rumoured that he, Ferguson wanted to proceed to Gadiari50. Another common element in the treaties was the chiefs' desire for the revival of trade. The Bolewura was more interested in the revival of trade than any thing else while the Bimbilla Na and the Mogho Naba bemoaned the decline of the caravan trade that had resulted from the defeat of Asante.51 Also, in the hope of maintaining their middleman positions in the event of the revival of trade, the Bolewura, Ya Na, and the Nayiri did all they could to prevent Ferguson from proceeding to Wa and Wagadugu respectively, since these towns were more important than their own towns in the caravan trade.52

Ferguson's second mission was relatively more successful than the first, but some of the chiefs were not happy about the partition of their territories. At Tuluwe, the chief wanted to know why the British were interested only in the western portion of his land. According to Ferguson, although the Tuluwewura was satisfied

48Arhin, _op cit._ p. 86.

49Ferguson to Griffith, Yendi, 18 August, 1894 in Metcalfe _op cit._ pp. 465-466

50Arhin _op cit._ p.90.

51Ferguson to Griffith, Yendi, Dagomba, 18 August, 1894 in Metcalfe _op cit._ pp. 465-467; Arhin, _op cit._ pp. 85 and 90.

52Arhin _op cit._ pp.84, 89 and 90.
with the explanation, "they hardly liked the matter referring to
the division of their country."53 Difficulties, however, arose in
Yendi over the neutral zone during Ferguson's second mission. He
informed the Ya Na that both Britain and Germany were on very
friendly terms and had agreed to trade with the Ya Na "in that
portion of your territory in the direction of the sunset."54
According to Thomas, Ferguson illustrated the arrangement with a
rather untactful "common saying about two hunters who set up a trap
for game; asking the Na how such a trap should be visited." 55
The Na replied that "the two must visit the trap together; one
alone is not allowed to visit the trap."56 He then told Ferguson
that he had not previously known that white men were different,
that is, of different nationalities and that while he accepted
Britain's suzerainty, after being freed from Asante, he could not
serve two masters. The Na, according to Ferguson said "as for the
Germans I do not know them. How do you describe them?. Did you ever
see two men riding one donkey.?"57 Ferguson was therefore forced
to leave Yendi without a new treaty. Perhaps another area where
both Ferguson and the chiefs differed was the interpretation given
to the treaties. To the British the treaties did not imply any

53Arhin, op cit. p. 84.
55Ibid.
56Ibid.
p.39.
obligation on her part, but the chiefs thought otherwise. This was recognized by Ferguson who stated that to Africans, a friendly alliance of a powerful country with a weaker one implied a protection of some kind. Ferguson further thought that by accepting the British flag the Africans expected a reciprocity in the form of protection to thwart the dangers of Samory and Babatu.

Even before Ferguson’s first mission, an Anglo-French Commission was set up to help solve any possible differences that might arise in their attempt at acquiring territories in the hinterland of the Gold Coast. When the Commission resolved nothing after its fourth sitting, and when it became clear that the French were advancing southward towards Wagadugu, the English dispatched two missions, a joint one of Henderson and Ferguson, and the other of Stewart to the interior. The Henderson/Ferguson mission was to re-sign treaties of Protection with Wa and Bouna while Stewart was to occupy Gambaga and, if possible, Wagadugu. The mission of Henderson and Ferguson did not face direct European competition, but was held back by Samory’s forces. The situation was further complicated by the activities of Babatu who was moving southward from the north. Henderson forced Babatu to withdraw the large force he was moving to Wa. Babatu, however, wanted British

58 Arhin, op cit. p. 130.

59 Arhin, op cit. p. 131.


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acquiescence in his actions against Amariya, one of his former Captains who had rebelled. Although initially, Henderson preferred Amariya to Babatu, on learning that the former had entered into a treaty with the French, Henderson moved at once to the north and made his own treaties with Tumu, Dolbizan (Kpon), Gworu and Sankana all of whom accepted British protection. Henderson and Ferguson then moved to the north-west where they eventually signed a treaty of protection with Wa in 1897. However, they could not proceed to Bouna which had then been occupied by the Sofas.⁵¹ Samory’s occupation of areas in treaty with the British put the latter in a dilemma. Firstly, while the British now believed that the people in treaty with them needed protection from Samory, the latter was being supplied with arms by Germany through the neutral zone.⁵² This, therefore, made Samory a formidable foe. Consequently, the British believed that "it would not be advisable to commence military operations against him for such an expedition must be a very serious undertaking."⁵³

The British further believed that the French would derive more advantages from the sacrifices if they attacked Samory.⁵⁴ They

⁵¹Eventually, Ferguson was to die in the hands of the sofas. Henderson was taken prisoner although he was later released. See Henderson’s account (including death of Ferguson) of his mission to Wa in Arhin, op cit., pp. 156-165; Thomas (1983), p.207; Holden, op cit., pp.83-103; Wilks (1985),p.131.

⁵²Chamberlain to Maxwell, Confidential, 4 June, 1897 in Metcalfe op cit., pp.495-498.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.
believed that a joint attack with the French against Samory would also tie their hands since they wanted to regain territories which the French had seized from them. Besides, it would lessen their prestige with Africans and their own subjects since it would mean the English were unable, without assistance to assert their authority on land they claimed to be theirs.\textsuperscript{65} The British even dabbled with the idea of coming to some arrangement with Samory\textsuperscript{66} but a visit to Bondouku by Governor Maxwell made them change their policy towards him.\textsuperscript{67} Realising that they needed a strong force to back up the treaties they signed with the chiefs, the British now assembled two forces led by Major Northcott and Captain Stewart. This ushered in the next stage in the race for the Northern Territories between the British, French and Germans.

\textsuperscript{65}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{66}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{67}Maxwell informed Chamberlain that it would be intensely distasteful to most people in the interior to hear that while the French wanted to destroy Samory the British were his friends. He added that Samory was "feared as much as, or more, than any king of Asante was ever". Maxwell to Chamberlain, Bontuku Camp, 13 October, 1897 in Metcalfe, \textit{op cit.} pp.501-502. Indeed, the British had a similar confused and inconsistent policy towards Babatu. While on the one hand they wanted his military assistance against Samory and a treaty to bar French expansion, on the other they were afraid of offending the French who were bent on his destruction. Holden for instance, describes the British policy towards both Samory and Babatu as one of "hesitation, fluctuation and treachery". Holden, \textit{op cit.} pp.82-86.
3.2 **BOUNDARY SETTLEMENTS; THE BRITISH, FRENCH AND GERMANS.**

You have acted towards us as if we were slaves, like one slave master transferring his slaves to another slave master.

(Chief Odonkor, Colonial Civil Servant and Chief of Kpong on Anglo-German treaty of 1 July, 1890.\(^{68}\))

After signing treaties of either protection or friendship with chiefs in the hinterland, Britain, France and Germany began to demarcate the boundaries between their "possessions". One reason for this was to avoid the isolation of their various coastal possessions from the trade and trade routes of the interior. The boundary between the Gold Coast Colony and Togoland was defined and demarcated from the coast inland for a distance of two and a half miles. The German attempt to extend their sphere of influence into the interior necessitated the northward continuation of the boundary and the creation of the neutral zone in 1888.

The possession of Salaga with its large and important market was naturally a problem in any definition of the spheres of influence between Britain and Germany to the north of the 8\(^{n}\) parallel of latitude. The British, though not committed to occupying the town, hastened to point out that:

it was of vital importance to the trade of the colony with the interior that the routes passing through Salaga to the districts east of the Volta should be kept open and free, and that the district used as recruiting grounds for the Hausa force should be kept, as heretofore, independent of any foreign jurisdiction.\(^{69}\)

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\(^{68}\)Griffith to Knutsfield, Confidential, Christianborg Castle, 12 September, 1890, Metcalfe, *op cit.* p.446.

\(^{69}\)Quoted from Bening(1971), p.14
The Germans readily admitted the reasonableness of the British contention. In 1887, the two governments agreed to set up a Joint Committee to define their spheres of influence. Among the recommendations of the Joint Commissioners was the provision that a conventional line be on the latitude of the River Daka and that the two governments should shall mutually agree to regard the territories:

lying to the north of this line, within the limits marked on the accompanying map, as neutral ground, and shall abstain from seeking to acquire within them protectorates or exclusive influence.\(^7^0\)

In March 1888 both governments accepted the report of the Joint Commissioners which established the neutral zone as the area lying between a conventional line drawn between East and West at the confluence of the Daka and Volta Rivers and 10 N latitude and between 0 33 East and 1 27 West.\(^7^1\)

The neutral zone agreement was a temporary triumph for Britain since it checked the activities of Germans in that zone, while giving the two Governments equal opportunities for trade without any administrative costs. The Neutral Zone agreement was potentially an uneasy truce, but for several years it was apparently successful, although Germany occasionally protested against British recruitment missions to Salaga. The Germans

\(^7^0\)Joint Recommendations of the British and German Protectorates and spheres of influence in the territories lying in the interior of the Gold Coast Colony and the German Togo Protectorate, September, 1887 in metcalfe op cit. p.433.

\(^7^1\)See Fig. 2 for the position of the neutral zone.
themselves had broken the neutral zone agreement by signing treaties with some chiefs in the neutral zone.72 The territorial contests between the three European powers which had become intense from 1896 quickly brought the future of the neutral zone to the fore and made possible its partition.

After the French occupation of Mossi, the German take over of Sansanne Mango, and the British at Gambaga, the significance of the neutral zone lay in the fact that none of them could travel to the other parts of its possessions without traversing the zone. It therefore became clear that the continuous existence of the neutral zone was irritating to both Britain and Germany. Also, it became clear that the territories to the north of the zone were to play an important role in any future partition of the neutral zone. This had been foreseen by Everett, Director of Military Intelligence, who advised that since the Germans claimed to have a treaty with the Nayiri, there was every possibility that they would attempt to occupy Karaga to the south of Mamprugu. Everett suggested that the best thing to do about the German treaty with Sansanne Mango was to occupy Gambaga. By this step, Britain would not only be occupying all territory immediately to the north of the neutral zone, but her position with regard to future negotiations with Germany and France

72 They had signed treaties with chiefs of Yendi, Karaga, Gambaga and Nanton all in the neutral zone in 1888 after the agreement had come into effect. But the most serious violation of the neutral zone agreement committed by German was in 1896 when Count Zech destroyed Kpembe, capital of the divisional chief. For an account of the incidents see acc. no.SAL/89/1; acc.no.89/3; acc.no.SAL/90/1 in Johnson; Braimah and Goody op cit. pp.181-84.
would be greatly strengthened.\textsuperscript{73} The desire to have strong bargaining points in the partition of the neutral zone also explains British claims for a northern boundary and further accounts for the surrender of Leo to the French for some territory to the north and east of Gambaga. After the race for Wagadugu, Gambaga and Chakosi, a provisional agreement was concluded by which the British were confined to Mamprugu while the Germans occupied Chakosi. German persistence in getting a foothold in Mamprugu led to the creation of a mini-neutral zone, with its eastern and western boundaries equidistant from the latitude of Morozugu\textsuperscript{74} and the 10th degree north latitude as its southern boundary.\textsuperscript{75}

The German claim to Mamprugu was based on the treaty of 1888 signed with her and also the erroneous idea that Mamprugu was subservient to Chakosi.\textsuperscript{76} With regard to the German-Chakosi treaty, Britain pointed out that since Gambaga was in the neutral zone, the 1888 agreement invalidated all previous treaties within the zone. However, as the geography of the area became better known,

\textsuperscript{73}Memorandum by William Everett, Director of Military Intelligence, War Office, London, 7 September, 1896, in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.491-2.

\textsuperscript{74}After occupying Gambaga, Stewart reported that he had put a picket at "Morozugu on the Gambaga-Sansanne Mango road to prevent German encroachment on Mamprusi". Stewart put another picket at Zensah on the Gambaga-Yendi road for the same purpose. Captain D. Stewart to F.M. Hodgson, Gambaga, 29 December, 1896 in Metcalfe, \textit{op cit.} p.493

\textsuperscript{75}African (West) No. 585, Enclosure 2, No.101.

\textsuperscript{76}The reverse was rather the case. For Mamprusi-Chakosi relations see Levtzion \textit{op cit.} pp.78-84; Mackay, \textit{op cit.} pp.22-23; Rattray (1932), ii and 547.
it became clear that Gambaga was outside the neutral zone. The British then turned round to say that the Ferguson treaty of 1894 justified their occupation of Gambaga. The German did not use same argument to justify their entitlement to Gambaga.

In the face of the struggle over territory in the neutral zone, Britain and Germany set up another Joint Committee to solve any problems likely to emerge. At its first meeting Count Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador to Britain and chief negotiator, claimed parts of the neutral zone such as Gambaga and Karaga to the north as German territory. Count Hatzfeldt further demanded the cession of the territory belonging to the Gold Coast on the left bank of the Volta River to his country. The British on the other hand insisted on maintaining the original agreement with regard to the neutral zone since abiding by the German request would have meant handing over territory which for nearly fifty years had been a dependency of hers, and it would have also entailed the loss of a population of 600,000. A year later the Germans still demanded free navigation on the Volta and a partition of the neutral zone such that Salaga and Yendi will be in their section. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for Colonies, was not prepared to

78Memorandum of the negotiations of November 1895, in regard to an arrangement respecting the Hinterland of the British and German possessions on the Gulf of Guinea in Metcalfe, op cit. pp.482-483.
79Ibid.
concede such demands. He stated that granting Germany free access to navigation on the Volta river would be injurious to British trade. According to him, the 1888 agreement was arrived at to open the trade at Salaga to the Gold Coast Colony, thus negating the possibility of any of the powers closing important trade centres.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.} For the views and career of Joseph Chamberlain as Secretary of State for Colonies with regards to Africa see Robinson and Gallagher with Alice Denny (1963), pp.181-4, 395-402 and 429-40.}

Due to this impasse, in May 1897, the Colonial Office suggested that the Neutral Zone agreement of 1888 should be unilaterally abrogated and Yendi and Salaga occupied if Germany were to be prevented from reaping the advantage of the "unscrupulous proceedings of her officers."\footnote{Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 13 May, 1897 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp. 495-496.} This would have greatly affected the military situation in Asante and the Northern Territories as a whole, so the Foreign Office refused to sanction such a venture. The Foreign Office pointed out that Yendi was completely in the hinterland of Togoland and its occupation would be unjustified.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

In June 1897 the Colonial Office reiterated its view that the occupation would be justified pointing out that:

the result of handing over the chief town and a portion of their country to Germany will be that the prestige of the British Government will be diminished, and that the difficulty of maintaining order in the neighbouring territories within the British sphere of influence will consequently be increased; while the partition of Dagomba will, as in the cases of Gaman and Krepi, which had similarly been divided, lead to much misunderstanding and
In spite of the wrangling, it was reluctantly agreed to partition the neutral zone such that from the confluence of the Volta and the Daka, a line would be drawn straight northward till the 9th parallel so that the whole of Mamprugu would come under British rule while Chakosi would belong to Germany. It was also proposed by the British that Dagbon should be partitioned so that a greater part, including Yendi, its capital, would come under German rule. This was in spite of the fact that in 1894 the Ya Na and his council:

refused to consent to any arrangement which savoured of a partition of their territory, or which placed them in a position of 'a donkey ridden by two masters.'

To prevent Yendi and Salaga, the two most important towns from passing into German hands, Britain occupied the two towns and established a local administration. The reasons given for this unilateral action was that the Germans had interfered in the zone by burning Kpembe and attacking Yendi and also selling arms and ammunition to Samory. The Germans also objected to negotiations because they considered Salaga to be more important than Yendi. They also protested against British presence at Yeji and Salaga hence leading to the withdrawal of the posts. By the middle of

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84Africa (West), no. 529. Enclosure 292
86 Ibid.
February 1899, the British had accepted the German view that the irregular occupation of the zone should cease. They declared that:

it was not possible that the future destiny of this important tract of country would be left in its present uncertain condition...We should by some form of conference or consultation, try and devise some methods by which the rights of the two countries could be made consistent with the bestowal of the advantages of civilised government upon it.\(^9\)

The Germans responded by requesting for the cession of the trans-Volta area of the Colony in that:

if only Her Majesty’s Government would consent to cede to us the coast line up to the mouth of the Volta, Germany would agree to anything England wished with regard to the Neutral Zone and Tchancholand.\(^9\)

In early November 1899, the British claimed the left bank of the River Daka as the boundary and then a line due north in the direction of Morozugu to the 9 parallel to include all Mamprugu within British sphere. The German claim that the boundary should be a straight line due north from the point of intersection of the 9 parallel and the Daka was rejected. Eventually, it was agreed that:

in the neutral zone, the frontier between the German and English territories shall be formed by the River Daka as far as the point of its intersection with the 9th parallel of north latitude...in such a manner that all the territories of Mamprusi shall fall to Great Britain, and that Yendi and all the territories of Chakosi shall fall to Germany.\(^9\)

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\(^9\)Africa (West) No. 549 in Enclosure 104.

\(^9\)Memorandum of conversation with Dr. Kayser on French schemes in the hinterland of Dahomey, and Anglo-German relations in Africa, Berlin, 30 August, 1894 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} p.505.

\(^9\)Conversation between Great Britain and Germany for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions, signed in London, 14 November,1899 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} p.505.
Thus, an Anglo-German agreement on their common boundaries in the Gold Coast and Togoland had been reached at last.

Although in 1891 Britain and France had agreed on their borders to the 9th parallel of the north latitude, disagreements soon arose about their spheres of influence further north. For example, while Britain was prepared to concede Mossi to the French in view of the alleged conclusion of a treaty with the Mogho Naba by a French officer, they demanded the inclusion of the whole of Gurma within the British sphere of influence. The last phase of the negotiations for the partition of the north of the Gold Coast and of the interior of West Africa between the British and the French started in 1896, and was concluded by the convention of 1898. In the agreement which also affected Siam, the two governments agreed to appoint commissioners:

who shall be charged to fix by mutual agreement, after examination of the titles produced on either side, the most equitable delimitation between the British and the French possessions in the region situated to the west of the lower Niger. 

When the Commission began its work in the same year, the aim of Britain was stated as:

to secure an equitable settlement which shall give to the British and the French possessions alike such access to the markets of the interior as will enable them to pursue their legitimate development without hindrance. 

\(^{91}\textbf{Ibid.}\)

\(^{92}\)The Marquis of Salisbury to the Marquis of Dufferin, 7 February, 1896 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} p.488.

\(^{93}\textbf{Ibid.}\)
Britain was soon to change this compromising tone. She now demanded Mossi, Lobi, Grunshi and Bouna since Mossi and Grunshi were recruiting grounds for most of the constabulary of the Gold Coast while Lobi and Bona were important trading centres. Britain felt that if these were given to France it would enable the latter to divert the trade in the Mossi region as she was doing in the case of the countries behind Sierra Leone. In the course of the deliberations by the Commissioners, the French rightly observed that all the treaties Ferguson made were commercial engagements, and did not preclude another power from signing treaties with the chiefs in spite of the clause banning them from accepting protection from other powers without Britain’s consent. The French delegates expressed surprise as to how Ferguson succeeded in making a treaty with the Mogho Naba. The French further declared that it was the first time in such negotiations that treaties executed by an African were being rendered in evidence to support claims.

Such attempts to disparage Ferguson’s character and discredit the treaties were resisted. The British pointed out that:

he was a thoroughly well educated man, and a geographer so excellent as to have been awarded the Gill Memorial and gold watch by the Royal Geographical Society for his service in connection with the extension of geographical knowledge of Africa.

It was also pointed out to the French that as an accredited agent

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³⁵African (West) No. 21 pp. 28 and 29

³⁶Quoted from Bening (1971), p.22.
of the British Government, his treaties were as valid as any executed by the French. The ambivalent attitude adopted by Europeans towards Africans is, also, illustrated by the British objection in 1887 to the Germans entrusting an African to execute a treaty.

In 1896 the French proclaimed a protectorate over Dahomey (Benin) after defeating its king in 1892. They now sought to connect Dahomey with their colonies to the north and west. To this end they repudiated all boundaries they had previously agreed to, claiming that they were mere basis for future negotiations. Anticipating that the French would occupy Mossi the British government decided to send a white officer to Wagadugu, if possible, with either some of the Africans who accompanied Ferguson on his visit there or with Ferguson himself. His main duty was to renew Ferguson’s treaty with the Mogho Naba and convince the latter to accept another British flag. Captain Stewart was chosen for this journey and was instructed to proceed immediately to and occupy Gambaga before continuing to Mossi. Stewart was however told to withdraw to Walewale if the French were already in occupation of

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Thomas (1983), pp. 203-204. Interestingly, while the French were doubting the credibility of his treaties because of his colour Ferguson was referring to his fellow Gold Coasters as "savages", "barbaric" who needed enlightenment. He also frequently used "we" and "our" to refer to British possessions as if he was part of it. See Arhin (1974) Introduction and indeed throughout the book.


Chamberlain to Maxwell, 3 October, 1896 in Metcalfe op cit. p. 492.
Wagadugu. Stewart reported that he had occupied Gambaga but that the French through trickery had taken over Wagadugu. He was asked to go to Wagadugu since the French had withdrawn but met Lieutenant Voulet at Tengrugu and there was almost a clash between them. Voulet claimed Mossi, Grunshi, Tengrugu, Sansanne Mango, Gurma and Wa for France while protesting against British occupation of Yendi and Bole. At Stewart's suggestion both Officers withdrew their forces and the matter was referred to their home Governments. This action by the French infuriated Chamberlain at the Colonial Office. After Henderson had signed a treaty with Bona, Chamberlain intimated that the French should be notified that Bona, Wa and Gambaga had come under British protection and that Mossi including Tengrugu were also part of British territory under the treaty of 1894. Chamberlain was of the view that something should be done without delay to induce the French Government to put a stop to the proceedings of their officers in Mossi and other territories whose inhabitants had grounds to look to Her Majesty’s

100 Instructions to Captain D. Stewart in Metcalfe op cit. p.492.

101 Captain D. Stewart to F.M. Hodgson, Gambaga, 29 December, 1896 in Metcalfe op cit. p.493. According to Stewart, two French Officers and 400 hundred soldiers arrived in Wagadugu and said they wanted the king as he had been making human sacrifices. The king on hearing this fled to Numgani. The palace was then burnt and the French occupying force stayed for thirty days before departing for Yariga. Ibid.

102 Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 6 April, 1897 in Metcalfe op cit. pp.494-495.

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.
Government for protection. Apparently incensed by the French action, Chamberlain went on to note that the French did not only seize Mossi and Bouna but other places which the agents of Gold Coast Government and the Royal Niger Company had signed treaties with. However, Chamberlain maintained that the French Government had not repudiated the treaties, nor replied to the remonstrances which had been addressed to them. He went on to bemoan the fact that it had been a source of weakness to Britain that in negotiations which had always taken place between her and France, the latter had always been in control of the principal places in dispute. Chamberlain then went on to suggest that should the forces of the Gold Coast be sufficient they should immediately occupy all important places in the Gold Coast hinterland, which could be claimed as properly belonging to Britain and which had not been already occupied by France. To the Secretary of State for Colonies, the French had no doubt been encouraged in their action by the belief, based on their past experience that the British had always yielded to French demands and abandoned their rights on similar occasions. He urged that this time Britain should show her determination to meet force with force and perhaps if France saw that Britain was determined to substantiate her demands the French

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106 Chamberlain to Maxwell, 4 June, 1897 in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.496-498.


would withdraw from all places they occupied but which had treaties with Britain. Chamberlain suggested that should France refuse to withdraw from such places, Britain should seize Mossi, Bussa and such places which were of importance to France until the latter withdrew. Apparently supporting Chamberlain, the Marquess of Salisbury, the Secretary of State, believed that the French had taken their action based on the principle of effective occupation which had been enunciated at the Berlin Conference of West Africa. Salisbury pointed out that at the Berlin Conference when the British delegate wanted the principle of effective occupation to be applied to the coastline of West Africa, the French opposed it hence the idea fell through. In spite of this seemingly strong position, the British later gave in to most French demands by allowing them to control Mossi and Bouna.

On 15 October, 1897 the title of the disputed territory was altered from "the Hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony" to the

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109 Ibid. For example, Britain had signed treaties with Mossi and Agege but the French later occupied the two places.

110 Ibid.


112 Ibid.
"Northern Territories of the Gold Coast." The term hinterland of course was objectionable since it could be interpreted to mean all territory considered to be within the sphere of interest of the colonial powers. The new term on the other hand conveyed a restricted meaning. It was perhaps also an indication of Britain's determination to maintain her rights in the disputed area. Negotiations between Britain and France also resumed in October 1897 at the instance of France, with Britain bidding for time to enable them occupy the areas they claimed. The two contentious areas in the hinterland of the Gold Coast were Bouna and Mossi. While the British espoused the principle of the priority of treaties, the French enunciated that of effective occupation.

When the negotiations resumed Britain claimed all the areas which were in treaty with them including Mossi. The French objected to these claims particularly Mossi claiming that its occupation cost them one million francs and besides, they argued, a local administration had been established and a telegraphic line had been extended from Dakar to Wagadugu. However in spite of their earlier strong claims to Mossi, the British began to scale down their demands on Mossi and rather concentrated on Bona which they had effectively occupied. Even in the case of Bona they acceded to the French plea so as to save "French loss of face and to round off the odd appearance of a British enclave projecting into the Ivory

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113 African (West) No. 538 Enclosure no. 217

114 Bening *op. cit.* p. 27.
By mid-June 1898, the two countries had arrived at an agreement with regards to their boundaries. It had become politically expedient to conclude the deliberations of the Commission because the French Minister of Colonies had lost his seat and it was almost certain that the Government would resign the next day. It was feared that the arrival of a new man would probably complicate matters. On 14 June, 1898 a convention was signed at Paris delimiting the possessions of Britain and France.  

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115 African (West) No. 104, Enclosure 115

116 See Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the delimitation of their respective possessions to the West of the Niger in Metcalfe op cit. pp. 503-504. These boundaries except with little modifications have since remained the boundaries between Ghana, Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso.
CHAPTER IV.
"PACIFYING" THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES.

4.1 WARS OF "PACIFICATION. ¹

The object of the expedition was to punish the people of Zackoo a large and populous district situated about twenty fives miles to the north-west of Gambaga. The people about three weeks ago attacked and robbed a Mossi caravan killing seven men and taking the whole of their loads.²

Before the signing of the Anglo-French and Anglo-German agreements of 1898 and 1899 respectively, which defined their borders on the Gold Coast, the British and French fought Samory and Babatu. After he was compelled to evacuate his home territory in Wasulu, Samory built a power base in the Jemini country north of the Ivory Coast and begun to extend his empire in the region of the Black Volta. He occupied Wa which was in treaty with Britain. This led to a clash in March 1897 at Dawkita between the sofas, Samory's army, and a British expedition led by Lieutenant Henderson and Ferguson. The British force was defeated, Ferguson was killed and

¹The terms "pacifying" and "pacification" enjoyed a certain amount of popularity among not only colonial officials but also some writers of colonial history. Among these "pacification" was said to have brought peace into otherwise warring environment not conducive to trade and good governance. But evidence elsewhere which points to the existence of trade routes and dynamic interaction of various groups undermines this thought.

²Acting C.C.N.T., Gambaga, 30 December, 1906 to Commissioner, North-West District, Wa. ADM.56/1/4; NAG, Accra.
Henderson was taken prisoner. Samory released Henderson because he wanted to ally with the British against the French and Babatu. He later moved back into French territory where he was captured in Guinea in September 1898, and exiled to Gabon. The British were however successful in their war with Babatu. After he had been evicted from the north-east by the French, Babatu formed an alliance with Bukari, king of Pigoo (Pigou in Dagbon). In May 1897, he sent messengers with presents to Wongo (Wungu), Sou and other towns in Mamprugu to incite them to rise up against the British. Captain Murray, who was in the area reported that he was informed that as soon as the rains were over, Babatu and his allies would attack Yabum (that is, the Gonja state) and Gambaga and drive "the English out as Samory had done at Wa." In October of the same year, the Chief of Nasia refused to have a post in his town as he was "not as foolish as the Mamprusi Na" to receive the white man.

Babatu and Bukari harassed the British at Pigou and Nayugu and attempted to dislodge them from Gambaga, a town that was vital to British plans for stopping German expansion into the neutral zone. A large British force under Major Morris defeated the allied force at Karaga and the town was pillaged by the British and their Mossi

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3For the events that led to the clash and the results of the battles, see Henderson's Account (including death of Ferguson) of His Mission to Wa in Arhin op cit, pp.155-166; Wilks (1989),pp.121-132. However, in May 1897, a larger British force under the command of Northcott occupied Wa.


5Ibid.
mercenaries. After this defeat, Babatu retired to Yendi and later died of a spider bite. Even a year after the defeat of the Dagomba and Zabarima force, the British were still apprehensive of a Dagomba attack. Murray, writing to Northcott⁷, stated that he had heard that the Ya Na had threatened to invade Mamprusi. If that occurred, he wrote, the whole of Mamprusi except Gambaga and Walewale would rise up against British rule. It was a fear so long as Dagbon remained neutral.⁸ Mamprugu and Gonja, the other centralised states submitted to the British because they had been defeated by Samory and Babatu, and perhaps, preferred British to African warlords.

After these initial "scares" and wars of "pacification", the British faced more determined resistance from the Lobi-Dagarti and the Frafra.⁹ One of the first major problems which confronted the

⁷Captain Armitage who was surveying the road from Yeji to Gambaga reported in September 1897 that the Dagombas and Babatu were preparing to attack him. At about the same time, Governor Maxwell regretted that Captain Campbell under French pressure, had made an enemy of Babatu. ADM.56/10/10; NAG, Accra.

⁸Major later Lt.Col. Northcott was the first Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories. He was however recalled into his regular battalion as a result of the outbreak of the South African War of 1899 where he died.

⁹Murray to Northcott, 4 May, 1898. Acc. No. 360/53; NAG, Accra. In spite of this Dagomba forces did not attack the British.

⁹Frafra as used in this chapter refers to that conglomeration of people who occupied the area between the White and Red volta rivers. But specifically, it refers to the Nabrigos, who occupied the hilly country around Nangodi, the Tallensi who occupied the area around the Tong Hills and the Nankarassi who occupied the rest of the country. The noun "Frafra" is derived from their form of greeting during which they utter the words "furra" "furra" three or four times clapping their hands. See S.D. Nash, General Report of the Zuarungu District, December, 1910. ADM.56/1/412; NAG, Accra.
British in the Northern Territories was how to deal with the non-centralised states. The British wanted them to stop raiding their neighbours for cattle. These raids led to reprisals from their neighbours. Most often, the Lobi-Dagari and Frafra rebelled\(^\text{10}\) and the British did not hesitate to dispatch soldiers to restore order. Even before the British took full control of the north-eastern part of the Gold Coast, they had a vague idea of the area which was described as lying west of Binduri and being peopled by the Frafra "a name that was understood to imply a concentration of all the evil characteristics."\(^\text{11}\)

Between 1898 and 1911, the Frafra as whole put up a heroic resistance to British rule but it was neither unanimous nor centrally coordinated.\(^\text{12}\) In line with the desire to encourage

\(^{10}\) Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch has pointed out that it was fragmented societies that were most prone to revolt against the colonial system because firstly, state control was alien to them and secondly, their traditional internal regulation was incapable of handling the demands of the colonial system. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch *Africa, Endurance and Change South of the Sahara* (University of California Press: Los Angeles, 1988), pp.172 and 204.


\(^{12}\) Writing about why the French defeated the Tukulor, Kanya-Forstner mentions the lack of cooperation between Mamadu Lamine and Ahmadu because the former claimed the latter's title. See Kanya-Forstner, A,S., "Mali-Tukukor" in *West African Resistance; The military response to colonial occupation* (ed.) Crowder, M., (Africana Publishing Corporation: New York, 1971), pp.53-79. Lack of cooperation among Africans was one of the reasons for their easy defeat by colonial armies. Similarly, the other ethnic groups stood by while the Frafra alone fought the British. In the case of the Frafra it was reported that the others feared them so much that they refused even to give evidence against them. See Informal Diary, Zuarungu, 16 December 1913. ADM.56/1/159; NAG, Accra.
trade\textsuperscript{13} in their territories, the British tried to punish those who violated the trade routes or looted caravans. In 1898, the first expedition against the Frafra led by Northcott was undertaken to punish certain villages which had attacked Mossi caravans. However, on his arrival in the area, he found the people to be peaceful.\textsuperscript{14} Most often, the Frafra sought refuge in the Sapiri Hills (correctly, Sipaat, but popularly called Tong hills) which were difficult to attack because of their steep slopes. Besides being their stronghold, they were the abode of \textit{Boar}, one of the most important Tallensi shrines which was at Tenzugu in the Hills. According to Anafu, although \textit{Boar} had limited economic value during the colonial period, it "symbolized the configuration of their (Tallensi) ancestors and a calculus for interclan relations."\textsuperscript{15} In January 1899, Captain Giffard led another expedition into Frafra with the aim of punishing an attack on a party of the Gold Coast Constabulary. It was meant to force the people to pay a fine for the attack and to:

establish our authority in the country, plant an officer's post and at the same time win the people to an understanding of the advantages of our rule and to explain to them the obligation imposed on them by it.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{13} Memorandum, By Order, Staff Officer. 9 March, 1899. ADM.56/1/35; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{14} Hodgson to Chamberlain, 8 April 1898 (Enclosed Report of a trip through the Frafra district of northern Mamprusi by Lt. Col. Northcott); PRO. CO. 879/52 in the Iliasu Papers.

\textsuperscript{15} Anafu \textit{op cit.} p.23.

\textsuperscript{16} Northcott to Col. Sec., 6 March, 1899. ADM 56/1/1; NAG, Accra.
In an expedition which lasted thirty days Captain Giffard carried "hell" to Frafra Land and pursued a scorched earth policy to the extent of poisoning the only water hole at Kumbusco.\(^\text{17}\) Two lessons emerged from this expedition; the first was the magnitude of punishment inflicted on a "rebellious" people and secondly, that a hasty interpretation should not be made on either the action or inaction of a people. Writing to the Colonial Secretary, Northcott pointed out that a mission such as Giffard's was a difficult one in that it demanded patience, intelligence, firmness as well as a just perception of the amount of punishment necessary for educational purposes.\(^\text{18}\) This was because as explained by the Chief Commissioner, the subdistrict was occupied by independent groups in many cases antagonistic to each other. The attitude of one was no indication of the feelings of its neighbour.\(^\text{19}\) Secondly, the expedition showed that the desertion of a village was not an indication that the people committed an offence against authority. The "King" of Tong told Giffard that his people had deserted their village because they thought Giffard and his men were the French who some time past shot and killed a hundred of his men.\(^\text{20}\)

\(^{17}\) Captain Giffard's Report of the Expedition to Frafra, 3 March, 1899. ADM 56/1/1; NAG, Accra.

\(^{18}\) Northcott to the Col. Sec., 6 March, 1899. ADM 56/1/1; NAG, Accra.

\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Interview with the "King" of Tong on 5 February, 1899 in Giffard's report of his expedition to Frafra. Ibid.
The attack on Lamptey, an African medical dresser at Sherigu, the expulsion of Feston from his post at Bolgatanga and the murder of six members of the Gold Coast constabulary led to another expedition into Frafra led by Captain Stewart in September 1899. This expedition was charged with the twin mission of "informing them (the Frafra) that the English government wanted to be their friends as well as being their master." After scorching the region, arresting the "King" of Tong, and charging him two hundred "heads of cattle" and three hundred sheep, Stewart wrote:

the carrying of the Sapiri Hills has done an enormous amount of good for the natives of the country now realise that their hills are not impregnable.

A year later, another expedition was sent into Frafraland. In his monthly report to the Governor, Major Morris, the Chief Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories said that an expedition had been sent to Frafra with the object of punishing Zackoo, a large and populous area which had attacked, robbed and

21N.N. Lamptey was a dresser attached to the Clinic at Gambarga. As a reprisal for this attack about forty Frafra were said to have been wounded or killed. Feston to Northcott, 20 March, 1899. ADM 56/1/1; NAG, Accra.

22Captain Stewart to Col. Sec., Accra, 12 September, 1899 (Enclosure; Report on the Expedition to Frafra) CO./879/78 in Iliasu PAPERS.

23Governor Sir F.M. Hodgson to Mr. Chamberlain, 25 September 1899 (Enclosure: Capt. Stewart to Col. Sec.; Report on the Expedition to Frafra) C.O. 879/78 in Iliasu Papers. In that expedition, a hundred Frafra were killed and according to Stewart, "as the chiefs of Zari and Sherigu refused to send messengers and as our men were being fired upon, I gave orders that all their villages and standing crops should be destroyed". Altogether, about five miles square were burnt and laid flat. Ibid.
murdered a Mossi caravan consisting of seven men. Major Morris stated that he had been informed that the people of Yariga had also engaged in caravan raiding and he was determined to punish them as well. The Commissioner mentioned that exemplary punishment was inflicted on both areas and that fifty Frafra had been killed, their compounds were burnt and a considerable number of cattle, sheep and donkeys were captured.24 The Commissioner could not however ascertain the number that was injured because the "Frafra are extremely tenacious of life and unless very badly wounded generally managed to get away with the rest of their comrades."25 Sometimes, expeditions had the dual purpose of punishing culprits and displaying British power. In 1904 it was found necessary to proceed with a strong force to Kandigar, lying six miles to the north of the eleventh parallel to punish the people for looting traders and caravans. After the objective had been successfully accomplished, it was decided to:

visit a number of towns enroute which are hostile to our rule but met with little opposition as all the towns proved friendly with the exception of Sherigu where a few arrows were fired at us.26

Another group of people who resisted the British were the Lobi-Dagarti in the North Western Province. The District Commandant of the Black Volta District in his annual report of 1904 noted that:

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24Major Morris, Gambaga, March 1900. ADM 56/1/1; NAG, Accra.
25Ibid.
26Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the year 1904. ADM.5/1/13; NAG, Accra.
the great difficulty in dealing with the people of Lobi-Dagarti and other outlying parts of the Protectorate is that they recognise no central form of authority amongst themselves, every compound owner being a law unto himself.27

In reality of course, each compound was not 'a law unto itself', but a constituent unit of a patrilineage under the leadership of a lineage head who was socially and ritually responsible for the behaviour of all members of the lineage.

In 1905, it was again reported that the Lobi sub-district was still unsettled and that:

raids were carried out on Girapa (Jirapa) and the natives of Konkuri reported of a disturbance in which they shot a "French" Lobi who was driving away stolen cattle after killing one "English" Lobi.28

The Acting Commandant further reported that the chiefs of Lawra and surrounding villages in Lobi-Dagarti, were no longer holding markets due to robberies lately committed in that district.29 However, the Lobi-Dagarti unlike the Frafra, soon settled down to an "orderly government". It was reported in 1907 that they were beginning to realise the futility of trying to oppose the authority of government and to "understand that only those who defy it will


28 Moutray Read, Acting Commandant, Black Volta District, 28 January 1905 to the Chief Commissioner and Commandant, Northern Territories. ADM 56/1/412; NAG, Accra.

29 Ibid.
be punished." Tact, the realisation by the people of the superior British military power and administrative changes account for the alleged changed behaviour of the Lobi-Dagarti. In 1906 Watherston the Chief Commissioner, spent two months among the Lobi-Dagarti, visited all the important towns and interviewed the chiefs. The result was that the people agreed to reorganise themselves under their old chiefs, instead of "living as they were in independent and at constant warfare with one another." It was further reported that:

this arrangement has been attended with far greater success than was expected, the chiefs have in most cases proved themselves capable men, and have commenced dealing with all cases in their country, and report to the commissioner of the district their decisions and judgements and the people now take their own native disputes to the chiefs. Lawra was made a sub-district in 1907 to strengthen the local administration.

On a number of occasions there was international co-operation. The British were able in 1907, with the assistance of the French Resident at Tenkodogo to break up an organised gang of robbers whose looting was done chiefly on English soil. The robbers were doing considerable harm to the trade between Gambaga and Kumasi.  

30Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1907. ADM 5/1/16; NAG, Accra.
31Report of the Northern Territories for the Year 1906. ADM.5/1/15; NAG, Accra.
32Ibid.
33Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1907. ADM.5/1/16; NAG, Accra.
If the Lobi-Dagarti areas were "pacified" by 1907 it took the British another four years to do so among the Frafra. Anafu, has pointed out that the fundamental cause of Frafra resistance was the defence of their land. Another explanation is that before British occupation, their area was the hunting grounds for slaves by the centralised states, and later, by Babatu. The Frafra therefore came to equate strangers with slavers. This resistance took many forms which included attacking caravans, shooting at Colonial officials, flouting Colonial authority and sometimes murdering officially appointed chiefs. For example, in January 1910, the chief of Nangodi and three members of his family were murdered, their compound was burnt and their cattle were driven off. His supporters were said to be panic stricken and fled their homes for fear of their lives. Since the chief had proved himself a "loyal and zealous supporter of the government", strong action was taken against the culprits, who were said to have blocked all access

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34 Anafu *op cit.* p.23.

35 In 1910 Captain Nash wrote of the Frafra "wedged in as they are between the Mossi on the north and Mamprusi on the south, the ignorance of the Frafra is due to years or perhaps centuries of raids on the part of the aforementioned people." S.D. Nash, Zuarungu, 26 September, 1910. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

36 In October 1909 the chief's compound was destroyed and he sought refuge in the Government Rest House and in November his son was murdered. When Captain Wheeler the District Commissioner (hereafter D.C.) at Navrongo went to reinstate him and punish the culprits he was given a very hostile reception and had to fire on the protestors. See Acting C.C.N.T., 23 March 1910 to the Acting Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra,
roads to Nangodi. In the reprisal for this action, the Frafra lost thirty-five men, their houses were burnt and more than two hundred and fifty cows were taken as a prize. Major Irvine, the acting Chief Commissioner, claimed that punishment inflicted on those implicated in the murder had a great moral effect not only on the District, but also the whole of the North Eastern Province as it "has been an object lesson to both chiefs and people that Government are always ready at a moment's notice to protect them." Punishments were severer when Colonial officials were attacked.

However, the greatest expedition into Frafra was undertaken in March 1911. There had been frequent complaints about the troublesome nature of the people in the area. Constant firing on

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37 Acting Commissioner, North-Eastern-Provice (hereafter (C.N.E.P.) Gambaga, 7 February 1910 to Acting. C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. The "rebels" were said to have been extremely defiant and hostile and "could be seen wearing their war kit, dancing about on the hills in the background, and the muffled beat of war drums could also be heard." Ibid.

38 Acting C.N.E.P., Gambaga, 7 February 1910 to the Acting. C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

39 The Acting C.C.N.T., 22 March 1910 to the Hon. Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

40 In 1907, Captain O'Kineally, C.N.E.P. visited the Tong Hills and was told that "the reason for their enmity to the white man was Moshis (Mossi), sent by the white man, had settled near their country, heard cases, confiscated their cattle, and so they had combined to fight all Moshi and the white man, but that they had no grievance against the white man, except in so far as they considered the Moshi had been sent by the white man." See Annual Report on the Northern Territories for 1907. ADM.5/1/16; NAG, Accra. Others are S.D. Nash, D.C., Zuarungu, June 15, 1910 to Acting C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. In another, the C.N.E.P. wrote "to countenance this sanctuary for malefactors in our midst appears therefore to be dangerous. The root of the whole evil is
officials, refusing to answer to summons and cattle stealing compelled the officials to undertake the mission. Attacks on carriers under the escort of the Constabulary, burning grass intended for repairs of houses and raids on markets two and half miles away from Zuarungu were the immediate factors for the March 1911 invasion. Force was used to "vindicate the authority of Government." Two Companies of the Gold Coast Regiment stormed the

the some superstition presided over by a fetish priest. If such is the case the sooner it is exploded the better. Major Festing to Armitage, 28 September, 1910. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Later Festing wrote again, we "allowed a tiny and disaffected area to persistently defy us. Consequently, they have formed a completely wrong estimate both of their own importance and of our power." Report of the Tong Hill Affair by Major H. Festing, Political Officer. ADM.56/1/426; NAG, Accra.

In June, 1908, S.D. Nash the D.C. was fired upon while sketching the Tong area and again in March 1910, the people drove him away when he attempted to climb the Tong Hills. See S.D. Nash, Tong, 18 June 1910 to C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra, and S.D. Nash, D.C., Zuarungu, 26 September, 1910, General Remarks on the Zuarungu District. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Apparently, no Colonial Official had been able to go to the top of the hills until 1907 when Captain O'Kineally surprised the people by climbing the hill. They were said to have run away but came back. O'Kineally lived among them for two weeks and later reported that there was no need to send an expedition to the hills. Nash reports that after the O'Kineally affair, the people determined that no Colonial Official would be allowed on the hills again hence their attack on him. Ibid.

Nash, the D.C. wrote that the people of Guruk refused to honour his summons about cattle stealing and in his own words "summons is always torn up by the defendant who runs away to the hills with his bow and arrows" and in effect says "let the white man try, if he is able to take the cattle which are on top of these hill." S.D. Nash, D.C., Tong, June 1910 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM 56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

Armitage to Col. Sec., 13 January 1911. ADM/1/7; NAG, Accra.

Annual Report on the Northern Territories for the Year 1911, pp.335-555.
hills, routed and expelled the Frafra from their stronghold and razed their houses to the ground. The chiefs of Tenzugu, Tiliga and the "celebrated fetish priest" surrendered six days after the commencement of the attack. It was reported afterwards that:

the storming of the hills was an unexpected event even by the friendlies who had become disheartened by our not giving them "protection" and as "the natives expressed it, we began to set fire to the hills themselves."

The grove was destroyed, its worship was banned and the people were told not to settle on the hills again since there was better soil for cultivation below the hills. A broad road was built from Tong across the hills, and a path bordered by stones was made round at about three hundred yards distance from the base from which Fraf ras were forbidden to live or make farms within the boundary made by the path.

The role of the Boar fetish in Frafra resistance to British rule needs some comment. It would appear that the destruction of the fetish at Tenzugu was a constraint on the general policy of patronage of tradition. But this was not the case. The British had not yet formulated such a policy at least in the Gold Coast. Also,

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45 Report on the Expedition to Tong Hills by Major Festing, 12 March, 1911. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

46 Acting C.C.N.T., R.A. Irvine, Nasia, 12 March 1911 to the Honourable (henceforth, Hon.) Acting Col. Sec. Christianborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

47 Handing over by S.D. Nash, Acting C.N.E.P., to Dr. William Ryan, 8 May, 1912. ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra.

48 Annual Report for the Northern Territories for 1911. ADM.5/1/20; NAG, Accra.
most Colonial officials regarded Tenzugu in which the fetish resided as the haven for all wrong doers which should be destroyed.\footnote{See S.D. Nash, D.C., Zuarungu, 26 September, 1910. General Remarks of Zuarungu District. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra; Captain Stewart to Col. Sec. in PRO. CO. 879/78 in Iliasu Papers; Report on Expedition to Tong Hills by Major Festing, 14 November, 1911. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra; S.D. Nash, D.C., Zuarungu, Tong, 18 June, 1910 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. The chief priest was fined 200 cows and 300 sheep. He was subsequently taken to Gambaga because he could not meet the payment. See C.C.N.T., 9 August, 1912 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra.} This explanation is not totally correct. There is no doubt that people who defied colonial authority took refuge there but any deity or shrine is regarded as a protector of its worshippers.\footnote{Indeed, as recently as 1985 I was witness to a village fight which lasted for three consecutive days. When eventually peace officers arrived in the village most people took refuge in the grove of a deity which was not well defended but the peace officers did not enter to effect any arrests.} Naturally, the people sought sanctuary from their protector which at the same time also happened to be at a place difficult to traverse by outsiders. In 1915 the Chief Commissioner, once more destroyed the grove of the Boar fetish when on investigation he realised that its worship had been secretly revived and its "malign" influence was once more at work on the people.\footnote{Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1915. ADM.5/1/24; NAG, Accra. In describing the event, the Chief Commissioner noted "when the fears of the people had abated they completely destroyed the fetish by making an immense pyre of dry grass and of brushwood and timber and set fire to it. The conflagration that ensued was considered to have killed the fetish." \textit{Ibid.} The chiefs were said to have come to thank the Commissioner for ridding them of an "evil" influence. \textit{Ibid.} However, ten years later its worship was revived because of its benevolent effects. See Departmental Reports for 1925/26. p.17.} The Boar fetish, which in the eyes of the British...
officials was the rallying point of Frafra resistance to their rule was worshipped for its protection against evil spirits, prosperity and fertility. In the absence of a strong centralised authority in the area, the chief priest assumed both spiritual and secular powers. This indicated that British created chiefs could not function effectively because they had no nam. Colonial officials tried to provide the nam by giving chiefs constables to ensure compliance to chiefs' orders hence in some Northern societies chiefs were known as nasaara panga. After the first invasion of the Frafra area, Major Morris noted:

From all I could gather from prisoners and the chief of Tanga (Bolgatanga), who gave his evidence most reluctantly, the author of all this trouble in the Frafra country is the chief of Tong, who is the chief priest of all the Frafra. He is the man who gave orders to have us driven out of the country and established a boycott whereby Mr. Feston could get no food for his men and therefore had to withdraw from Tanga.

Frafra resistance to British rule finally collapsed after the 1911 invasion because they realised that after all, their hills were not impregnable as they had always thought. Anafu has pointed out that

52 See Rattray op cit. pp.361-5. Most often, children who were born after their parents had sought its assistance for fertility were named after it. Thus, one finds names such as Tongo, Tong etc. in Ghana.

53 The powers of fetish priests in the non-centralised societies contrasts with those in the centralised ones even though the latter too have powerful deities such as Senyon and Lansah in Gonja and Gbewa's grave in Mamprusi. See Levitzion (1968), p.65.

54 Literary meaning white man's whip

if moral or psychological victory was the primary aim of the Colonial Administration, then the scale of the 1911 operations had ensured it, for it could still be remembered twenty three years later. Soon after the expedition, Major Festing wrote that the people were tractable and even helped an officer to carry his luggage which was an indication of how "a beaten savage conforms to our rule." And at the end of 1912, the Chief Commissioner could write of the Northern Territories as a whole:

I consider that today, it would be difficult to find more contented and amenable people than those of the Northern Territories within the length and breadth of His Majesty's Dominions.

The response of the Frafra to the occupation of their land comes under the category of primary resistance. This form of resistance collapsed primarily because of the lack of coordination

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56 Anafu, _op cit._ p.20.

57 Report on Expedition to Tong Hills by Major Festing, 12 March, 1911. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

58 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1912. ADM.5/1/21; NAG, Accra.

among the resisters, but more importantly, due to the superior weapons and fighting technique of the coloniser.60

Colonial officials can be categorised into two groups, the "hawks" and "doves". For example, the expedition against the Frafra led by Captain Giffard in 1899 falls under the first category. He destroyed the compounds, killed people, poisoned the only water hole and burned wood and grass at Kumbosco. Other examples of hawkish acts were the arrest and exile of the Tongrana to Tamale after the 1911 expedition.61 Subsequent expeditions against the Frafra were so brutal that Giffard who had led an earlier expedition wrote "they seem to have played hell in Frafra in their zeal for distinctions. I am very sick of it all."62 These actions were contrary to the Governor’s orders to the officers which enjoined them to establish good relations with the people and "never to resort to the use of force till all other means have

See all the contributions in Crowder (1971); Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch (1988), Iliffe (1967). Another important thing was the number of colonial soldiers who suppressed these revolts and the casualties on both sides. While many Africans were killed few of the colonial soldiers died. See Introduction in Crowder (1971) and the articles by John Fynn, Kanya-Forstner, Robert Smith in Crowder Ibid.

Report by Captain Giffard on the expedition to Frafra. The Tongrana died in exile because he could not pay the fine of two hundred cows imposed on him. Other examples of high-handedness were asking the chief of Bongo to pay fifty cows after officials levelled villages five miles square. See Morris’ account of the Frafra expedition, 23 March 1900. ADM.56/1/1; NAG, Accra.

failed." Indeed, an earlier injunction to the officers pointed out that the use of heavy punishment was a "proof of their incapacity to rule." It was again pointed out that the government was against "punitive expeditions." The "doves" on the other hand used "other means" to solve problems when they arose. For example, when the Chief of Nangodi was murdered, and the people deserted their villages, the Chief Commissioner was able to assemble a crowd of 3,500 and the headmen of the villages implicated in the murder who apologised "in the native way" to the bereaved family, through the use of intermediaries and persuasions at the end of which "they sung with one accord their tribal song of welcome of peace."  

63 Morris to Colonial Secretary, 16 April, 1904. ADM.56/1/2; NAG, Accra.

64 Memorandum, By Order, Staff Officer, 9 March, 1899. ADM.56/1/35, NAG, Accra.

65 Captain Marlow to Acting District Commandant, Black Volta District, 13 February, 1905. ADM.56/1/2; NAG, Accra.

66 The other means consisted of sending friendly "native" messengers to the chiefs, or to the principal men of the unfriendly villages or areas where the authority of the Government had been defied, to persuade them in the first instance to comply with the chief's or D.C.'s instructions, and afterwards, warn them of the severe punishment they rendered themselves to, if, they continued to defy the authority of the Government. See R.A. Irvine, C.C.N.T., Tamale, 4 August, 1904 to the Col, Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/2; NAG, Accra.

67 Apologising in the "Native custom" consisted of the culprits led by their headmen lying on the ground and presenting a white chicken each to the head of the bereaved family. Accepting the chicken signified forgiveness. See Acting C.C.N.T., Tamale, 22 March 1910, to the Acting Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

68 Ibid.
Another element which became clear in the incidents described above was the military technique of the combatants and the casualties involved. While the Colonial forces fought with modern weapons, Africans fought with bows and arrows, hence heavy casualties were inflicted on the latter. With the capture of the Tong Hills and the "destruction" of the Tenzugu Shrine, effective resistance to British occupation of the Northern Territories ended. Thus a report of 1912 stated:

the people have been rescued from the tyranny of slave raiders, from the horrors of frequent inter-tribal warfare and from the miseries and deprivations which these things brought on their train and today, the native population is "finding itself."

4.2 SEARCH FOR A VIABLE ADMINISTRATION.

The great difficulty in dealing with the people of Lobi-Dagarti and other outlying parts of the Protectorate is that they recognise no central form of authority among themselves, every compound owner being a law unto himself.

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69 Leys, N. KENYA, With An Introduction by Murray, G., (Leonard & Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1924), p.326. The Frafra had an advantage because of their better geographical knowledge of the area and again being on top of the hills and on the defensive too. This explains why the Commanding Officer of the invading Colonial forces said that had the Frafra rolled boulders down they, the attacking force would have suffered heavy casualties. Captain Stewart, Accra, 12 September, 1899 to the Col. Sec., Enclosed in PRO. CO. 879/78 in Iliasu Papers.

70 Annual Report of Northern Territories for 1912. ADM.5/1/21; NAG, Accra.

71 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1904. ADM.5/1/13; NAG, Accra.
After the Anglo-French and Anglo-German treaties of 1898 and 1899 respectively, by an Order in Council of September 1901, Britain declared a Protectorate over the Northern Territories.\(^7\) The Order in Council empowered the Governor to appoint a Chief Commissioner to administer the Protectorate with the aid of District Commanders. However, even before the declaration, Major (later Lieutenant-Colonel) H.P. Northcott had been appointed Commissioner and Commandant of the Northern Territories.\(^7\) In a letter setting out his views on the area, he stated that given the conditions of the country, "the application of a rigid and minute system of administration is impolitic if even it were practicable."\(^7\) Also, Joseph Chamberlain advised that the: 

> agency of the chiefs should be employed to a greater extent than in the districts nearer the coast and their power should, during good behaviour, be uniformly supported.\(^7\)

Accordingly, Northcott's primary task was to acquaint the administration with the nature of the country, its inhabitants and resources, and on the data thus acquired, devise, a scheme of

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\(^7\)For the Order in Council see Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.523-4. Britain annexed Asante the same year she declared a Protectorate over the Northern Territories.

\(^7\)Chamberlain to Maxwell, Confidential, 15 October,1897 in Metcalfe *op cit.* p.502.

\(^7\)Chamberlain to Hodgson, Confidential, 19 February, 1900 in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.508-9

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\(^7\)Ref. By this, the tone had been set firstly, to make chiefs play some role if even a nominal one, in the administration and secondly, the development of an administration that was to try and isolate the Northern Territories from the rest of the country.
government of the "simplest and most economic form" sufficiently "elastic to adapt itself to any development that may occur." 76

Three factors seem to have influenced Northcott. The first was the reluctance of British officers to serve in "that remote and hostile place"; the second was the size of the area. With an area, almost the size of England, the poor state of the area and its communication network made it seem, in the estimation of Watherston "forty times bigger." 77 But the third factor, and perhaps the most important reason, was the state of insecurity that prevailed in most parts of the area during the last two decades of the 19th century. 78

The Northern Territories were divided into three districts for the convenience of military command centred on, and named after Gambaga, Wa and Kintampo. In 1898, the first two of these names were changed to Black Volta, White Volta. The unsettled nature of the area, the complicated political and military situation prior to the demarcation of boundaries and the lack of personnel made the British adopt a combined military and civil administration.

The establishment of military administration was closely bound by the availability of soldiers. Three Companies of 160 men each were stationed in the Northern Territories. The size of the

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76 Quoted from Iliasu, (1975), p. 2.


78 Apart from the activities of Samory and Babatu which lay most areas waste, there were two civil wars in Gonja, 1892-3 and 1895-6, one in Dagbon in 1888 while the Gonja and Mamprusi resumed their clashes on the western fringes of Mamprugu.
force therefore limited the number of permanent stations that could be established. Salaga was made a district centre in 1902, and therefore, the number of companies was increased to six by reducing the number of men to 80.

The District Commanders were to be responsible for the efficient running of the administration, training and discipline of the Constabulary, promote the economic welfare of the District, act through the chiefs if there were any, for the suppression of minor offenses. They also tried cases and could fine offenders up to twenty pounds sterling and order imprisonment with or without hard labour up to three months and collect taxes from caravans.79 Lastly, the District Commanders were to write and submit monthly reports of their districts and subdistricts to the Chief Commissioner who would in turn forward them to the Governor in Accra. On their first appointment, the Commandants were to assemble the people and tell them the advantage of having a white officer among them. Furthermore, the colonial administration forbade the people to make and possess poisoned arrows, keep poison in their compound, loot cattle either from traders or among themselves and conduct inter-village raids.80 To win the confidence of the people and establish friendly relations with them, looting by the Constabulary and their camp followers was prohibited. All food

79 Memorandum, By Order, Staff Officer, 9 March, 1899. ADM.56/1/35; NAG, Accra. The taxes to be collected from the caravans were 5s for horses, 3s for cattle, 1/6d for calves, sheep and goats /6d and human load for 2s. Ibid.

80 Acting C.C.N.T., Gambaga, 30 December, 1906 to Commissioner, North-West District, Wa. ADM.56/1/4; NAG, Accra.
items were to be properly paid for at a laid down rate and to ensure compliance, markets were to be established at every station.\textsuperscript{81}

The persistence of active opposition to British authority eight years after the country had been occupied, and the fact that little had been done to develop it invited serious rethinking on the problems of administering the dependency. The military administration had neither pacified nor opened up the country. Although the military administration was economical, it failed to lay a solid and satisfactory form of administration. This was mainly due to the lack of understanding and mutual co-operation between the population and the British administration exacerbated by the propensity of young officers to undertake punitive expeditions in the hope of winning medals and promotion.\textsuperscript{82}

In 1907, a new administrative structure was introduced. The main feature of this new system was a purely civilian administration. The Northern Territories were divided into three provinces namely, the Southern, North-Western and North-Eastern, with Tamale, Wa and Navrongo\textsuperscript{83} as capitals respectively. Each of

\textsuperscript{81}Ibid.\textsuperscript{82}For that of the French in West Africa see Kanya-Forstner’s article in Crowder (1971).\textsuperscript{83}The Provincial capital was transferred from Gambaga to Navrongo because it was considered advisable to move the Provincial capital near the Frafra area which still resisted British rule. In the new arrangement, the Chief Commissioner administered the Gambaga district in place of the Provincial Commissioner who had moved to Navrongo.
the provinces was divided into districts. Some of the new districts were created for special reasons. Salaga, for instance, was created to facilitate the collection of tax on salt which was brought to Yeji from Ada while Lawra and Zuarungu were created to control areas around them which still contained pockets of resistance to British rule. The new district of Zuarungu was also created in April 1910 and a Company of the Gold Coast Regiment was transferred to the area with the aim controlling the Frafra areas which were still regarded turbulent by the Colonial administration. It was also hoped that the people would become "law abiding," especially when they found that "our intentions were friendly towards them, and that only those who defied the authority of the Government would be punished." These hopes were not realised as the people still refused to obey colonial law and showed their defiance by attacking and robbing traders not only in their own neighbourhood, but also at distant places. Another change was the transfer of the capital of the Protectorate from Gambaga to Tamale. The former, situated as it were, in the northeast corner was inconvenient for communication with outstations, whereas Tamale occupies a more central position and is in a thickly populated area; Kintampo was then transferred

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84 See Fig. 3.

85 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1911. ADM.5/1/20; NAG, Accra.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.
THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES OF 1907

FIG. 3.
to the Asante Protectorate. Also, the Constabulary replaced the Battalion of the Gold Coast Regiment. In replacing the battalion with a Constabulary force, the administration was abiding by the recommendations of Major Watherston, Chief Commissioner of Northern Territories, who advised that to meet emergencies and to maintain peace, in the "turbulent" Frafra area, the Company of Gold Coast Regiment should be replaced by a specially trained Constabulary consisting of three officers and a hundred rank and file.\textsuperscript{88}

In the aftermath of the First World War, the need to economise and the desire to involve chiefs in the administration led to another restructuring of the administration in 1921. In the new scheme, the three provinces were reduced to two, namely Southern and Northern Province while bigger districts were established instead of the earlier smaller ones.\textsuperscript{89}

The central concern of the Colonial administration after the administrative changes was to create a political system capable of carrying out its policies. Chief Commissioner Watherston,

\textsuperscript{88}Acting C.C.N.T., Tamale, 19 March, 1910 to the Acting Col. Sec., Victoriabor, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Major Irvine calculated that besides having a locally trained force always available it will cost the administration £1237 2s less. Indeed, Bening has pointed out that between 1902 nd 1906, the military expenditure accounted for well over half the average expenditure of the administration in the Northern Territories. See Bening (1971) p.112.

\textsuperscript{89}For example, the Salaga and Yeji districts were combined to form the Eastern Gonja District while Lawra and Tumu were joined together to form the Lawra-Tumu. The Zuarungu, Navrongo and Bawku districts were amalgamated to be known as Northern Mamprusi while the Gambaga district was renamed the Southern Mamprusi. The desire to involve traditional rulers in the administration led to naming the districts after the traditional areas. C.C.N.T., Tamale, 4 April 1921 to all Political Officers. ADM.56/1/274; NAG, Accra.
identified five main problems in implementing this policy. These were absence of any "big" chiefs; the break up of what were kingdoms by Samory and Babatu, and the resultant creation of small independent states. Others were the absolute "imbecility" of sixty per cent of the elected chiefs; the lack of common laws among people speaking the same language and lastly, traders taking their "small native matters" to the white man instead of the local chief. Although there had been powerful chiefs such as Zangina of Dagbon, Na Atabia of Mamprugu and Kumpati of Gonja who ruled large and relatively strong states in the past but their states had become weak. Furthermore, internal dissent and the activities of Samory and Babatu accentuated their decline. It is therefore not correct to assert as Saaka and Iliasu have done that the activities of the British were the initial factors that weakened such polities.

The British decided to involve chiefs in the administration of the Protectorate. Their powers were increased by allowing them to rule their subjects as far as was compatible with equity and good government. They were allowed to try matrimonial, land and

90 Watherston op cit, p.355.
91 Saaka, Y.A., "The Evolution of Political Consciousness in Northern Ghana, 1900-1954", pp.26-27, an unpublished M.A. Thesis presented to the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon (1972); Iliasu (1975), p.7. It has already been pointed out that Gonja for example had been wrecked by two civil wars. Besides, the kingdom was highly decentralised. Dagbon had been weakened by a civil war in 1888 while the various princes looked to themselves instead of the Ya Na. Also although Mamprugu had not been weakened by internal war, the activities of Samory made it difficult for her to maintain her empire with the result that the divisional chiefs could not control the outlying areas.
farm disputes and petty assaults in their courts. Appeals could however, be made to the District officer. Another way the administration strengthened the powers of the chiefs and made them dependent on it was recreating the supposedly disintegrating empires. Armitage, Watherston's successor, was the chief proponent of this view. With grudging approval from Accra, Armitage launched his policy between August and October 1911. The North-Eastern Province, at the stroke of his pen, was constituted into the kingdom of Mamprusu with five divisions- Mamprusu, Kusasi, Frafra, Grunshi and Builsa with the Nayiri as the paramount chief. A similar re-organisation took place in the North-Western Province where the Wa Na was made Paramount Chief.

To enable the system to function effectively, the various divisions were also headed by head chiefs. Some of these new arrangements such as bringing the Builsa under the Nayiri did not have traditional sanction. It is perhaps ironical that Armitage

92Handing Over Report, Southern Province, March 1909. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra. In addition, no chief or priest was to be flogged without previous reference to the headquarters and that their powers were to be fostered and their religious susceptibilities should not be wounded. Memorandum, By Order, Staff Officer, 9 March 1899. ADM.56/1/35.

93See Annual Report for the N.W.P. for the Year ending 31 December, 1914. ADM.56/1/424; NAG, Accra.

94The Builsa and the Grunshi had never accepted the nominal claim by the Nayiri to be their head hence Major Festing, C.N.E.P. wrote "my experience in the workings among these pagan communities such as we have to deal with in this Province is that one has to be guided to a considerable extent by the feelings of the people and that it is very difficult to force a chief upon them....Around Navarro (Navrongo) there I believe, so-called Grunshis who have never accepted the Mamprusi (Nayiri). Also in Kanjarga (Builsa) I gather Mamprusi influence is small. We should have to think
now subscribed to the view of creating large territorial areas to be ruled by chiefs. This is because as Acting Chief Commissioner for Asante (prior to his posting to Tamale), he had shared the Gold Coast Government's conviction that Asante could be controlled if it was broken up and the various *amanhehe* given separate recognition.

The other step the colonial government took to ensure the implementation of its policy was the creation of chiefs among the acephalous people. The British created chiefs who eventually became known as "Kambonaba" in certain areas. Since the Tindana lived almost in seclusion, they chose either the sons or brothers of the various lineage heads to be the intermediary between the people and the British. As representatives of their various lineage heads it

...seriously therefore as to whether we can force them to acknowledge Mamprusi (Nayiri) or failing this whether there is anyone among them who can take the lead." See Circular of 20 July 1911 to DCs., N.E.P., ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra. Some officials even went to the extent of introducing the ballot box in the election of chiefs as occurred at Savelugu in the election of the head chief. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1903. ADM.5/1/15; NAG, Accra.

*Amanhene (Omanhene-sing.) are chiefs of the various divisions of Asante.

*96* Literally meaning Asante type of chief who ruled his people with the whip. Eyre-Smith has pointed out that most of the parvvenu chiefs initially were the "boys" of the Tindana who customarily was not to leave the precincts of the shrine. When Europeans arrived and asked for chiefs, these people without official status in the community were asked to meet them and act as intermediary and ascertain their wishes. The result was that these men of straw came to be regarded as headmen. Eyre-Smith *op cit.* p.28. The British faced the same problem of lack of chiefs among the Igbo of Nigeria. The British therefore appointed chiefs for them who became known as "Warrant chiefs". See Afigbo, A.E., *The Warrant Chiefs: indirect rule in Southeastern Nigeria, 1891-1929.* (London: Longman, 1972).
devolved on them to provide labour for carriers, road repairs and builders of government quarters. In time as the District Commissioners never saw the old lineage heads again, their 'helpers' aggrandized their positions which crystallised into a new type of chiefship- the kambonaba. In some places, communities put forward persons as chiefs for their inability to make any one obey them. Although very biased, one could still come across reports such as:

each compound was more or less a law by itself. The people obey no one really though they have nominal chiefs. Political blindness, paralysis and often idiocy appears to have been the qualification in many parts of the country, the only sine qua non being that the chief should have many cattle, as on him falls the privilege of paying any fines that the Commissioner might impose on them.

These government chiefs did not have the nam which would engender the people's obedience to them. Meanwhile, the difficult tasks of providing labour for the roads, mines, railways, construction of rest houses and carriers fell on them. Other duties of the chiefs included reporting serious crimes such as murder, manslaughter, looting of caravans and if possible, bringing

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97 It should be noted that the selection of people who could not control them as chiefs was a form of a protest against the intrusion of colonial rule into the people's political system.

98 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1907. ADM.56/1/16; NAG, Accra. Of course, this might be one example of the patronising and demeaning attitude of colonial officials towards their subjects.

99 Nam in Mole-Dagbani means chiefly authority.
offenders to justice. It was definitely above their capacity to perform these tasks. Before the intrusion of colonialism, most of them had spiritual, rather than secular powers hence it was almost impossible to get them to carry out orders without a constable to enforce compliance to orders. This lack of political power by chiefs is corroborated by a report that even when favourably disposed to the administration they could not prevent acts of hostility against the administration. In spite of this weakness some of the chiefs used the colonial administration as a threat to force their subjects to do things for them. Yagbumwura Mama, for example, used his enlarged powers to impose heavy fines on his people. In 1915, he fined the people of Fimbutu six cows instead of one when they did not bring him one of the tusks of a shot elephant. Also, some chiefs in Sisalla, used the threat of the Commissioner to force their people to work on their farms. Some of the chiefs also kept Moshi retainers whom they employed to intimidate their subjects by taking their cattle and "saying they

100 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1904. ADM.56/1/13; NAG, Accra.

101 Major Morris, Acting C.C.N.T., Tamale, 27 March, 1905. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra.

102 See letter from Acting D.C., Bole, to Commissioner, Southern Province (hereafter C.S.P.), 12 April 1915. ADM.56/1/70. The people complained so much about the Yagbumwura’s exploitation that the colonial government set up an inquiry into the allegations. The chief was found guilty and was jailed for two months. See notes taken at the inquiry from 19 March to 12 April, 1915. ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra.

were going to pay their respects to the white man." As the years wore on, the chiefs began to carry out what was expected of them hence one finds a report such as:

> every year, the power of the chiefs and their usefulness to us as figure heads is on the increase. Formerly, a Constable had to be sent on every trifling affair. Chiefs now collect labour for the roads, rest houses or head boys and the work is superintended by them. Constables had to be sent to serve summons. This is now done by a court bailiff who got to the chief who assisted him.

In spite of the supposedly increasing powers and usefulness of chiefs to the administration, one report stated:

> the fabric on which the chief’s powers rests is the white man. If we left the people will immediately revert to their old ways.

However, this system was to give way to a more effective way of ruling through chiefs in 1932.

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105 See Report of the fighting strength, arms, tactics and intertribal differences of the people of Zuarungu District. 25 August, 1914. ADM.56/1/144; NAG, Accra.

CHAPTER V.
THE ERA OF CONSOLIDATION.

5.1 THE PEOPLE AND THE ADMINISTRATION.

The chief is a lion, let everyone respect him-the white man is an elephant. Let the chief and people beware as the elephant is stronger than the lion. Unless the lion and the elephant keep quiet there may be trouble. Let therefore the chief and the white man treat everybody properly and give the drummers food.¹

After formally declaring a Protectorate over the Northern Territories in 1901, Britain took practical steps to enforce and consolidate her rule. The first of these steps was the enactment of the Order in Council which was passed on 26 September 1901, but came into force on January 1, 1902.² Unlike the Asante and the Gold Coast Orders in Council of the same date, that of the Northern Territories provided for "protection" rather than "annexation". However, under the terms of the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890,³ the Crown could exercise jurisdiction over such a territory:

in the same and as ample a manner as if Her Majesty had acquired that jurisdiction by the cession or conquest of

¹"Drum song" of a chief's praise-singer collected by Captain S.D. Nash in the Zuarungu District. Zuarungu District Diary (hereafter ZD.), 16 and 17 December 1913. ADM.68/1/1; NAG, Accra.


³See Metcalfe op cit. pp. 523-4 for both the Foreign Jurisdiction Act and the formal Declaration of the Northern Territories as a Protectorate. This was not the first time such Act was made for Africans. Similar ones had been made for Sierra Leone in 1871. See Newbury op cit. pp,36-37
Thus, for practical administrative purposes, it made no difference whether Britain acquired the area by means of treaties with local rulers or by conquest. The Order in Council provided that the Governor make laws for the Northern Territories. One element of authority is the right to tax and this was recognised by Northcott who noted as early as 1899 that:

> the essence of easy rule over the natives of West Africa is the essence of some convincing proof of paramountcy. This is displayed by the native rulers in various forms, but the only one of these that does not conflict with public opinion as known in Britain is the exaction of tribute.⁵

Therefore, to this end and to raise revenue, taxes were levied on trade caravans that passed through the territory. This tax became the major source of revenue for the Protectorate until its abolition in 1907.⁶ In 1899, as a sign of sovereignty, Northcott decided to introduce direct taxation in the Northern Territories to raise revenue to supplement taxes from caravans. Touring the different places of the Protectorate, he explained to the people the advantages of British rule. They were therefore expected to contribute to the maintenance of peace. Initially, it was estimated that the new annual tax would raise only eight hundred and seventy

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⁴Gold Coast Gazette. 1 January 1902. Northern Territory Order in Council.


⁶For detailed discussion on this and other related matters on taxation see Chapter 6.1.
five pounds sterling per annum only, but it was hoped this amount would increase. However, the whole idea of collecting the tax proved just unworkable; there was little currency in circulation, high expenses were incurred in the collection of the taxes and, of course, there was extortion and corruption on the part of chiefs who collected the taxes. The collection of the direct tax also created discontent.\(^7\) Lt. Col. Morris, Northcott's successor, abolished it in 1901 substituting free labour "which they willingly provide for the upkeep of rest houses" in its place.\(^8\)

Also, steps were taken to consolidate British authority by banning the possession of offensive weapons. Since most areas had not yet been "pacified" the importation of firearms, ammunition and gunpowder was prohibited except by license from the Commandant and Chief Commissioner. Violators were fined a hundred pounds sterling or imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding twelve months.\(^9\) Only a few Africans had access to firearms but most possessed lethal local weapons such as bows and arrows. A law was also enacted making the production and possession of poisoned arrows illegal.\(^10\) The British treated the people of the

\(^7\)Ferguson and Wilks (1970), p.334; Staniland \textit{op cit.} p.44

\(^8\)Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1914, ADM.5/1/23; NAG, Accra; C.C.N.T., Tamale, 5 November, 1919 to C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra.

\(^9\)Northern Territories Ordinance no.3, of 1904. Departmental Reports on the Northern Territories for 1904, p.4.

\(^10\)Acting C.C.N.T, Gambaga, 30 December, 1906 to Commissioner, North-western District, 1906. ADM.56/1/4 ; NAG, Accra. Informal Diary, Zuarungu, November 1922. ADM.56/1/158; NAG, Accra. The administration resorted to an ineffective method of destroying the
Northern territories as children to be protected against themselves and against any influence coming from the south. One instance of this was the ban of the sale and possession of spirits. This action was in line with the spirit and objectives of Article XCI of the Brussels Act of 1890. However, it was permissible to brew and drink "pito", a local alcoholic beverage which Northcott described as "wholesome".

strophanthus plant from which poison was extracted to make the arrows. But the making of poisoned arrows was not difficult since other sources such as snakes and scorpions could easily be obtained. Reading through the correspondence especially from the Yendi District, one comes across many instances when bows and arrows were seized. For example in 1931 when there were inter-clan clashes among Konkombas in Sanguli, Kutza, Kungau and Sansugu sixty members of the Constabulary were dispatched to disarm the combatants. Over two hundred thousand bows and arrows were seized. See Annual Report for 1916. ADM.5/1/31; NAG, Accra. Also after the "Bongo riots" the DC told the people that the possession of bows and arrows was illegal and anyone caught with any would be shot on sight. See DC, Zuarungu, 30 July 1916 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM.56/1/165; NAG, Accra.

11See Article XCI of the Brussels Act with reference to Africa which states that "in the region of this zone where it shall be ascertained that, either on account of religious belief or from other motives, the use of distilled liquor does not exist or has not been developed, the powers shall prohibit its use". See Minutes on Gold Coast Confidential of 17 March 1903. This ban was to remain in effect till 1953. Another discriminatory law prohibited the appearance of lawyers in Courts of the Northern Territories. The latter law was passed ostensibly to protect and simplify trial of cases in the "Native Courts". What one may ask is what, if people were to appear in the in the courts of the District, Provincial and Chief Commissioner?.

12Bening, R.B., "The Regional Boundaries of Ghana, 1874-1972" in Institute of African Studies (Legon) Research Review., Vol.9, No.1, 1973, pp.20-57. "Pito" was said to have medicinal and nutritional properties for the cure of pellagra. "Pito" was again said to be an "ideal stimulant, assuaging thirst and producing a feeling of well being without intoxicating and with no aftermath beyond a possibly healthy stimulation of peristalsis". Cited in
The next step taken by the Colonial government was the restructuring of power relations, to increase the powers of the traditional rulers. Political expediency and economic necessity\(^\text{13}\) dictated that the colonial administration should govern the Northern Territories through chiefs. For this reason, under the Northern Territories Administration Ordinance of 1902, chiefs were empowered, in what has been aptly described as "an inspired piece of gobbledygook"\(^\text{14}\) to "exercise the jurisdiction here-to-fore exercised by them in the same measure as such jurisdiction has been heretofore exercised."\(^\text{15}\) The administrative system which prevailed until the early 1930s is characterised as one of "direct rule". The

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Bening (1973), p.28. Northcott argued that although the prohibition of the sale of spirits deprived the government of certain and easily collectable revenue, the welfare of the community as a whole should be protected against the advantage of a small class of traders who would make profit. He further pointed out that the introduction and sale of spirits in the Northern Territories would be an unmixed evil, for which the return of an increased revenue would be no equivalent. Although apparently discriminatory, in 1975, Colonel Minyila, Regional Commissioner for the then Upper Region banned the distilling and sale of "Akpeteshie", a locally distilled gin because dangerous materials such as nails and "omo" a detergent were used to distill "akpeteshie".

\(^\text{13}\) After the initial occupation of the Northern Territories, it was erroneously thought that they lacked economic resources unlike the South. Because of this in 1899, Governor Hodgson said he was not going to spend a penny more on the North. See Kimble \textit{op cit.}, pp.533-4; Ferguson and Wilks (1970), p.333; Staniland \textit{op cit.}, p.43. But Plange argues that the lack of development in the Northern Territories was not due to a dearth in economic resources but the deliberate refusal by the Colonial authorities to develop the resources so as to turn the area into a labour pool. See Plange \textit{op cit.}, pp.125-256.


A general policy was to rule through chiefs, but unlike the later indirect rule system, the chiefs were regarded as mere instruments for implementing the orders of the colonial administrators and had no inherent authority. From the beginning, the British recognised the importance of chiefs to the administration; hence in 1898 Northcott noted that:

the agency employed will be that of the native chiefs, and their powers will be uniformly supported except in matters of their relationship with neighbouring chiefs and of offenses of a capital nature.\(^6\)

But there were difficulties in implementing this policy. In the first place the British did not really find any "really big chiefs" as Watherston remarked.\(^7\) The few sizable kingdoms such as Mamprugu and Gonja had either been broken up by the wars of Samory and Babatu or had been torn apart by internal wars as was the case in Gonja. Dagbon, the other kingdom had been partitioned between Britain and Germany. The three kingdoms of Dagbon, Mamprugu and


\(^7\)Watherston (1908), p.356. The records are replete with assertions that some of the societies had no chiefs until the colonial era. See Eyre-Smith *op cit.* p.38; Handing over report of N.W.P., 1909. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra. Rattray (1932), p.486 has pointed out that among the Isala the word for chief is *kworo* which originally meant any man of substance in a clan. A *kworo* had not, however, any administrative, executive, or religious power. All such powers were invested in the hands of the *Tintentina*. However, with the jumbling of clans, the germ of conception of territorial, as opposed to clan groupings had no doubt begun to manifest itself before the advent of Europeans. Men of wealth and outstanding ability had already arisen in some of the clan settlements, and in the turmoil and chaos resulting from the departure of the Zabarima, united clans had sometimes rallied around such natural leaders for protection.
Gonja were so highly decentralised that the divisional chiefs were all but independent and one wonders what assistance the centralised states could have given to the British. To the dismay of the British, almost all the polities in the north-east had no chiefs at all. In the north-west too, the only recognizable state was Wala. It was with the intention of making chiefs play a role in the administration that Armitage created a hierarchy of chiefs. Therefore, in the north-east chiefs and headchiefs were created among the Frafra, Kasem and Builsa\(^{18}\) under the Nayiri who was declared Paramount Chief of the Northern-Eastern Province.\(^{19}\) But some of the administrators expressed misgivings about subordinating the various chiefs under the Nayiri. For example, Major Festing, Commissioner of North-Eastern Province writing to the Colonial Secretary pointed out that the Frafra were willing to follow their own kings and he was wondering how one would expect such independent and warlike people to obey a "so called paramount

\(^{18}\)The Bongonab, Sandemanaba and Navropio were the head chiefs of the Frafra, Builsa and Kasem respectively. Most of these had no historical basis even though it is known that the Sandemanaba was the rallying point of the Builsa against the raids of Babatu. For detailed information on the creation of chiefs see Iliasu (1972), pp.1-28; Anafu *op cit.* (1973), pp.17-37.

\(^{19}\)The recognition of the Nayiri as the Paramount chief of the North-Eastern Province was called the event of the year. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1912, p.18. Also, most of the records for 1912 and 1914 are replete with the DCs explanations of the hierarchy to the chiefs and people. See Armitage to Acting C.N.E.P., Walewale, ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra. Armitage to Festing, 14 November 1910, ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Major Festing, 12 March 1911 to Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. E.O. Warden, 22 August 1911 to Armitage. ADM.56/1/123; NAG, Accra.
chief holding the ludicrous position like Mamprusi (Nayiri)."  

Most of these acts had no traditional sanction. A typical example was asking the Nayiri, who was always in ritual seclusion to visit his subjects. On the proposed tour, the District Commissioner for Gambaga noted:

> there is a certain amount of feeling by the Mamprusi (Nayiri) himself and also by the big chiefs against his going round as the king of Mamprusi has never visited his people.

It was also in line with the same policy that the Kunab, chief of the Kurugu division in Mamprugu was made the head chief of the Tallensi. This appointment, like many others made by the British, was due to the lack of accurate knowledge of the history and society of the Tallensi. This is because political centralisation runs counter to the fundamental principles of Tallensi political organisation. Indeed their political organisation is characterised by a marked centrifugal tendency and their method of managing all

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20 Major Festing, Navarro (Navrongo), 12 March, 1911 to Hon. Col. Sec., Christianborg, Accra. ADM.5/1/7: NAG, Accra.

21 Handling Over Report, Gambaga District, 24 October, 1911 by C.J. Elkan to Captain P.H. Short. ADM/56/1/95: NAG, Accra.

22 For the role of the Kunab in Tallensi see Anafu op cit., pp.17-21; Iliasu (1972), pp.7-19. See also Captain Nash, 23 December 1913 to C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/137; NAG, Accra. For his inability to function according to British administrative standards see Zuarungu District Diary, 15 October 1913. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra. Also E.O. Warden, C.N.E.P. said this of him "as for Kurugu (Kunab), I think he is considerably more of a fool, the knave being supplied in Salifu the late court interpreter". E.O. Warden, Navarro (Navrongo), 25 June 1913, to the Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/165; NAG, Accra.
public concern is by the committee system.  

Furthermore, smaller groups living within territories nominally claimed by one or another of these kingdoms were formally made subjects to them. Thus, numerous small and unassimilated groups such as the Nawuri, Nchumuru, Mo and Vagala were grouped under Gonja chiefs, while large numbers of Konkombas and Chakosi were also made subject to Dagbon, Dagarti and Sissala in the Wala district to the Wala chiefs. The approach soon became the official policy of the administration, and in 1906, H. Bryan, the Acting Governor, wrote to the Secretary of State that:

the policy of supporting and emphasising the position of the paramount native chiefs while, at the same time, making them realise their responsibilities, appears to me to be the only practicable system of administering this country.

In spite of the professed policy to rule through chiefs the British regarded the chiefs at best as useful auxiliaries to the district administrations in such matters as providing labourers for the roads and mines or transporting goods and persons. In this connection, Ferguson and Wilks' description of chiefs as "sergeant-

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24Ladouceur, op cit. p.43. In the case of the Wa Na although the Muslims who had given the British much assistance in the "pacification" of the region continued to regard the Yeri Na (Chief of the Muslims in Wa) as equivalent to the Wa Na, the British increased the standing of the latter vis-a-vis the former and progressively diminished the powers and standing of the Yeri Na. See Ferguson and Wilks (1970), p.331; Wilks (1985), pp.140-165.

25Quoted from Ladouceur, op cit. p.41
majors" is a fitting accolade. Traditional matters were generally allowed to run their course so long as they were not repugnant to British law and administrative exigencies. In this context, annual reports are replete with how the chiefs were said to have begun to realise their responsibilities, to assert their authority and consequently, had become more and more useful to the administration.

The administration took every opportunity to broaden the power base of the chiefs. For example, in 1923, it convened a Conference of all Gonja chiefs at Yapei at which they agreed to recognise the Yagbumwura as their paramount chief. Thus, the Yagbumwura was restored to his traditional position in Gonja. To introduce efficiency in the administration, a policy of continuity in administrative officials was introduced, whereby each district was given a substantive District Commissioner who worked there for at least seven years.


28ADM.56/1/234; NAG, Accra. Conference of Gonja chiefs held at Yapei 10 and 11 February 1923. Before the Conference, the decentralised nature of the traditional Gonja administration and the wars of Samory and Babatu made most of the Gonja chiefs particularly the Kpembewura, independent of the Yagbumwura, their sovereign.

29Governor, Christianborg, 12 March 1921 to C.C.N.T., ADM.56./1/27; NAG, Accra. For example, it was written in 1922 that the "natives are now beginning to know that they will when
In spite of the efforts at strengthening chiefly authority, political officers assumed powers in diverse fields and encouraged litigation in their courts to such an extent that chiefs adjudicated only over most trivial matters. This brought protest from some chiefs, such as Yagbumwura Mahama, who in his trial for allegedly rebelling against the administration in 1917 said:

when I am on the stool (skin) I want power. I do not want people always running to Bole, making complaints to the District Commissioner.\(^{30}\)

By the late 1920s a fundamental contradiction in local administrative policy in the Northern Territories had become evident. The officially declared policy was to rule through chiefs and to support them as much as possible. After all, Northcott had said:

since British occupation of the protectorate, it has been the Government’s aim and endeavour to educate the chiefs, possible, have their own man over them, which tends to give them confidence, as they are exceedingly shy of strangers, more especially in the North, and it takes some time to put any confidence in them”. Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the first quarter of 1922. ADM.5/1/30; NAG, Accra. Some of the DCs such as Blair lived in their Districts for so long and were fluent in the local language and knowledgeable in customs that the people tended to regard them as indigenes. Blair for example was called Dagbon-bia (son of Dagbon). Staniland \textit{op cit.} p.83. People who had worked for long in such areas became an obstacle in the way of the introduction of indirect rule. They were therefore transferred before it was introduced. See Staniland \textit{op cit.} pp.79-86.; Ladouceur \textit{op cit.} p. 53.

\(^{30}\)Acting D.C., Bole, 12 April 1917 to C.S.P., ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra and to Acting C.C.N.T., 27 August 1917. ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra. Similarly, in 1921 the Yo Na and Karaga Na complained to the C.S.P. that the majority of their chiefs and people did not obey them but were constantly running to the DC with complaints which they could easily settle. Tour of inspection by C.S.P., 16 November to 11 December 1921. ADM.56/1/226; NAG, Accra.
uphold their power and give them authority to administer the area under them by native custom, or to which they have been nominated or elected.\(^{31}\)

In the opinion of many of the older colonial administrators in the North, this policy was both successful as a system of local administration and appropriate to the circumstances of the Northern Territories. On the other hand, the policy also reduced chiefs to the status of agents of colonial administration, or conversely, as we have seen, elevated individuals with little or no claim to traditional authority to the status of chief, but completely dependent on the administration. Cardinall, for example, asserted in 1928:

> in reality the administration is a direct one; the chiefs are practically powerless; they have neither revenue nor authority; they have tended to become merely sergeant-majors through whom the administration can address the rank and file.\(^{32}\)

The position of chiefs as "sergeant-majors" was amply demonstrated among the Frafra as we have seen, by the revival of the worship of the Boar fetish in the Tong hills and their inability to do anything about it. Although the authority of the chiefs vis-a-vis the administration had declined, the powers over their people that the administration invested in them in fact far exceeded what they exercised before the imposition of colonial rule. Yet, there is abundant evidence that the chiefs increasingly found it impossible to exercise their increased powers without the

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\(^{31}\) C.C.N.T., 21 July, 1928 to Col. Sec. ADM.1/7; NAGT.

\(^{32}\) A.W. Cardinall "Report on Native Administration in the Northern Territories," ADM.1/7; NAGT.
support of either the District Commissioner or other agents of the administration such as the constabulary. In 1911, for instance, Nash reported that acting on a rumour that the white man was leaving the protectorate, Navropio Kwarra's subjects had sent messages to him advising him to follow the "white man out of the country or else he would be killed." The weak position of chiefs became very evident in the North-Eastern Province where chieftaincy was a British creation. With the outbreak of the First World War and the withdrawal of some officers for service outside their stations, the chiefs became more vulnerable. This led to the Bongo "Riots" in 1916. For instance, it was noted in the annual report of 1916 that on the "withdrawal of their commissioner" as the chiefs called the Administrative Officer of the District, the chiefs "lose all authority over their subjects." Anyaragu, the chief of Sambolugu, frankly admitted that the people did not respect their chiefs who, unsupported by the administration could do little. The people of Nangodi, Bongo and Kusanaba did not wait for the supposed withdrawal before teaching either their chiefs or

33Handing Over Reports to Captain Warden and Half Yearly Report on the Navarro (Navrongo) District (Half Year January -June 1911) by Captain S.D. Nash, 12 July, 1911. ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra.


36"Notes of Enquiry into the Unrest in Zuarungu District." 16 November, 1916. ADM.56/1/193. NAG; Accra.
administration "something". Thomas has suggested that the Bongo incidents did not amount to a "revolt" against British rule. Rather, they were:

symptomatic of continuing popular discontent with the structure of African administrative intermediaries that the British had imposed.37

This explanation seems to be too simplistic and one sided. There is no doubt that the chiefs had become unpopular because of the tasks they asked their people to perform for the administration. It is equally true that some of the chiefs had been told to follow the departing white man but, the Bongo "riots" and the Kusanaba "rebellion"38 were directed as much against chiefs as towards the administration. The people realised the weaknesses of the administration at the beginning of the war and they regarded chiefs as part of it. Many officers had been re-called for service outside their stations and some stations such as Bawku and Navrongo were closed down because of shortage of personnel. The people were thus emboldened to flout authority in a number of ways. For example, in October 1914 Constable Bakado Moshi was threatened with bows and arrows when he went to arrest five men who had refused to obey the orders of the chief of Nangodi. In addition, the people of Nangodi told their chief's messengers who went out for carriers that "they


38The Kusanaba case, occurred when Constable Akerti Kanjarga was murdered by the people of Gossi when he tried to round them up to work on the chief's farm after they had already completed their share of a bridge building. See Thomas, (1983), pp. 67-8.
would not carry load for white men.  " Also, Castellan, District Commissioner for Zuarungu, reported that the people of Unkum, Tindamarogo and Tindansabilisi had asked the people of Gambaga and other places to join them "in making a mighty attack and drive the white man out of the country."  

Furthermore, hostility against British administration intensified because the French had shot some Africans across the northern border.  Also, earlier in 1915, Chief Commissioner Armitage had destroyed for the second time, the Tenzugu shrine in the Tong hills and renewed a ban on its worship.  All this, in addition to the fact that an initial attempt had been made to recruit people for the army, might have angered people who may then have been waiting for an opportunity to rebel. Perhaps to them, the opportunity came when they saw a skeletal administrative staff at the onset of the war. More importantly, if the "rebellion" had been solely directed against chiefs, one would have expected at least one attack on a chief but none was recorded in spite of their

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39Zuarungu Diary, entry for 19 May 1916 quoting the chiefs of Nangodi and Arabe. Indeed Azure, chief of Zuarungu said at the Committee of inquiry that had there been a Commissioner, the people would not have behaved the way they did. The chief went on to say that the people thought the white man had left and they could therefore take matters into their own hands. See Evidence of Azure, chief of Zuarungu taken on 16 November 1916. ADM.56/1/165; NAG, Accra.

40Castellan to Armitage, 20 November 1916. ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra.

41Zuarungu District Diary, entry for 16 May 1916, quoting reports from the chief of Nangodi and Arabe

alleged unpopularity. The people wanted to take their chance at a weakened administration and chiefs, its collaborators. Unfortunately, as always happened the rebellions were easily crushed.  

If the chiefs were said to have become responsive to their duties in the eyes of the administration, the people showed their disapproval of the tasks they were called upon to perform in a number of ways. As a substitute for direct tax, the people of the Northern Territories were said to have agreed to perform tasks gratia for the administration. One of the tasks they were often asked to perform was roofing the houses at the stations and rest houses in almost every big village and town in the dependency. Since the houses were roofed with grass, they had to be re-roofed annually. The re-roofing was done in the dry season against the impending raining season which soon followed. This was the period when all farming activities came to an end and the people were then mostly engaged in crafts such as hat, bag and basket weaving for sale in the southern part of the Gold Coast. These craft preoccupations were jeopardized by the re-roofing. The provision of grass and wood became a tax known as "Grass and stick Tax". Writing

43Fifty nine people were killed in the Bongo "Riots" and many compounds were pulled down, crops were destroyed and many animals were captured. See Thomas (1983), pp.61-65. Clearly, there was no coordination among the rebels while the government used the few soldiers that were available to crush the rebellion. The lack of cooperation among Africans when facing Colonial armies was a wide spread phenomenon among Africans. See all the articles in Crowder (1971) especially those by Fynn, Kanya-Forstner, Smith and Ikime. Also, see the number of colonial soldiers used to crush large African armies in the introduction of the same book.
to Accra and advocating the construction of permanent buildings so as to do away with the "Grass and stick tax" which had become a menace, Armitage, the Chief Commissioner, explained that most of the grass and wood was brought from places three days away as none could be found near the stations. He warned that the policy was breeding discontent. The people showed their disgust for this form of tax mostly in one way - arson - by burning the grass. A report of 1911 asserts that:

since the fire(sic) in the barracks at Zuarungu unfriendly natives of the district have become more and more dissatisfied and have burned down the grass for repairs of the building.

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44Armitage to Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, 13 January 1911. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.

45Ibid. Indeed, Duncan-Johnstone, the Acting D.C. for Wa complained that the vegetation of his district was gradually getting more and more thinned of wood and no efforts were being made to grow trees for fuel. See Acting D.C, Wa District, to the C.N.W.P. 10 July 1919. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. The C.C.N.T. stated in his letter that 5000 loads each of grass and wood was needed annually to repair each station, C.C.N.T. to Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. It seemed that some of the DCs used the occasion of the provision of the grass and wood to bully the people. For example, Captain S. D. Nash, DC for Zuarungu notes in his diary "busy yesterday and today checking loads of grass and sticks and paying out for some as much as our vote will allow. Up to date 2457 timber have been supplied and 5500 of grass. At one time in the hay days of my youth, I used to find this work of bullying interesting. When it occurs however, in every dry season at every station I have managed, the work begins to bore and get monotonous". Zuarungu Official Diary for the third week ending 23 December 1913. ADM.56/1/159; NAG, Accra.

46C.N.E.P., Navarro (Navrongo), 13 January 1911 to C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Armitage to Col. Sec., Victoriaborg. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. These incidents are similar to those which occurred in the Edough Mountains in Algeria when that country was still under French Colonial rule. See "Fire on the mountains; resisting colonialism in Algeria" by Proschaska, D., in Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest. (ed.) by Crummeey, D., (James Currey: London, 1986.), pp. 229-252. In the case of the Edough mountains,
Two of the most hated tasks the people were called upon to do were to serve as carriers and to build roads. As the transport system was in a very rudimentary stage until the introduction of vehicular transport in 1923, human porterage was the main system for transporting colonial officials and their goods from one area to another. Each village was to provide a quota of workers, a burden that was heavy in the least populated areas such as Western Gonja. Braimah, perhaps one of the first Northerners to acquire formal western education, speaking about the provision of carriers in the Kpembe Division of Gonja wrote:

the Kpembewura was addressed by the British officer as 'My Good Friend', but the treatment he got from him was worse than that of a slave. Practically, every week, carriers were demanded to take loads to Kumasi, Tamale and Kintampo. Imoru was then the Lepowura, the right hand man of the chief and he and Chuawura were often on horseback for twenty-four hours a day going from village to village to conscript carriers. The constabulary went round seizing men to make up the quotas demanded. Whips were constantly at men's back and there was no one to complain to.47

The response of the people to these demands was to cross the border to safety in neighbouring territories. The people most noted for border jumping were those living along borders with either the French or Germans. Writing in 1912 about the people of the Zuarungu Captain Nash noted:

the pastoralists were prevented from grazing their animals in an area that was once theirs. Meanwhile, the French allowed pigs, animals that were a taboo to Muslims to feed in the area. The Algerians responded by burning the artificial forest.

47Braimah and Goody op cit. p.62.
there is a tendency on the part of the natives on our side living on or near the Anglo-French frontier who have developed the tendency to assume an independent and arrogant attitude towards us. I refer especially to the towns of Paha (Paga), Maiyoro, Nantumia, Samblogu, Fwegu and Arabe. When the natives of the above are politically implicated in any crime they have frequently, on our arrival, run across to the French side with all their cattle, foodstuff and property. They will also cross the frontier if any work is required on the roads, rest houses and transport. The people on the French side do the same thing too.\(^46\)

The phenomenon of border jumping was also undertaken internally since different policies were practiced in different parts of the Gold Coast. The Mo, an ethnic group which lived along the borders of the Asante Protectorate and the Northern Territories, were most noted for border jumping. They constantly refused to provide their quota of carriers and crossed to Asante at the least pretence. This was mainly because forced labour had become a thing of the past in Asante by the second decade of the 20th century. Eventually, all the Mos crossed into Asante and renounced their rights to all property in the Northern Territories.\(^45\)

\(^{45}\) S.D. Nash, Acting C.N.E.P., Navarro (Navrongo), 24 July 1912 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/132; NAG, Accra. To stop such a practice, Nash suggested that all people living five miles along the border should be registered and given a number plate as identification. \(\text{Ibid.}\) For the creation of artificial borders in Africa and their attendant problems see Nugent P., Asiwaju, A.I., (eds) \textit{African Boundaries: Soldiers, Conduits and Opportunities} (Guilford and King’s Lynn: 1996); Asiwaju, A.I., (ed) \textit{Partitioned Africa: Ethnic Relations Across International Boundaries, 1884-1984} (Lagos: University of Lagos Press, 1985)

\(^{46}\) C.C.N.T., Tamale, 15 May 1927 to Chief Commissioner, Asante. ADM.56/1/234; NAG, Accra. Consequently, the people of Western Gonja where the Mo formerly lived were often compelled to do double work though it was one of the least populated areas. Their chiefs always complained that if nothing was done all their people would also cross the Volta River into Asante because they could ill afford
Furthermore, to avoid doing more work in one province chiefs and their people sometimes migrated to another or simply claimed to have lived in the new province for a long time. This often led to heated exchanges of correspondence between the various officials. A classic one was the movement of people from the sparsely populated area in the North-Western Province to the thickly populated area of the North-Eastern Province. On certain occasions people crossed the border because of peculiar local reasons. In his monthly report to the Commissioner of the Southern Province, the District Commissioner for Bole stated that some people of Kolenso in his district had crossed into Asante Province after being defeated in "an abusing singing competition at a dance

always to see these "run away sitting comfortably" DC, Bole, 11 December 1923 to C.S.P., ADM.56/1/234; NAG, Accra. Also see Tour of Western Gonja by the C.S.P., 22 May 1909. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra. Diary of Tour of Western Gonja, 9 August 1914, ADM.56/1/51; NAG, Accra. Eventually, all Mos were transferred to Asante. When free labour was abolished, labourers in the Asante Protectorate were paid 1/6d while their counterparts in the North were given 9d. The difference in per diem also encouraged border jumping. See Bening, R.B., "Colonial development policy in Northern Ghana, 1898-1950" in Bulletin of the Ghana Geographical Association, Vol. 17, 1975, pp. 65-79; Ferguson and Wilks (1970), p.334.

50 C.N.W.P., 27 October 1919 to Acting C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra. Finally, it was the Chief Commissioner who settled the controversy between the Commissioners of North-Western and North-Eastern Provinces. According to him, he did not want to interfere with people migrating to improve upon their lot but he would not countenance the movement of people to dodge their quota of working people. C.C.N.T., Tamale, 23 March 1911 to C.N.W.P., ADM.56/1/50; NAG, Accra. However, when people officially asked permission to migrate their request was turned down. For example, in July 1926 the people of Sabongyida (Jambuai) requested to be allowed to join their kinsmen in the Mandated Territory of Krachi but it was turned down. R.S.C. Bowers, Acting DC, Kete Krachi on Trek, Krupi, 28 July 1926 to DC., Salaga. ADM.56/1/240; NAG, Accra.
in the night."

However, Colonial officials sometimes encouraged people from dense but infertile areas to migrate to thinly populated but fertile areas of the Northern Territories. For example, after his tour of the densely populated area of the Northern Province, the Chief Commissioner requested the Commissioner for that province to look for "good families" willing to migrate and settle between Salaga and Tamale which was fertile but thinly populated. The migrants were to be given many incentives such as ten pounds sterling from Northern Territories Development Fund and a thousand yam seedlings.\footnote{DC, Bole, 29 June 1925 to C.S.P., ADM.56/1/234; NAG, Accra. The competition consisted of singing on a theme such as on death, dishonesty etc. When one is able to sing about four songs on the same theme without a reply from the opponent one is declared the winner. In the same letter the District Commissioner said that the Tindana of Jimbito and his family had crossed the Volta into Asante because "an old man near Kolenso was pursuing them with witchcraft". \textit{Ibid.} While the first group might be said to have entered Asante to avoid the forced labour of the Northern Territories, the same cannot be said of the latter who under normal circumstances was regarded as powerful spiritually. But one really wonders how he could have abandoned his role as a custodian of the land just to avoid hard labour. In any case, a Tindana would be too old to be asked to take part in free labour.} In his reply to the Chief Commissioner’s letter, while acknowledging that the scheme was good, the Provincial Commissioner however suggested that the people should not be compelled to cultivate yams alone since most people in his province

\footnote{C.W. Leigh, Acting C.C.N.T, Tamale, 12 April 1923 to C.N.P., ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra. Other incentives to the migrants were, they had rights to shea butter trees in areas they cultivated and lastly, they would not be called upon to do communal work for two years although they could take up a job for pay if they so wished. \textit{Ibid.}}
were rather used to the cultivation of millet and guinea corn.\textsuperscript{53}

At other times, fear and respect for the administration sometimes prevented people from taking action against their alleged "enemies". In 1921, the chief of Birifor, an area that was initially regarded as turbulent, complained bitterly to the District Commissioner about the people of Lemka on the French side. According to the chief his "enemies" on the French side had killed two of his relatives and were laughing at him and calling him a woman because he could not avenge this humiliation. Moreover, he and his people could not, and were not, allowed to cultivate their former land which was on the "French" side. The young men of Birifor according to the chief, were becoming restless and if anything happened again he would not be able to prevent them from crossing the Black Volta river and taking their revenge.\textsuperscript{54} In spite of these problems, both the administration and the people gradually came to understand each other. This ushered in a period of peace and was demonstrated by a report of 1930 which asserted that:

> happy is the country that has no history. In this case, happy is the province for there is very little, if any, history to record. Except for one or two disturbances among the Konkombas nothing has occurred to disturb the peace.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{53}C.N.P., Navrongo, 21 June 1932. ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra. Unfortunately, subsequent documents are silent on this noble scheme.

\textsuperscript{54}Complains of chief of Birifor to DC and certified by Eyre-Smith, Lawra, 18 April 1921. ADM.56/1/260; NAG, Accra. In spite of this seemingly genuine complain nothing was done.

\textsuperscript{55}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1929, p.17. ADM.5/1/30; NAG, Accra.
As future events were to show the whole of the Northern Territories did not remain as peaceful as asserted by the commissioner.

5.2 **THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR.**

In case of war, get reliable natives who will push across the frontier and report concentrations and movements of enemy troops. These agents should be promised good pay and a large reward for important information transmitted.\(^{56}\)

On 5 August, 1914, Captain Armitage, the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories received a telegram from W.F.C. Robertson, the acting Governor\(^ {57}\) of the Gold Coast informing him of the outbreak of war between Great Britain and her dependencies and Germany. In line with previous instructions given to the Chief Commissioner, he sent a message to the Officer Commanding the 2nd Battalion of the Gold Coast Regiment based at Zuarungu and the Commandant of the Northern Territory Constabulary in Tamale to march their troops to Sang (Sambu) only twenty kilometers to Yendi in German Togoland.\(^ {58}\) To prepare against any unforeseen

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\(^{56}\) Instructions from the Intelligence Office, Kumasi to Chief Commissioner, Northern Territories, 1 January 1912. ADM.56/1/180; NAG, Accra.


\(^{58}\) The instructions had been sent almost a year before. See Intelligence Office, Kumasi, 13 May 1913 to the Commissioner, Tamale. ADM.56/1/180; NAG, Accra. At the time the instructions were dispatched it was not certain which country Britain was going to
circumstances even before the outbreak of the war, the Intelligence Office in Kumasi wanted some information from the political officers in the Northern Territories. Among other things, it wanted to know from the various District Commissioners the number of fighting men each ethnic group could raise, the number of guns they possessed, their capability of using and handling modern weapons and whether they needed further training. The Intelligence Office again wanted to know whether there was need to import food and lastly, what the relationships among the various ethnic groups were. The Intelligence Office believed that information on the relationship between the various groups was important because it would facilitate future recruitment of soldiers without interfering in their internal affairs.\(^5^9\) On 14 August 1914, Yendi, the sub-headquarters of the Sansanne Mango district fell without much opposition and twelve days later, the Germans in Togoland surrendered unconditionally.\(^6^0\)

\(^{59}\) Intelligence Office, Kumasi, 31 December 1913 to the C.S.P., ADM.56/1/144; NAG, Accra.

\(^{60}\) C.C.N.T., Tamale, (n.d.) to the Col. Sec., ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra; Thomas, R.G., "Military Recruitment in the Gold Coast during the First World War" in *Cahiers d'études Africaines*, 15, 1, 1975, pp.57-83. Crowder quoting *The Times* has pointed out that the importance of the brief campaign in Togo lies in the fact that it was the occasion for the first "British" shot of the whole war to
Writing after the capture of Yendi the traditional capital of Dagbon, and Lome, the capital of Togo, the Chief Commissioner noted that the behaviour of members of the Northern Territories Constabulary was exemplary adding that they "displayed a most praise worthy discipline and efficiency throughout the operations." According to him, the small detachment of Northern Constabulary under Major Marlow entered Yendi and "received the submission of all Togoland Dagomba chiefs amidst scenes of great enthusiasm." In an earlier report it was stated that all the chiefs in the frontier districts exhibited much eagerness to assist British arms in the hope that ethnic groups long divided by "artificial" and "unnatural" political boundaries would now be united under the British flag. The report further noted that the people did not have any anxiety at all since they had full confidence in being

be fired. Crowder, (1968), p.253. Militarily, Togo presented no problems to the allies for while the Germans had only 1,500 Polizeitruppe equipped with rifles used in Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71, the allies had a combined force of 1,738 equipped with better weapons. According to Crowder, realising the small force at his disposal, Von Doring, the German Governor of Togo suggested the neutralisation of Togo to his British and French counterparts in Benin (Dahomey) and Ghana (Gold Coast) so that "Africans would not witness the spectacle of war between Europeans." But this suggestion was rejected. Ibid.

61Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1914. ADM.56/1/23; NAG, Accra. Amadu, a man from Kariga in "British Dagbon" reported that he was in Yendi when English troops were advancing on the town. According to him, the Germans assembled the people and informed them that the English were now in charge of Yendi and that they must not make any trouble as the English were now going to live among them. Amadu further said that the Germans hauled down the German flag and hoisted a white one. However, one of the African soldiers said they would face the English if the Germans were afraid. Statement by Amadu of Karaga at Tamale on 12 August 1912. ADM.56/1/180; NAG, Accra.
protected by the British. The chief of Bawku came up for singular praise for putting his services and resources and those of his people at the disposal of the Gold Coast Government and the French forces on the way to Togo. Another way the chiefs and people of the Northern Territories were said to have shown loyalty to the administration was their contribution to the war fund. To raise money for the war efforts, bonds bearing an annual interest of four and a half per cent were issued. Originally, the bonds were to be a hundred pounds sterling each but realising the general poverty of the people of the Gold Coast, the value was reduced to fifty pounds. The interests were to be paid half yearly in June and December. Of course, the people of the Northern Territories and most of their counterparts in the Gold Coast Colony and Asante as a whole, were not expected to know what bonds were. To make up for this lack of knowledge, appeals were made for contribution into an Imperial Fund. Reports pay glowing tribute to the efforts made by

62\textit{ibid.} This piece of information mostly refers to the Nanumba, Dagomba and Mamprusi some of whose lands had been divided between Britain and Germany during the "partition" of the interior of the Gold Coast. The Gonja also claimed that part of their land, the "Alfai", area had come under German rule. This was and is still disputed by the Nawuri and Nchumuru who claim to be the owners of the land. This dispute over the land has been one of the major causes of the ethnic conflicts in Northern Ghana since 1980. After the Paris Peace Conference most of the areas occupied by allied forces were ruled by them as Mandated Territory. See 5.3. It is also interesting to note that at the time of the partition, the British did not care that the boundaries being created were "artificial" and "unnatural".

63\textit{ibid.}

64Telegram from the Treasury (n.d.) to the C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra.
the people of the Northern Territories towards the Fund. For example, in his annual report on the Northern Territories for 1914, the Chief Commissioner, among other things, praised the loyalty and generosity shown by the people and their ready response to subscribe to the Imperial Fund. The Commissioner noted that the people in comparison to their counterparts in Asante and the Colony were extremely poor and therefore, their generous donations came as a surprise to all. He further noted that their contributions stand as:

marks of their appreciation of English methods of administration and have shown that their expressions of loyalty made when they were informed of the war were no mere lip service.

The Chief Commissioner further praised the generosity of the people when he said:

when it is remembered that many of the chiefs could count the number of white men they have seen on their fingers and moreover, when they know nothing of the causes of the war and that it is just a decade since we occupied their country.

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65 The chiefs and people of Asante and the Gold Coast Colony contributed more to the war efforts than their Northern counterparts. For their contributions see Lucas, op cit., pp.39-56; Kimble, op cit. p.376.


67 *Ibid.* The total contribution of the Northern Territories towards the war efforts was £1,826 1/3d. Government House, Accra, 18 September 1916. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. Personal contributions consisted of £20 by the Na of Mamprusi (Nayiri) to a cow, sheep, fowl or even a handful of cowries from people none of whom could be described as well off. Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1915. ADM.5/1/24; NAG, Accra. Contributions from other areas of the Gold Coast were Eastern Province £13,446 11/6d; Western Province £3,491 11/7d.; Central Province £1,391 3/3d.; Asante £9,304 10/2d and Aborigines Right Protection Society £1,500.
Donations to the Imperial Fund came from all over the Gold Coast. For example, J.E. Casely Hayford, a critic of the Gold Coast Government played a major role in organising public meetings to explain the rationale behind the establishment of the Fund. The western educated elite in the colony and the conservative Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society, already in decline by 1914, supported aircraft funds and recruiting campaigns. In return they hoped for greater political opportunities. In spite of the

Government House, Accra, 18 September 1916, ADM.56/1/180; NAG, Accra. Although the Southern elite were involved in British culture and therefore rallied behind her war efforts, one really wonders whether the average Gold Coaster made the contributions because of love for Britain.

68 Government House, Accra, 18 September 1916. ADM.56/1/180; NAG, Accra. Even the Aborigines Right Protection Society which had fought the Government over some issues such as the Land Bills of 1897 contributed £3,000 to purchase an aeroplane to be named after the Society. Kimble *op cit.* p.376. In all, the people of the Gold Coast presented eleven aeroplanes to the British Government during the war. See Governor Clifford, Legislative Council Debates, 28 October 1918. Other people who played prominent roles in raising funds and getting recruits were Sir Ofori Atta, the Okyenhene, (Paramount Chief of Akyem Abuakwa Traditional area) and Nene Mate Kole, Konor of Manya Krobo. See Kimble *op cit.* pp.388-396 for their roles in national politics and Thomas (1975), pp.65-69 in connection with the First World War.

69 For example Rev. S. Atto Ahuma, author of *The Gold Coast Nation and National Consciousness* (1911), at Winneba "offered fervent and incessant prayers for the unqualified success of British arms". Debrunner, H.W., *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: 1967), p.277. Also, the *Gold Coast Leader* closely identified with J.E.Casely Hayford, in an editorial of 10 July 1915 said that now was "not the time to ventilate grievances which might prejudice the cause of England or lead her enemies to impugn the solidarity and loyalty of the sons and subject races of the British Empire. We shall play the role of passive spectators with loyalty, determination and devotion in order to qualify for greater trust." In a similarly optimistic vein two years later an editorial supporting the recruiting campaign challenged; ".... wake up men of the Gold Coast and answer the call with fervour and enthusiasm; for the day comes, and it is at hand, when if we knock at the door of
support the people of the Gold Coast as a whole gave to the war efforts, there was a small fray between soldiers and civilians, the first of which occurred between French troops on their way to Togo and the people of Pusiga, a small village near Bawku, in which more than twenty people died.

If the chiefs and people along the borders of Togoland and the Gold Coast were said to be loyal, the Gold Coast Government doubted the loyalty of Muslims who were mostly concentrated in Wa, Salaga and Tamale. At the onset of the war, all District and Provincial Commissioners were instructed to explain the causes of the war to the Muslim communities. The Muslims were also to be told that the war was directed against Turkey, not Islam. The political officers were also instructed to tell the Muslim leaders to report people

opportunity, we shall not be denied admittance." Gold Coast Leader, 3 March 1917.

The French claimed to have been attacked in Pusiga by a "not considerable band probably composed of vagabonds, thieves, murderers and refugees from the Sudan." According to the French their attackers were Sako of Yatenga prosecuted for attempted murder, Amadu deposed chief of Sangu sentenced to imprisonment by a court in Wagadugu for robbery and violence, Pargu of Tenkodogo prosecuted for murder and robbery. See D.C., Pusiga, 20 August 1914 to C.N.E.P., Gambaga. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. However according to the Chief of Pusiga it was the French who had come to his town and made trouble by shooting twenty two of his people. According to one Yakubu, brother of the chief of Bawku, it was the Pusiga people who attacked the French out of fear of the Moshis without knowing that there were white men with them. See K.B. Allan, Acting D.C., Gambaga, 13 January 1915. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. It seems that the incident at Pusiga was not the only one between civilians and soldiers marching to battle. One report mentions a "regrettable incident at Bimbilla", traditional capital of Nanun which was also in German territory. The document however does not elaborate. See C.C.N.T., Tamale, 8 October 1914, to the Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra.
who preached "sedition" to the authorities.\textsuperscript{71} After his meeting with the Muslims in Tamale, Captain Nash reported that although all expressed regret at the outbreak of the war, they said they were content under British rule.\textsuperscript{72} Nash, usually having a great insight on local developments, further reported that religious enthusiasm was not great among the Muslims of the Northern Territories. He pointed out that in most Dagomba villages for example, there were Muslim clerics whose main business was not to proselytise but establish Koranic schools to teach people to read and write. Nash again pointed out that most of those he spoke with had never heard of Turkey nor the Sultan although a few said "Stambul" (Istanbul, Turkey) was about forty days north of Tamale.\textsuperscript{73} After the Muslims had promised to report anyone who preached "sedition" Nash concluded that he did not expect any trouble in the province as a result of the European war.

While it was reported that at the beginning of the war some wandering "Mallams" made determined efforts in the neighbouring French territory to stir up dissatisfaction, Captain Armitage noted that "not a single fanatical Mohammedan ventured to preach sedition

\textsuperscript{71}C.C.N.T., Tamale, 5 October, 1914 to all Political Officers in the Northern Territories. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. There was no significant Ottoman propaganda in West Africa and besides, the Caliph meant nothing to West African Muslims. The efforts to check on Muslims was a sign of how little Britain and France understood the Muslims.

\textsuperscript{72}S.D. Nash, C.S.P., 29 December 1914 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Ibid.} For more detailed information on the position and role of Islam in Dagbon see Levtzion (1968), pp.85-121.
in the Protectorate."\textsuperscript{74}

Armitage further pointed out that:

\begin{quote}
our neighbours have been much troubled since then by wandering Mallams who preached a Jihad and announced the early arrival of a Mahdi who would drive the white man from the country. I believe that in certain cases they were joined by local natives.\textsuperscript{75}
\end{quote}

Perhaps what looked like a "Jihad" in the making was hatched in Gawa in Burkina Faso. Writing about what he was told by his French counterpart, M.G.S. Sheriff, District Commissioner for Wa, informed the Provincial Commissioner that after lunch with his counterpart he was told that there was a Muslim agitation at Gawa in French territory. Several Mallams were said to be preaching a "Jihad" in Gawa and issued a proclamation in Arabic that if all black men rose they would be able to drive white men out of the country. The preachers further said that Allah had decreed that the "Black man's country belongs to Black man."\textsuperscript{76} Sheriff claims to have been told that the Mallams who preached "sedition" were from Togoland and that arms, guns and gunpowder and Proclamations from Egypt had been discovered at Wohabo in northern Togo. Finally, Sheriff reported that he had been cautioned that one Mallam from Duri with twenty followers and two horses were on their way either to Diebogu in

\textsuperscript{74}\textit{Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1914. ADM.1/1/23; NAG, Accra.}

\textsuperscript{75}\textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{76}M.G.S, Sheriff, Acting D.C., Lorha (Lawra), 7 March 1915 to C.N.W.P., ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra.
British territory or some part of French territory. 77

When the war first broke out in 1914, the general opinion in Europe was that it was going to be a short one hence the enthusiasm for it. After participating in the capture of Togoland, soldiers from the Gold Coast and other British West African Colonies were involved in the campaign in the Cameroon and in the long drawn out and bitterly contested East African campaign. 78 Although conscription was introduced in the United Kingdom in 1916, it was not extended to the British possessions in West Africa. But as the war dragged on, particularly after the battle of Somme, the need for more soldiers and carriers for the West African Frontier Forces arose. 79 This led to a drive for recruits throughout the Gold Coast in general, especially the Northern Territories which was regarded as a military catchment area. Meetings were held to persuade young men to join the army while the Provincial and District Commissioners toured their areas to convince people to volunteer as recruits. Collecting centres for the recruits were also established throughout the Protectorate. To further bolster the recruiting drive, a musical band of the Gold Coast Regiment

77 Ibid.

78 See Crowder (1968), p.266 foot note 27 for the numbers involved in the campaigns.

toured the Protectorate to entice men to recruit.\textsuperscript{80}

Various methods ranging from exhortation laced with insults and threats to direct orders were resorted to in the Northern Territories to obtain recruits. For example, in February 1917 when Sheriff, the District Commissioner for Bole, received instructions to obtain recruits, he summoned the Yagbumwura and his subchiefs to a meeting at Bole and told them to produce recruits "to give him and them a good name." When they could not produce the number he requested, he publicly stripped the Yagbumwura and Bolelwura to the waist and then threw them into "guard room" for several hours.\textsuperscript{81} This and other incidents led to the "Bole Rebellion."\textsuperscript{82} Also, in May 1917, when the Recruiting Officer visited the North Eastern Province the headmen of each section was called upon to supply two men.\textsuperscript{83} In Wa and Dagbon, the chiefs were said to have "promised" a certain number of men from each village.\textsuperscript{84}

These methods were not successful and Chief Commissioner

\textsuperscript{80}Acting C.C.N.T., Travelling, Bole, 30 March 1917 to His High Excellency, the Acting Governor, Accra.

\textsuperscript{81}Statement by Mahama the Yagbumwura, 4 April 1917. ADM.56/4/8; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{82}See Iliasu, A.A., "Rex V. Yagbungwura Mahama and six others" in \textit{Universitas} (Legon), V, i, 1975, pp.139-151.

\textsuperscript{83}C.N.E.P., 1 October 1917 to C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{84}Recruiting Officer, West African Frontier Force (WAFF), NT, 26 May 1917, to C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra. In the North Eastern Province alone four hundred recruits were obtained from this selective service system which was described as "a mild form of compulsion". See C.N.E.P., 1 October 1917 to C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra.
Armitage reported:

appeals to patriotism that have been made are not understood by the people except by some of the chiefs and when are heard by the people they are at once taken as a sign of our weakness and have resulted in a state of unrest. Under the circumstances, the establishment of collecting centres will only be wasting an officer’s time as he will have no recruits to collect and forward to Kumasi.  

Armitage, a staunch believer in strengthening chiefly power however grew restless over the effects of this method. He feared that when the people realised that they:

are being compelled by their chiefs to sacrifice their liberty to become soldiers, the natives will say that the chiefs have "sold themselves" to Government and have no longer the interests of the people at heart, but are sending them into danger and slavery in order to carry out favours with the powers that be. If such an idea gains ground, the work of years will be ruined, and the inhabitants, casting off their allegiance to their chiefs, will attempt to revert to the state of anarchy that existed in the old evil days, when every man was a law unto himself.

The Chief Commissioner therefore recommended that:

chiefs should be encouraged to give their moral support to the campaign but appeal for recruits should be addressed directly to the heads of the families and the young men themselves.

Of course, such a method would be ineffective given that the young men were unwilling to enlist and more importantly, it would be impossible to assemble them without the help of the chiefs.

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^5^Acting C.C.N.T., Travelling, Bole, 30 March 1917  His Excellency, Acting Governor, Accra.


^7^C.C.N.T., (Armitage), 20 July 1917 to C.N.E.P., ADM. 56/1/219; NAG, Accra.
The commonest method the political officers used to obtain recruits was to order the chiefs to provide a certain number of men, or induce them to promise a certain number. Such a promise was invariably binding. For example, in March 1917, the Commissioner for Navrongo-Zuarungu District was told by the Sandemanaba that he had not been able to find the number of recruits. The Commissioner retorted:

I did not come all the way to Kanjarga (Builsa) and tell all the chiefs that I wanted recruits for nothing. That is simply because when I was not at Navarro (Navrongo) you did not do anything. Go back and get busy. If you do not get me recruits by the time I visit Kanjarga (Builsa) next week you will 'catch trouble'.

Thomas has pointed out that "force" could be applied in the Northern Territories to draft people into the war because in many cases chiefs in the area were British appointees who had been imposed on the previously acephalous people. Much as this is true, it does not explain why force was also used in chiefly societies. The explanation is that even among the latter societies, chiefs were and are still autocratic and, besides, once enskinned are not removed from office unless through a civil war.

The people responded to this semi forceful-recruitment in a number of ways. The first and the most popular was border jumping.

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88Navarro-Zuarungu District Diary, 1 March 1917, ADM.56/1/218; NAG, Accra.

89Thomas (1975), p.59. He has compared the system of recruiting in the Northern Territories with those of the Colony and Asante where there was "democratic" control of chiefs such as the existence of the Queen Mother and the "Asafo Companies", who could take action against the chief. Another major difference he points out was the existence of a watchful local press. Thomas (1975), p.58.
In his tour of the North Western Province on a recruiting mission, the Commissioner noted "recruits are running from border to border and I am afraid to visit Leo." An Intelligence report of 1917 also said:

during the quarter, our efforts have chiefly been directed to getting recruits for the Gold Coast Regiment. All chiefs did their best and loyally helped the recruiting staff. However, the call for recruits was misunderstood by the people and they thought conscription was contemplated. The result was that at some palavers, able bodied men were not present.

Also, in their zeal to assist the administration in the recruiting exercise, some of the chiefs became objects of attack. For example, the District Commissioner for Navarro (Navrongo) noted in his diary:

yesterday afternoon, the chief of Bolga (Bolgatanga) sent word to me to say that while he was out summoning recruits, he was held up at a compound and threatened with bows and arrows. I sent out two constables to try and arrest offenders, but to avoid friction with the people. When they got to the compound they found a crowd of twenty so they withdrew. I left for Bolga (Bolgatanga) and visited the compound at which the chief was held up. It was deserted as well as eleven others. I sent for the

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90 Tour of North Western Province, 28 January 1916. ADM.56/1/50; NAG, Accra. Border jumping from the Gold Coast was less compared to the neighbouring French speaking states. It became so serious that the French eventually succeeded in convincing the Gold Coast Government to agree to repatriate all French subjects who fled to the Gold Coast to evade conscription with effect from 28 December 1915. See C.C.N.T., Tamale, 8 January 1916, to C.N.E.P., ADM.56/1/150; NAG, Accra. Subsequently, at a meeting between the Acting D.C for Bawku and the French Resident at Tenkodogo, the latter gave the former a list consisting of 800 such people. By August 1918, one half of that number had been returned to the French. See Report on French Emigrants to British Territories taken to return to their original homes by Acting D.C., Bawku, 9 August 1918. ADM.56/1/132; NAG, Accra.

91 Intelligence Report, 31 March 1917. ADM.56/1/144; NAG, Accra.
headman to tell his people to come back and not to be foolish, but that I would not allow any bow and arrow palaver.\textsuperscript{92}

The commonest form of protest against recruiting was either desertion or sending recruits of poor quality. For example in August 1917, 240 recruits were escorted south from Zuarungu, but by the time they arrived at Ejura, three hundred and forty three miles away, only 112 remained; the rest had escaped.\textsuperscript{93} Also, by the time another party of 119 reached Winduri only five miles way from Tong, the collection centre, twenty three had absconded.\textsuperscript{94} Poor quality was another distinguishing mark of some of the recruits. In September 1915, Lieutenant-Colonel Rose inspected 195 recruits from the North in Kumasi. He reported that the majority of the men were "dull and stupid" and many of them expressed the desire to go home since they did not know why they had been brought down the country.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{92}Extract from Navarro (Navrongo)-Zuarungu Diary, 22-30 November 1917. ADM.56/1/171; NAG, Accra. The report went on to say "Passed on to Winkogo. This chief had also been recently held up and threatened with bow and arrows, while recruiting, and I have now got the offender in the fort". \textit{ibid.}'

\textsuperscript{93}Captain Nash, Navarro-Zuarungu, 9 August 1917 to C.N.E.P., Gambaga. ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{94}\textit{Ibid.} Also, between October 1917 and April 1918, of the 1,570 recruits who actually reached the training centre at Tamale 221 later deserted. Major W.H. Baker to C.C.N.T., 20 April 1918 in Iliasu Papers. The Commissioner of North Eastern Province reported that all the chiefs and headmen he had spoken to were "unanimous in declaring that the reason the men ran away was because they had been caught or at least brought in under pressure from their chiefs who in doing so were only performing what was considered to be their duty in complying with the requirements of the Government." See C.N.E.P., 25 November 1917 to C.C.N.T., ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra. Such deserters were said to keep well away from home hence their chiefs had no idea about their whereabouts.
to be soldiers. S.D. Nash characteristically noted after seeing some of the recruits:

the class of boys which are caught and produced is of the very worst stamp physically. { I am } inclined to think that they are not strong enough to run away.  

Also, Dr. W.W. Claridge, the Acting Provincial Medical Officer whose duty it was to inspect the recruits remarked that in some groups as many as a third of them showed signs of obvious physical defects. Claridge suggested that chiefs were intentionally picking out for enlistment men who were useless to the community.

Some historians have argued that the main effect of the First World War on British West Africa was economic. While I do not disagree with this, certain political events also emerged as a result of the war. With the outbreak of the First World War, some of the officers were recalled for service either in the war front or were sent to other places where their services were required. This led to the reduction of the colonial personnel by thirty per cent between 1914 and 1917, and consequently, to the closure of some stations in the Northern Territories, such as Bawku, Zuarungu and Yeji. The withdrawal of both the District Commissioner and the garrison from Zuarungu gave the people the erroneous idea that the white man was leaving. It was reported in 1916 that the old men and

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96 Captain Nash, 9 August 1917 to C.N.E.P., Gambaga. ADM.56/1/219; NAG, Accra.

97 For example see David Killingray "Repercussions of World War 1 in the Gold Coast" in JAH, XIX, 1, (1978), pp.39-59; Crowder(1968), pp.252-270; Crowder (1974), pp.484-513.
headmen who resented the imposition of chiefs, and who were said to be reactionary, interpreted the news of the withdrawal of a Commissioner to mean that the white man was leaving the country "and that the old days of lawlessness and license were about to return." During the course of an enquiry that was held on the spot after the Bongo riots, it was proved beyond doubt that the old men were responsible for the trouble for they had so played on the feelings of the young men by their constant jeers at what they were pleased to term their effeminacy on submitting to their chiefs' authority that the latter were only awaiting the first opportunity that offered itself to show their "manhood" by fighting. They had therefore secretly prepared large stores of poisoned arrows, far more in excess of their normal requirement as hunters for that day.

Giving evidence during the enquiry, the chief of Zuarungu gave an illuminating view about the absence of a District Commissioner when he said:

My opinion is that it is only because there has been no white man (D. C.) stationed at Zuarungu that the people have started to go against their chiefs. The people would not look to a white man who travelled from one district to another. They said that it was like a trader arriving and going and no one would take notice of travelling strangers.

Perhaps what appeared superficially to be the most serious reaction of the people against recruitment in the Northern Territories occurred in the Bole District of Gonja which was also

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10 ibid.
one of the least populated areas. The high-handed method used by the District Commissioner to obtain recruits was only a spark that lit what he called a revolt. Behind the District Commissioner’s blunders were the rivalry between the Yagbumwura and the Bolewura and the advantage to which Yaya, the Bolewura, took of the wartime situation to discredit his superior. The first of these was the general apprehension among the people that the call for carriers was a pretext to draft people into the army. The second was that the regular call for recruits meant that:

Berkeley, Commissioner for N.W. Province had gone to Tamale and all officials had gone to England and that all our soldiers had been killed by Germans hence the Northern Territory Constabulary were sent down to protect Kumasi.

When the Yagbumwura failed to appear before the District Commissioner after three calls, and when he heard that the rest house at Senyon had been burnt, Sheriff, the District Commissioner, sent urgent telegrams to Tamale that the people of Western Gonja had taken up arms against the administration. The District

101 Incidentally, only twenty recruits were obtained from the whole of the Gonja area. See Table II in Thomas (1975), p. 60.

102 For details of the “Bole” or “Yabum” revolt see Iliasu (1975)

103 See ‘Tamale Complaint Book’ 13, and the statement by Mahama, the Yagbumwura, in ADM.56/4/8; NAG, Accra.

104 Evidence of M.G.S. Sheriff, Acting D.C., Bole, 30 March 1917 at the Enquiry into the reported Yagbum rebellion. ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra. Other revolts which occurred in British West Africa were in Nigeria as a result of the highhanded actions of Colonial Officials. See Akinjide Osuntokun "Disaffection and revolts in Nigeria during the First World War, 1914-1918" in Canadian Journal of African Studies, V, ii, (1971), pp.171-192; Crowder (1974)
Commissioner dispatched more urgent telegrams when he heard that the fetish priest of Senyon\textsuperscript{105} had joined the Yagbumwura in the rebellion and that all chiefs especially, the Bolewura, had been sent for to come and:

drink fetish that they would not work for the government again as he would be the Black Commissioner after the white man has been driven from the country.\textsuperscript{106}

Consequently, a company of Northern Territory Constabulary and another of the Gold Coast Regiment proceeded to Bole and "found out that they had been sent to kill an elephant but could not even find a mouse to shoot."\textsuperscript{107} The "Bole" or "Yagbum rebellion" was the last major disturbance in the Northern Territories in which soldiers were brought from Asante and the Gold Coast Colony to reinforce those of the Protectorate. After 1917, the Northern Territories settled down for a long period of peace, except the occasional flouting of the orders of either the Political heads or chiefs or internal disturbances among the various ethnic groups.

\textsuperscript{105}For the importance of the shrine at Senyon and other shrines in Gonja politics see Goody, J., \textit{Technology, Tradition, and the State in Africa}. (O.U.P., London, 1971) particularly, pp.59-63.

\textsuperscript{106}Evidence of M.G.S. Sheriff, Acting DC, Bole, 30 March, 1917 at the Enquiry into the reported Yagbum rebellion. ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{107}Address delivered at Bole on the 4 February 1918 by the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/70; NAG, Accra.
It is gratifying to report that the natives under the administration of the Mandatory area are perfectly happy and content and prosperous and they fully appreciate all that is being done for them by government.¹⁰⁸

Under Article 119 of the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, Germany was compelled to renounce all claims to overseas possessions including Togo which became a Mandated Territory under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.¹⁰⁹ These territories were to be administered by individual powers of the League who invariably played a leading role in their capture from Germany, and who were selected for the purpose, not as sovereign rulers but as trustees for the world in general.¹¹⁰ It was in line with this mandate principle that part of the former German Togoland came under British rule. It comprised an area of 13,040 squares miles.

Soon after the German forces in Togoland surrendered to their

¹⁰⁸Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government on the British sphere of the Mandated Territory of Togoland for 1924, p.29.


¹¹⁰For the duties and obligations of the Mandated power see Walters op cit, pp.171-73;211-3; A mandate Commission was established and under Clause 7 of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League, all Mandatory powers were to make annual reports to it. The idea of Mandate arose because some of the nations such as Great Britain, France, New Zealand and South Africa who conquered the former German Colonies did not want to return them to her to prevent them from being a danger to the conquerors. Some of the colonies were also thought to be too backward to stand on their own.
British and French counterparts, discussions began between Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor of the Gold Coast, and Noufflard, Lieutenant-Governor of Dahomey (Benin), as a result of which an agreement, subsequently ratified by the home Governments was drawn up. Under this agreement, Togoland was to be jointly administered under martial law by British and French officials. To the former were allotted the western administrative areas of Lome, Misahohe, Yendi and Kete Krachi and to the latter Anecho, Sakode, Atakpame and Sansanne Mango. The initial agreement was ratified by the Anglo-French Declaration signed in May 1920 by Viscount Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies of the British Empire and Simon, Minister for the Colonies of the French Republic. The League of Nations formally granted Togoland as Mandated territory.

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111 ADM.56/1/405; NAG, Accra; Sir Hugh Clifford to W.H.Long, Accra, 29 April 1918 in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.567-568; Bourret, F.M., *The Gold Coast; A survey of the Gold Coast and British Togoland, 1919-1951* (Stanford University Press: 1952), p.95; Instructions for the administration of the British sector were given in a letter from the Colonial Secretary, Accra, to the C.C.N.T., 24 September 1914. See Yendi Information Book 1916-1930, ADM.67/1/1; NAG, Accra.

112 ADM.56/1/405; Report on the British Mandated Sphere of Togoland for 1920-1921, p.23. See Appendix A of the same report for a copy of the Declaration. It was also agreed that if the inhabitants living near the border should within a period of six months from the completion of the delimitation, express the intention to settle in the region placed in either side no obstacle should be placed in their way. They were to be given the necessary time to gather their standing crops and generally remove all property which legitimately belonged to them. See Lieutenant-Colonel F.C. Bryant, Commander, British Forces, Togoland, Lome, 18 December 1914 to Hon. Col. Sec., Government House, Accra. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra.
to Britain and France in 1922. Even before the discussions between Britain and France began, Armitage the Chief Commissioner for the Northern Territories had signed treaties with some of the Dagomba chiefs who welcomed the British forces. Also, Britain, or at least, some of her officials in the Northern Territories were of the view that a future partition of Togoland which did not take cognisance of the ethnic unity of Dagbon and Mamprugu would be intolerable and would not have the support of the people concerned.

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113 See Walters *op cit.*, p.172; The British Mandate for Togoland, 20 July 1922 in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.590-3. By a proclamation the British sphere was administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast. See Togoland Proclamation No.4 of 1923 cited as "The British Administration and Courts (Togoland) Proclamation, 1923" in Report on the British Mandated Sphere of Togoland for 1924, p.1.

114 Sir Hugh Clifford to Lewis Harcourt, Accra, 14 September, 1914 in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp.549-551. However, after examining the treaties Clifford concluded that they were more of a petition than a treaty. *Ibid.* Even before the treaty was forwarded to the Governor, there had been some disagreement between the Lieutenant-Colonel F.C.Bryant, Commander of the British Forces and the C.C.N.T. See F.C. Bryant, Commanding British Forces, Togoland, Lome, Government House, 18 December 1914 to Col. Sec., Accra. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. It however appears that what sparked off the disagreement was the remark by the Chief Commissioner that but for the cowardice of one Lieutenant Bellew leading one of the British contingents around Yendi, Sansanne Mango, capital of the Sansanne Mango-Yendi District would have been captured by British and not French forces. *Ibid.*

115 Sir Hugh Clifford, Accra, 14 September 1914 to Lewis Harcourt in Metcalfe *op cit.* pp. 549-551. So determined was Britain to ensure that Dagbon and Mamprugu were reunited that there was correspondence between the Col. Sec., in Accra and the C.C.N.T. What emerges from the correspondence is that the former was carrying out his own agenda without reference to Accra. For example, in one of the letters the Col. Sec, remarked that until he received the C.C.N.T's letter of 3 January 1915 he did not know that the latter had instructed the D.C. of Bawku to call in all the Chiefs of Togo Mamprusis. He noted that had he been informed, he and the Governor would have made the necessary arrangements with
For administrative convenience the British sphere was divided into two parts: the northern part was administered as part of the Northern Territories and the southern section as part of the Colony proper. The northern section was in turn divided into six districts namely, Northern Mamprusi (Togoland section), Kusasi (Togoland section), Southern Mamprusi (Togoland section), Eastern Dagomba (Togoland section), Eastern Gonja (Togoland section) and Kete Krachi. The division of the British sphere of Togoland among the territorial components of the Gold Coast in 1921 was influenced mainly by the ethnic, linguistic and cultural affiliations of the people living in the adjacent areas of the two countries. Thus, initially the Krachi District was absorbed into Asante because many of its inhabitants spoke a dialect of Twi.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Dahomey. See Col.Sec., Accra, 26 December 1915 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/187; NAG, Accra. The case of the Mamprusi villages which came under German administration is interesting. In the first place they would not have come under German administration much more later become a bone of contention between Britain and France. The area was known as "Tempenga"- wilderness- because of its sparse population. Living near Bawku was a Mamprusi known as Asura who employed a company of mounted Mossi mercenaries who periodically plundered the surrounding areas. He apparently became the friend of British officers who in ignorance of his activities, camped near his village when on tour of inspection. The aggrieved people, therefore thought that it would be of no avail to complain to the British of one who, seemingly enjoyed their confidence. For this reason they sent to Sansanne Mango to seek protection from the Germans. Annual Report Togo Mandated Area 1 April 1922-31 March 1923. ADM.56/1/327; NAG, Accra.

The Northern section will be the main focus of this section since it formed part of the area under discussion.

However, in 1921, Krachi was transferred to the Northern Section of the Mandated area because it was realised that the district could not be effectively supervised from Kumasi because of the poor nature of the road network. See Minute of 19 January, 1928.
The administrative Staff operating in the Mandated Territory consisted of two Senior Political Officers based in Tamale and Ho (one each for the two Sections respectively), seven District Commissioners including one who was based in Ho and acted as Record Officer for the British sphere of Togoland and two Assistant Commissioners. Under them were heads of departments for Agriculture, Health, Police and Education.\textsuperscript{118} The Northern Section was administered by the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories who was the Senior Political Officer, and acted subject to the authority of the Governor. The other districts were administered by District Commissioners resident in Bawku, Gambaga, Yendi, Salaga and Krachi respectively. However, in 1932 there was a readjustment of the boundaries. By an Order in Council, the Districts were reorganised such that their boundaries now coincided with the traditional states of Mamprugu, Dagbon and Gonja which had been arbitrarily divided by the final Anglo-German boundary

\textsuperscript{118}Until the Krachi District was transferred to the Northern Territories in 1921, there were three Senior Political Officers based in Tamale for the Northern Section, Koforidua for the Ho subsection and Kumasi for Krachi.
demarcation of 1904.\textsuperscript{119}

The readjustment however also entailed problems. Firstly, M. Ruppel, the German member on the Permanent Mandate Commission, objected to the re-union of the Eastern and Western Dagomba districts as one native authority as well as the restoration of the domination of the Dagomba over the earlier and truly indigenous people such as the Konkomba. Denouncing the unification of parts of the Mandated territory with adjacent areas of the Northern Territories to constitute united "native" states, he declared:

\begin{quote}
It seemed incompatible with the spirit of the mandate to split the territory into pieces and to amalgamate one after another of those places with local districts of the neighbouring colony. Ultimately, there would remain no trace of a separate entity such as each mandated
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{119}See Section 3 of the Administrative Ordinance of the Protectorate as applied to the Northern Section by article 5 of Togoland under British Mandate in Council, 1923, in a Report on the British Mandated Sphere of Togoland for 1932. The designations and descriptions of the Districts are as follows. \textbf{Mamprusi}: all the lands lying in the Northern Section subject to the Na of Mamprusi and occupied by the Kusasi, B'Moba and Konkomba ethnic groups. \textbf{Dagomba}: a) all lands lying within the Northern Section and subject to the Na of Dagomba, a) belonging to the Konkomba and Chakosi ethnic groups and c) subject to the Na of Nanumba; \textbf{Gonja}: all lands lying within the Northern Section a) belonging to the Owure of Nchumuru b) belonging to the Nawuri ethnic group and subject to the chief of Kpandai; \textbf{Krachi}: all lands in the Northern Section subject to the headchiefs of Kete Krachi, Adele and Adjuati (Achode) people. All the people involved were said to have accepted the readjustment voluntarily. \textit{Ibid}. But as would be seen in 6.2 the people were not consulted and it is the basis of the current ethnic conflicts in the Northern of Ghana today. In reference to the changes noted above, the Permanent Commission wanted an assurance from the Mandatory power that the measures would in no way jeopardise the territorial integrity of the territory under Mandate, Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government to the League of Nations on the administration of Togo under British Mandate for the Year 1933 p.18.
\end{flushleft}
Also, in the former North Mamprusi District, the divisional chief who lived at Worikambo in the German side, was cut off from his subchiefs and people. Having enjoyed autonomy for sometime, some of the chiefs were not prepared to surrender it even after the amalgamation and two of them had to be detained. A report of the area stated Northern Mamprusi suffered from:

> disturbance of tribal organisation brought about by our predecessor's attempt to rule the country through the medium of 'gardes de cercles' which had weakened chiefly power.

There was also a problem in the Krachi District when some Nchumuru and Nawuri were removed from it and brought into the Gonja District on the claim that they once served the Yagbumwura through the Kpembewura. Three years later the Nchumuru revolted against Gonja rule and this problem continues till today. However, the

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120 F.C.O.L JX 1975.A49.SF. Permanent Mandates Commission: Minutes of the Twenty-First Session held at Geneva from October 26th to November 13 1931. p.43. The two Dagomba parts were united in spite of the objection.

121 Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government on the Administration of Togoland under British Mandate for the Year 1932.

122 Ibid.

123 The report of 1933 claims that the Nchumuru and Nawuri were desirous of renewing their former allegiance to the Gonja hence they were accordingly released. Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Togoland under British rule for the year 1933. This claim should not be accepted at face value because the Nchumuru and Nawuri were not consulted at all. Interview Nana Kwesi Mensa and Nana Kwesi Okyere Adikrofo (village chiefs) of Jambuai and Wiai respectively interviewed on 13 December 1994 and 16 December 1994.
amalgamation of Eastern and Western Dagbon was smooth. This was because the division of Dagbon into British and German spheres had cut off the Ya Na from most of his subjects in the British sphere while Dagombas as a whole welcomed the new arrangement.\textsuperscript{124}

The Judicial Procedure of the Northern Section followed that which operated in the Northern Territories.\textsuperscript{125} The Chief Commissioner's Court was the highest in the Protectorate and it had jurisdiction throughout the Northern Section of the British sphere. It was presided over by one of the following officers: the Chief Commissioner, his deputy or any officer selected by either the Governor or the Chief Commissioner. The District Political Officers had also jurisdiction in all civil matters up to three hundred pounds sterling or in criminal cases which could be met by a fine of a hundred pounds or imprisonment for one year with or without hard labour. To ensure that justice prevailed, there was a right of appeal in all cases to the Senior Political Officer whose jurisdiction was unlimited except that of capital sentence which

\textsuperscript{124}Initially there was the fear that the Yo Na and Karaga Na in the British sphere who had been made Paramount Chiefs by Britain would resist the idea of amalgamation. The British were therefore surprised when the two chiefs agreed to revert to their former positions as divisional chiefs. Report on the Mandated Territory for 1932. What the British did not realise is that each of them could be a Ya Na and none would therefore like to see a divided Dagbon.

\textsuperscript{125}Initially, the judicial system in the Northern Section became linked with that of the Protectorate by Proclamation No.4 of 1923 but this was revoked by the British Sphere of Togoland (Administration) Ordinance, 1924 No. 1 of 1924. See Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Togoland under British Mandate for the Year 1924, pp.75-78.
could only be confirmed by the Governor. Also, in any criminal case in which a sentence or imprisonment exceeding five years or a death sentence had been passed, the notes of evidence taken at the trial, together with a report in writing signed by the Senior Political Office containing recommendations on the case written by the President of the Court, were to be submitted to the Governor.\textsuperscript{126}

To further facilitate the administration of justice Native Tribunals were introduced in 1924. As provided by the Ordinance which established them, the Tribunals could exercise the jurisdiction exercised by them immediately prior to the commencement of the Ordinance but with a proviso that they could not try criminal cases.\textsuperscript{127} The head chief of every division and the subchief of every village and their councilors, formed the tribunal. In case of a deadlock, the President, who was the head chief, had the casting vote. However, Native Tribunals were established only in Eastern Dagbon and Southern Mamprusi.\textsuperscript{128} In

\textsuperscript{126}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{127}This was provided in the British Sphere of Togoland Ordinance, No.1, of 1924, Section 9, subsection 1 of Native Tribunal in a Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Togoland under British Mandate for the Year 1924, pp.14-15. Prior to the intrusion of Colonial rule chiefs had the right to try all cases but their powers became weak with the entrenchment of colonial rule.

\textsuperscript{128}No tribunals were established in Northern Mamprusi because it was felt there was no "big" chief in the area while the Mandate did not allow the British to appoint the Nayiri as Paramount chief over the area. In the case of Kete Krachi district none of the chiefs wanted the Krachiwura to be the head and therefore the President of the Tribunal because he was in reality not their head. They had agreed to form a federation under the Krachi Dentebosomfo (Chief priest of Dente Shrine) when Asante was a threat to them.
the case of the Northern Section of the Mandated area, the Chief Commissioner, or Provincial Commissioner, or even any Commissioner, could stop the hearing of any case and refer it to a "regular British Court". It was the opinion of the British that with the reorganisation of the districts and the establishment of Native Tribunals, the chiefs should be assisted to know their duties and responsibilities according to British procedures. The rationale was that it would help build strong "native" administrations.¹²⁹

Another area of concern to the Permanent Commission of the League of Nations to which the Mandatory Power submitted annual reports was the condition of labour. In almost all the reports on labour in the Northern Section of the Mandate, it was always stated that the industrial life of the territory had not yet assumed that complex character capable of developing such problems as would render the application of conventions or recommendations of the International Labour Organisation. In spite of this, labour regulations in the Gold Coast and, therefore, of the Mandated areas, were guided by Ordinance No.11 of 1921.¹³⁰ However, like


¹²⁹ It is rather surprising that while Native Tribunals were established in the Mandated area in 1924, none were established in the rest of the Northern Territories until 1935.

¹³⁰ This was known as "The Regulation of Employment Ordinance, 1921" of the Gold Coast Colony. By its terms the District Officer was to be satisfied with the nature of the contract, the place or limits within which such service were to be performed and the remuneration to be paid. Others were that no one from the Mandated area was to be employed in a foreign land for more than thirteen
the rest of the Protectorate, compulsory labour still existed, mainly used for maintenance of roads and rest houses.\textsuperscript{131} The amount of work required was left to the District Commissioner.

Clearly linked with labour, the institution of slavery became a concern to the Permanent Mandate Commission. Slavery itself was declared illegal by Chapters 5 and 6 of the Laws of the Gold Coast Colony while Section 443 of the Criminal Code prescribed penalties for slave dealing.\textsuperscript{132} That domestic slavery existed in the Gold Coast and the Mandated area but was ignored by Britain is evidenced in the answers of Major Moreton, District Commissioner for Mamprusi North, gave in a Questionnaire "B" distributed to Officials in the Mandate by the Records Office at Ho. In his answers to the

months and the employer was to provide a return passage with proper accommodation and maintenance during the voyage. Report for 1924 pp.29-32. In the annual reports detailed information is given about the various Departments which hired labour, the number working hours and the remuneration. See Annual Reports for 1924-29 and 1930-37.

\textsuperscript{131}Under Roads Ordinance, Chapter 107 of the Gold Coast Laws every male adult was required to perform 24 days work per annum on the roads. That form of labour was called out through the chief and remuneration was made through him. Chiefs often abused the system by either diverting some of the labour to their farms or took a lion's share of the remuneration. For example "Notes in the District Book under Kusenaba ", in Acting C.N.E.P., to C.C.N.T., 19 July 1916.

\textsuperscript{132}Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the British Administration of Togoland under British Mandate for the year 1927-28. For a discussion on the abolition of slavery and domestic slavery see Carnarvon to Strahan, 21 August, 1874 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.371-375; Strahan, Cape Coast Castle, 19 September, 1874 to Carnarvon, in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.376-377; Proclamation by His Excellency George Cumine Strahan, Captain Royal Artillery, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Gold Coast Colony in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.377-378 and Carnarvon to Strahan, 19 February, 1875 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.378-9;
questionnaire, Major Moreton stated that domestic slavery existed in the Mandate but there were no statistics available and that it was by no means harsh and the people knew they could be free if they wanted it. The Commissioner further stated that the only domestic slaves were those born into it and they were brought up as members of the master’s family and had the same rights and privileges as any member of the family. However, on the death of male domestic slaves their property returned to their master who then also became responsible for the wife and children of the deceased.\[133\] He further stated that he did not think domestic slavery could be stopped because according to him, no objective would be gained by abolishing it.\[134\] This apparently candid opinion expressed by Major Moreton seemed to have drawn ripples among the senior administrators. The Commissioner for the North East Province who was Moreton’s immediate superior asserted that he 

\[133\] Major Moreton, D.C., Mamprusi North, 7 May 1924 to the Records Office, Ho. ADM.56/1/327; NAG, Accra.

and one Freeman were of the opinion that there was no slavery in the Protectorate and that while they had considerable experience in the area, Moreton wrote his report when he had been in the area for only a month. 135 In another letter the Commissioner stated that when he called for the report on which Moreton arrived at his conclusion, the latter replied that:

Every native freely admits that domestic slavery exists and make no secret about it. I have questioned several and also met it in court palavers. 136

The Provincial Commissioner concluded his report by saying that he did not agree with Moreton's assertions and had never heard any other officer making similar pronouncement. 137 In spite of the denials by the Commissioner of the existence of domestic slavery, three years later legislation expressly abolishing the legal status of slavery including that of "domestic slaves" were being considered. 138 Unfortunately, the records after 1927 are silent on

135C.N.E.P., Navrongo, 6 December, 1924 to Acting D.C., Gambaga. ADM.56/1/327; NAG, Accra.

136C.N.E.P., 12 December 1924 to C.C.N.T., Tamale. ADM.56/1/327; NAG, Accra.

137Ibid.

138Report by His Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the British Administration of Togoland under British Mandate for the year 1927-28. With particular reference to domestic slavery in the Northern Section, the report quoted another report by the Chief Commissioner which said "In nearly 30 years experience I have never yet had a request from any domestic slave for freedom. The so called slaves are perfectly happy, generally related by marriage to their master, and have no worries to making a living. I should call them domestic parasites rather than domestic slaves, as, if they wished to leave they could always do so. The people are free to change their state of life, and they know it. If and when and as the attractions of being a "free
slavery in the Northern Section of the Mandated area.

From 1932 onward, the Northern Section of the Mandated territory was ruled as part of the Northern Territories even though periodic reports were sent to both the Permanent Commission and later United Nations Trusteeship Council. Finally, by a resolution of 15 June 1949, the Northern Territorial Council abolished the boundary of the trusteeship.\textsuperscript{139} By the practical, though not legal, abolition of the boundary in 1949, the results of a future plebiscite to determine the future of Togoland, as far as the Northern Section of Togoland was concerned had been virtually pre-determined.

\textsuperscript{139}Record of the Fifth Session of the Northern Territorial Council held at Tamale on 15 June 1949. p.69.
CHAPTER VI.

THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND THE "SOUTH".

6.1 COLONIAL ECONOMIC POLICIES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES.

I cannot too strongly urge the employment of all available resources of the Government upon the development of the country south of Kintampo....I would not at present spend upon the Northern Territories -upon in fact the hinterland of the Colony- a single penny more than is absolutely necessary for their suitable administration and the encouragement of the transit trade.¹

Before the intrusion of Colonial rule, the main economic activities in the area that came to be known as the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, were subsistence agriculture, animal husbandry, handicraft production, hunting and fishing on a small scale.² Simultaneous with subsistence farming was trading activity. Early European records noted two types of trade; trade in transit and local trade.³ Northerners did not participate in the transit


² For trade and subsistence agriculture in the Northern Territories see M. and S.L. Fortes; "Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi" in 1937. This article is one of a collection of papers on Northern Ghana in the University of Ghana Library. Another is Dickson, K.B., "Trade Patterns in Ghana at the Beginning of the 18th Century" in Geographical Review. 56, 1966, pp.416-431. The crops cultivated were and are Guinea corn, red sorghum (also used for dyeing leather), rice, pigeon peas, maize, groundnut, cassava, sweet potatoes, cotton, tobacco and shea nuts.

³ADM.56/1/131; NAG, Accra is mostly on trade and talks about the southward transit trade moving towards Kumasi which consisted of various commodities such as livestock and native cloth woven from "native" cotton. The local trade consisted "mainly of foodstuffs and Moshi cloth". Ibid.
trade but they grew and sold food for the caravan traders. The economic activities of the area were to change with the arrival of the British in the latter part of the 19th century.

The Northern Territories were not initially acquired because of any intrinsic economic value, but because it was strategically undesirable to let the French or Germans take them. They were not acquired in a fit of absent-mindedness but rather because of a general epidemic of jealousy. Indeed, the motivating factor for the acquisition of the area was fear of the isolation of the Gold Coast Colony from the interior trade. After the area had been acquired, it was realised that it had very few exportable minerals or forests products such as timber and cocoa. However, the area was involved in the north-south trade and also possessed important market centres such as Kintampo, Salaga, Wa and Yendi.

The Colonial Government took steps to integrate the Northern Territories into the economy of the Gold Coast Colony. Provincial, District and Assistant District Commissioners were told that one of their most important duties was to encourage trade. They were enjoined to assist caravans and individuals to ply their trade without molestation and extortion. Chiefs of important halting places on the caravan routes were also to be helped to provide food at reasonable rates. A caravan tax was introduced, the payment of


5 Circular Memorandum. By Order, Staff Officer, Gambaga, 9 March, 1899. ADM.56/1/35; NAG, Accra.
which entitled one, to a "Hausa" escort to prevent the trader from being robbed and extorted. Writing in favour of the maintenance of the caravan tax, Chief Commissioner Watherston said it was one of the taxes the people were prepared to pay since it was a tenth of what they paid before the British occupation. He contended that so long as kola remained a product which could be procured in large quantities only in Asante, caravans would continue to ply the roads. Watherston further stated that the tax the traders paid was their contribution to the money the administration spent to construct and maintain roads and to provide security. Tax from caravans continued to be the major source of revenue for the Northern Territories until 1907 when it was abolished because the London Chamber of Commerce denounced it as detrimental to trade.

Indeed, a report after the abolition of the tax stated that:

the revenue of the Protectorate has become a practically negligible quantity and will remain so until a system of cheap transport stimulates the latent industry of the

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*Ibid.* The rates of taxes were 5s for a horse, 3s for a cow, 6d for calves and kola 2s for human load. After paying the tax the traders were under no obligation to pay any other tax to a chief. *Ibid.*

7A.E. Watherston, Tamale, 2 April, 1900 to Col. Sec., Christianborg. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. Eleven years later, A. Balstone, Acting Inspector of Customs commented that the caravans only came to make money without spending it since they could subsist on a few cowries. A. Balstone, Tariassu Station, 26 June, 1911 to Comptroller of Customs, Accra. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra.

8A.E. Watherston, Tamale, 2 April, 1900 to Col. Sec., Christianborg. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. However, the importance of the caravan tax in the revenue of the Protectorate is shown by the fact that the revenue of the Northern Territories were £11,802 and £15,500 in 1906 and 1907 respectively, but they shrunk to £3,400 in 1908. See Annual Report for 1906, 1907 and 1908.
country. The revenue of the Protectorate fell from an average of £13,800 for
the period 1904-1908, to an average of £2,525 for the period 1909
to 1913. Revenue continued to stagnate until 1926, when the
government introduced a cattle tax in the North; this doubled
revenue from £9,201 in 1925/26 to £19,027 in 1926/27.

To further help integrate the economy of the Protectorate into
that of the rest of the country, officers were to assist in the
establishment of markets to provide Africans with the opportunity
to purchase European products suited to their needs. However,
initially, chiefs and headmen in areas outside the caravan routes
were reluctant to establish markets for fear that their young wives
attending the markets would be seduced. It was however later
reported that their prejudices were overcome and that they attended
the markets and supervised people from their section and thoroughly
enjoyed it and:

in fact realised that there is another side to their
argument and that is, they now come into contact with
more eligible females which gives them a better selection

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10Gold Coast Administrative Reports from 1904 to 1913.

11Annual Reports of the Northern Territories for the period
April 1926 to March 1927.

12For a decade, efforts at opening markets at some places such
as Navrongo, Zuarungu and Bolgatanga failed because of opposition
from chiefs, clan and sectional heads and important people in the
area. See Intelligence Reports of North-Eastern Province, 30 June,
1913. ADM.56/1/144; NAG, Accra.

13Ibid.
wherewith to replenish the wastage of their present list.\textsuperscript{14}

Also, Africans were to be encouraged to be industrious to earn money to purchase European products.\textsuperscript{15} Two "European" stores were opened at Gambaga and Wa in 1898 and 1900 respectively to encourage trade and familiarize Africans with British products, particularly imported cloth. Four years later, the Government built small stalls at Wa, Kintampo, Salaga and Gambaga for Africans which attracted a monthly fee of 3s. It was reported in 1904 that the number of petty traders selling European goods in all the markets of the Protectorate continued to increase yearly. Another report indicated that there was a demand for European goods and that:

\begin{quote}
owing to the increased demand there has been a corresponding decrease in the amount of native garments and cloth sold although the trade done in these articles is still very large.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Another way the traditional economy of the Protectorate was integrated into the Colonial economic system was the introduction of currency. Until then, the cowry was the currency in circulation. In addition to its use as a means of exchange, cowries were used for dowry, ritual purposes such as veneration of ancestors and burial of important people in the community. But they were

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{16}Annual Report for the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for 1904. ADM.5/1/13. Indeed, seven years later, it was reported that trade in European goods in the Southern Province had increased over one hundred per cent. It was also stated that sales in the branch store at Salaga also showed considerable increase. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1911. ADM.5/1/20; NAG, Accra.
unacceptable in the capitalist economy hence metallic currency was introduced. In 1905, J. H. Byran, the Governor, informed the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories that it had been decided that the:

bronze coinage in circulation throughout Great Britain and in most of the Colonies should be adopted in the Gold Coast and her dependencies.\(^{17}\)

At the beginning, only one penny denomination was introduced but in 1915, nickel coinage of three denominations - one penny, one half penny and one tenth of a penny were added because the use of coins had become popular. Previously, Africans were reluctant to accept coins in exchange for their products but as always happens, they accepted it but melted it for the manufacture of ornaments. Although eventually, coins replaced the cowry, the latter was resilient and kept re-appearing whenever there was a shortage of coins. Indeed, as at 1927 cowries were still used by the Lobis in the North Western Province.

The collection of tax from colonial subjects, which according to Northcott was a "convincing proof of paramountcy",\(^{18}\) was introduced in 1899 but was abandoned in 1901. Attempts were made in 1909 to re-introduce the direct tax. Among the reasons advanced for its re-introduction were that it would increase the people's desire to work for money and prevent them from "sitting down and doing nothing." It was also felt that its collection would put the

\(^{17}\)Acting Governor Byran to Lyttelton, Government House, Accra, 24 June, 1905. ADM.5/1/13; NAG, Accra.

finances of the Dependency on a sound footing and ensure its "opening up." However, the idea was abandoned because some of the Commissioners pointed out that most labour in the Protectorate was free but would not be forthcoming if direct taxes were reintroduced. They argued that in the end a greater expense would be incurred when carrying out government projects such as road construction. It was also pointed out that much currency was still not in circulation and the people would be compelled to sell their livestock at low prices to pay the tax. Other sources of revenue introduced were court fees and fines, Gun and Game Licenses, ferry tolls, tax on livestock, kola, salt, shea butter and market tolls. But these were grossly inadequate to run the administration. For example, while the total revenue for 1912 was £2,994, expenditure amounted to £78,894. To close the gap between revenue and expenditure, certain economic measures were taken. In 1908 for example, the Government took over the running of the important ferry at Yeji. Efforts were also made to check smuggling of goods

19S.D. Nash, Acting C.N.W.P., 17 December, 1909 to the C.C.N.T, Tamale. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

20D.C., Salaga, 11 December 1909 to C.C.N.T., Tamale. ADM.56/1/107. The notion of the people "sitting down doing nothing" was a wrong idea that was formed by many colonial officials about the Northern Territories. Presumably they were referring to the dry season, that is, from November to April when all farming activities had come to an end. But this was the period that the people engaged in the manufacture of crafts such as baskets, hats, and leather products. It was also during the same time that roofs of houses were repaired and new ones were built.

21C.C.N.T., Tamale, 2 April, 1908 to Hon. Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra. It was estimated that the income of the ferry was between £700 and £800 annually while £500 compensation might be acceptable to the chief. Ibid.
from the German and French areas into the Protectorate. The open nature of the country facilitated the evasion of taxes by traders who knew the country well, and who could either avoid the custom posts or travel by night. A report of 1908 mentioned among other things that German goods were replacing British manufactures in the interior. The report attributed that to the cheap transportation German traders enjoyed because of the extension of the railway to Kpalime which was on the same latitude with Kumasi. Consequently, goods at the latter cost three times more. To stop the smuggling activities of traders, an Ordinance was passed in 1906, which imposed a duty of ten per cent on all goods entering the Protectorate. In addition, chiefs who gave information that led to the arrest of smugglers and the seizure of their goods, were rewarded with one half of the confiscated goods. Also, to advertise the products of the Protectorate, her products of groundnut, guinea corn, shea butter, millet and "European" vegetables were displayed at national Agricultural Shows. Cattle fairs were also held and prizes were awarded to encourage the farmers to take better care of their livestock.

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22 C.C.N.T., Tamale, 2 April, 1908 to Hon. Col. Sec., ADM.56/1/7; NAG, Accra.

31 Comptroller of Customs, Victoriaborg, Accra, 31 October, 1911, to Acting C.C.N.T., Tamale. ADM.56/1/131. Efforts were also to be made to arrest people trying to purchase goods smuggled in from Togo. Traders were told that they would be arrested if they were caught introducing goods from Togo without receipts. See Handing Over, Southern Province, March 1909. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra.

24 See Annual Reports of 1907, 1911, 1918.
After integrating the economy of the Protectorate into the rest of the country through certain fiscal policies, one would have thought that the economic potentialities of the area would be tapped. But this was not done because it was the policy of the administration to subordinate the interests of the Northern Territories to those of the rest of the country. The Protectorate was also to be turned into a labour pool for the mines, railway and road construction and cocoa farms. Expenditure in the area was reduced. This became clear as early as 1899 when Frederick Hodgson, the Governor, declared:

as the trade value of the Northern Territories are not favourable as to their future, and lead me to the opinion that they possess no mineral wealth, it is destitute of timbers, and does not produce either rubber or kola nuts or indeed any product of trade value, ... I would not at present spend on the Northern territories a single penny more than is absolutely necessary. 25

A year later, the West African Section of the London Chamber of Commerce which had influenced the occupation of the Protectorate, expressed the view that the area was commercially unimportant. It suggested that expenditure in the area should be confined "to the smallest amount consistent with the maintenance of our rights until their value is more fully ascertained." 26 Because of these views "the opening up" of the area was delayed. The construction of roads was left to the individual District Officers


who relied on free labour. And as will seen later, the economic potential of the area was not tapped, educational advancement was delayed and few social services were provided. Even the abolition of the caravan tax was to serve the interests of the Colony and Asante since goods from the North were exempted from tax.\textsuperscript{27} The Northern Territories stagnated economically because few heads of technical departments knew the country and its requirements.

However, occasionally a few officers both in London and in Accra showed a keen interest in the economic advancement of the north. For example, in 1912, Lewis Harcourt, the Secretary of State for the Colonies showed an unusual interest in the Protectorate and directed the new Governor Hugh Clifford to give special attention to their development. The Governor subsequently observed that:

\begin{quote}
the development depends on the provision of transport but most of the developed districts of the Colony and Asante were still without adequate means of transport. The trade between the Northern Territories and the Colony and Asante was not sufficient to justify large expenditure on the former.\textsuperscript{28}
\end{quote}

Also, as the people did not offer any strong challenge to the colonial regime, it was felt there was no need to maintain a large and expensive administration. The Governor even considered the presence of nine doctors serving the few European officers a waste of money.\textsuperscript{29} The effect of limiting government expenditure in the Protectorate was the extensive use of unpaid labour for the

\textsuperscript{27}\textit{Remarks by Governor Sir Hugh Clifford to the Legislative Council. Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1918, p.3.}

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Gold Coast Conference, 9 April, 1914. ADM.12/3/19}

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid.}
construction of roads, rest houses and government bungalows. When labour was to be paid for, as was the case with carriers, the wages in the North were less than half of those in Asante and the Colony. The Northern Territories continued to be regarded as a poor land the development of which would not repay investment immediately. The lack of development of the Protectorate confirmed the prophetic statement of Lord Selbourne who remarked that:

if the Northern Territories are simply tacked on to the Gold Coast, good bye to all chances of development. No Government will ever go near them and not a sixpence will be devoted to their development except by the direct orders of the Secretary of State.  

Evidence does not however support the contention that the Northern Territories were a drag on the economy of the Colony and Asante. Most of the wealth of the country was created by the large number of labourers from the Northern Territories who went down to work in the cocoa and mining industries. In his annual report, Hugh Clifford, who once said he did not see the economic importance of the Northern Territories, remarked:

it is commonly, but quite erroneously, imagined by some residents in the Colony that the possession of the Northern Territories imposes a burden upon the Gold Coast for which it makes no adequate return. Those who are disposed to this view base their judgement of such matters upon the narrow and imperfect foundation of the financial balance sheet.

According to him, the caravan toll, the greatest revenue earner in

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30Bening (1975), p.66.

31For the creation of wealth for the nation by workers from the Northern Territories see 6.2 and 6.3.

32Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1918. ADM.5/1/26; NAG, Accra.
the Protectorate was consciously abolished in the interests of Asante and the Colony. The Governor further pointed out that the entire country depended on the Protectorate for their meat supply. Hugh Clifford also said that the Dependency provided the country with man-power, including ninety per cent of the rank and file of the Gold Coast Regiment. Gordon Guggisberg, his successor, put it bluntly:

the Northern Territories have, for so many years been deprived of sufficient funds to help them (Colony and Asante) along in that great progress which we expect them.

He concluded:

the career of the North as the Cinderella of the Gold Coast is nearing its end; as Cinderella she has done good and unobstructive work. Her reward for that and the gallantry of her soldiers is in sight.

Guggisberg recognised the economic potential of the Protectorate and was prepared to develop it. He remarked when he assumed office:

I have absolute evidence that the country is extremely rich ground for the development of huge trade in both groundnut and shea butter. It is also a fine country for rice in the Volta flats, a commodity badly needed here and of which, with a railway, we could export large quantities. I am doubtful if the agricultural poverty of the country was a reason for the desire to postpone the railway. Rather was it due to the policy which has openly obtained.... of starving the Northern territories of the

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31 Ibid.


35 Ibid.
means of development: that time is now past.\textsuperscript{36}

However, these high hopes of initiating developments in the Northern Territories quickly evaporated when the British Government refused to sanction construction of a railway due to the uncertainty of its economic viability. The failure to develop the Northern Territories was evident when two years after the departure of Guggisberg, Major-General W.H. Grey informed Sir Ransford Slater, the new Governor, that what struck him:

more than anything else with the exception of the motor roads, rest houses and Government quarters, was the impression that the state of the country and the condition of the people were very much the same as in 1904.\textsuperscript{37}

The Northern Territories would not have been the "Cinderella" of the country if efforts had been made to tap her economic potentials. Soon after his appointment as Commandant and Chief Commissioner in 1897, Northcott, asked experts to investigate the natural resources of the area. They reported that tobacco, indigo and cotton could, with some care, be cultivated on a commercial scale. He tried wheat and oats but the seeds arrived too late for any meaningful results to be obtained.\textsuperscript{38} Important sources of wealth in the area included and still include livestock, rice cultivation, cotton, shea nut, tobacco and groundnut. Balstone, the acting Inspector of Customs, analysing the economic potentialities

\footnote{\textsuperscript{36}Gold Coast Conference, 30 November, 1919, pp.15-16. ADM.12/3/32; NAG, Accra.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{37}Major-General W.H.Grey to Ransford Slater, 9 October, 1929. ADM.1/181; NAGT.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{38}Bening (1977), p.61.}

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of the Protectorate, suggested that cattle raising and rice cultivation should be the number one priority of the area. He noted that there were excellent grazing grounds all over the Protectorate but especially around Salaga and suggested that the government should give grants in aid to assist local chiefs to purchase herds of cattle. He believed that with a European Inspector offering technical advice, cattle could be exported. Apart from Balstone's comments, the presence of cattle as well as climate and environment conducive to cattle raising has been well documented. The quality of their meat, breed, hardiness, docility, immunity from tse-tse sickness and good feeding habits were attested to by agricultural officer Chas Saunders. In spite of these observations, no positive action was taken with regard to that industry. Beal, principal veterinary officer of the region remarked that no action had been taken on cattle raising since 1907 because "there are too many people consulted and allowed to put their fingers in the pie." He further stated that cattle breeding in the Protectorate was better than some areas in Argentina, India and South Africa. Surprisingly, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, the Governor turned down the recommendations made by Beal because he was "unimpressed by the report."

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39 See ADM.56/1/64 and ADM.56/1/108; NAG, Accra.

40 Chas Saunders, Agricultural Officer, Tamale, 16 October, 1912 to the C.C.N.T., Tamale. ADM.56/1/64; NAG, Accra.

41 Principal Veterinary Officer, Tamale, 21 September, 1920 to the Governor through the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/262; NAG, Accra.

42 Ibid.
Balstone also mentioned that rice cultivated in the Northern Territories could compete favourably with rice produced in Rangoon for the Gold Coast trade. He believed that with good rice fields around Mankongo, Grubi, Sabongyida (Jambuai) and Padjai rice cultivation could be greatly improved if ready markets were available.

Another untapped resource was hides and skins. J.L. Stewart, a Veterinary Officer, suggested that with proper care, hides and skin, could be a major income earner for the Gold Coast. But this was not carried out. So also was cotton cultivation. Cotton was a natural resource in the Northern Territories before Britain acquired the region. It was extensively cultivated and was used in the manufacture of local cloth which was sold in the south. In 1904, Lieutenant Colonel Morris, the Chief Commissioner for the

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43A. Balstone, Tariassu Station, 26 June, 1911 to Comptroller of Customs, Accra. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra. Every year, huge numbers of cattle from the Northern Territories and French countries entered Asante and the Colony. See all the annual reports. The trade in cattle became so lucrative that some Syrians entered the business and were said to be pushing out the indigenous people. See Annual Reports for 1922-1927.

44Ibid. The Chief Commissioner, Major Morris agreed with him that rice cultivated in the Northern Territories compared favourably with Rangoon rice provided there was cheap river transport. C.C.N.T., Tamale, 16 September, 1911 to the Hon. Acting Col., Accra. ADM.56/1/131; NAG, Accra.

45J.L. Stewart, Veterinary Officer, Hints for Improvement of Hides and Skins (n.d.), ADM.56/1/273; NAG, Accra. Indeed in 1926, 258,323 lbs of untanned cattle skin was exported from the Northern Territories. See W.P. Beal, Principal Veterinary Officer, Tamale, 2 February 1927 through the C.C.N.T., to Acting Col. Sec., Victoriaborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/273; NAG, Accra.

46See all documents in ADM.56/1/24; NAG, Accra. See also Kimble op cit. p.11; Levtzion (1966); Iliasu (1971).
Northern Territories, reported that from a commercial point of view, cotton was the most important product in the Protectorate. He mentioned that it was widely grown in Dagbon and if there was a demand for it, the people would rise to the occasion and meet it as "they are always ready to adapt themselves to any new means of making money which gives a quick return." He believed that three conditions were necessary to encourage its cultivation on a large scale. These were: 1) the establishment of buying centres at Daboya, Yendi, Salaga or Yeji; 2) informing all chiefs that all cotton they produced would be purchased and; 3) the staking of a minimum price at which it would be bought. He was still optimistic a year later that cotton growing could be remunerative if a guaranteed price could be fixed. The Governor however stated that in view of the expenditure which had been incurred on the experimental cotton farms at Anum and Labolabo, he could not give any financial assistance to the suggested scheme. The British Cotton Growers Association entered the region in 1906 to promote the cultivation of cotton. Its research officers undertook surveys in the region, distributed cotton seeds and established cotton farms in 18 villages. It erected a permanent building in Tamale and a ginnery and press to handle any quantity likely to be purchased.

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47 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1904. ADM.5/1/13; NAG, Accra.

48 Ibid.

49 Acting Governor Bryan, Government House, 26 June 1905 to Mr. Lyttelton. ADM.56/1/113; NAG, Accra.

50 Hereafter B.C.G.A.
and also fixed the minimum price of cotton. One bale of cotton was purchased in 1909 and exports of cotton increased gradually until 1916, when 27,882 lbs were purchased. Nine years after the entry of the B.C.G.A into the Dependency, it was reported that cotton cultivated had increased by thirty per cent.

The B.C.G.A., however soon faced the problem of transporting the cotton to the coast. At the same time, the Colonial Office withdrew its grant-in-aid to the cotton project in the Protectorate. But the major problem that led to the termination of the project was labour. The administration felt that lucrative enterprises existed in the Colony and Asante which needed labour from the Northern Territories. Cotton was vying with these projects for labour. In May 1909, a letter from the Prime Minister's Office was addressed to Sir Arthur Hutton, Chairman of B.C.G.A. In it the views of the Governor were quoted as "having considered the unprofitability of cotton growing being developed on a large scale in the North." This was so because of "the presence of more lucrative agricultural industries, such as the production of cocoa and palm oil" and especially more so as those interested in the planting of cotton have also to contend in the colony with the labour competition of the mines. When attempts were made to

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51 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1911. ADM.5/1/20; NAG, Accra.

52 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1915. ADM.5/1/24; NAG, Accra.

53 10 Downing Street, 11 May, 1900 to Chairman, B.C.G.A. ADM.56/1/78; NAG, Accra.

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revive the scheme in the 1920s, it faced the same problems.

Shea nut cultivation was another potential crop that was not developed. Shea nuts, like cotton, were part of the southern transit trade but, unlike the latter, and like palm oil, its extraction and preparation was an entirely female job. Also, like cotton, shea nut trees grew and still grow wildly all over the Protectorate. Again like cotton, the Colonial administration became interested in its production. The administration commissioned N. C. McLeod, the Conservator of Forests to investigate its economic potentialities. He reported that 257,200 tons of shea butter could be produced in a year and that the potential wealth of the Dependency from it was very great. He further remarked that any industry or firm which went into the exploitation of shea nut would amply be rewarded. The Conservator added that the provision of cheap transport, possibly mechanical, which would not make any great demand on wood as fuel will make the enterprise more profitable since:

the native of the Northern Territories is an extraordinary industrious person, who, notwithstanding the cheap and plentiful crops he raises of yams, groundnut, corn etc., has plenty of time hanging heavily on his hands which he would only be too willingly (sic) to fill in undertaking any work which would make it worth his while.55

Before he undertook the research McLeod had advised that model farms of ten acres each should be established in every District.

54 N. C. McLeod, Conservator of Forests on the shea butter areas of the Northern Territories; Kumasi, 22 May 1922. ADM.56/1/158; NAG, Accra.

55 Ibid.
One half of the plot should be prevented from being burnt by the annual bush fires and a comparison should be made at the end of the harvest.\textsuperscript{56} Based on McLeod's suggestions, each District Commissioner was instructed to make a ten acre shea nut farm and experimental farms were established at Yendi, Kulupe, Jimle and Savelugu.\textsuperscript{57}

Apparently because of the encouragement the administration gave to shea nut production, foreign expatriate firms expressed an interest in it. They asked for concessions from London to introduce "modern" techniques into the industry by putting up factories for its extraction. Among them were John Walkden & Company, African Merchants, W. Bartholomew and Company and Millers of Kumasi.\textsuperscript{58} Indeed, Millers bought 60 tons of shea nuts in Tamale between April and June 1923. The agent reported that although the amount purchased was small, the London buyers were impressed with the quality which had ten per cent more oil than shea nuts purchased in other countries.\textsuperscript{59} However, they were all discouraged by the

\textsuperscript{56}N.C. McLeod, Tamale, 27 February, 1922 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/158; NAG, Accra. I have not come across the results of the experiment. This is unfortunate because it is still a common belief, among the people of Northern Ghana that shea nut trees that have been affected by bush fires produce (without scientific proof) more fruits than their counterparts.

\textsuperscript{57}Government's Memo on shea nut Experiments in the Northern Territories, 3 May, 1922. ADM.56/1/158; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{58}See the numerous letters exchanged between them and the Secretary of State between November and December, 1923 in ADM.56/1/152; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{59}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the period April 1926 to March 1927, p.7
lack of an adequate transport system and the reluctance of the administration to provide it. This confirms Balstone’s remarks in 1911 to the Governor that:

I do not think that any form of commercial cultivation can be attempted with success until a proper system of transportation is introduced.\(^{60}\)

The shea nut industry, like that of cotton remained at the subsistence level producing only for the internal market. It is thus clear that the reluctance of government to provide good transport stifled both the cotton and shea nut industries. The Protectorate became the "Cinderella" of the country because of the failure of the Colonial regime to develop its economic potential. This failure stems from the policy of turning the Protectorate into a source of unskilled labour for the rest of the country. W.J.A. Jones, Chief Commissioner, realising this noted:

the Northern Territories was regarded in the light of an unwanted, inconvenient poor relation to whom, for fear of public criticism, some occasional assistance must be given. In the matter of staff and funds, the requirements of the other parts of the Gold Coast were met before the claims of the Protectorate even received consideration.\(^{61}\)

6.2. **LABOUR RECRUITMENT.**

Every man of the Northern Territories is worth his weight in gold...for the mines, for private enterprise and for development of those schemes the completion of which are

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\(^{60}\)A. Balstone, Tariassu Station, 26 June 1911 to the Governor, Accra. ADM.56/1/131, NAG, Accra.

\(^{61}\)W.J.A. Jones: Memorandum on Agriculture in the Northern Territories. ADM.1/295; NAGT.
necessary to secure progress and development.  

Before the intrusion of colonial rule, free labour was always mobilised for farm work, erection of new buildings and repairs of old ones. People worked as members of households or lineages. Sometimes, labour was also obtained from sons-in-law. Most often, the landlord's only responsibility was to provide meals and alcohol for the participants in the course of the work. During the farming season, work was always done according to seniority, beginning with the farm of either the lineage or clan head. However, in chiefly societies, the chief's farm was worked first before individuals could work theirs. Refusal to work for the chief was regarded as rebellion and the offender could be banished from the area under the chief's jurisdiction. Although paid wage labour undermined the communal system of work, it did not supplant it completely.

With the occupation of the Northern Territories and particularly, the opening of stations, men were recruited for the Gold Coast Regiment of the West African Frontier Force. Labour was needed for building stations, road construction and as carriers. Before the Northern Territories were occupied, Britain recruited soldiers and bought slaves from Salaga for a regiment called the

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62Speech by Sir Gordon Guggisberg on Political Service Re-organisation, June 1920. p.13

63The alcoholic beverage was most often "pito", a local beer, brewed from guinea corn. The "pito" was usually drunk near the place of work to avoid intruders.
Hausa Constabulary. When the wars of “pacification” were over, soldiers were recruited among the Gonjas, Dagomba, Grunshis and Mossi for the Gold Coast Regiment. Their services were highly regarded as a report noted:

I am of the opinion that this ‘hinterland’ is a most valuable field for recruiting, the men are of excellent material, most amenable to discipline, and extremely desirous of learning their work.

We pointed out in the preceding section that little effort was made to develop the economic resources of the Northern Territories. We also pointed out that the maintenance tax was abolished in 1901 and was replaced by free labour. Even after compulsory labour and official recruitment were banned in 1927, the major contribution of the Northern Territories to the economic development of the country was manpower. The administration in the North relied on free labour for porterage and road construction. By law every male adult was to do six days’ work per quarter on the roads and could be commandeered for carrier service. Writing on the effects of compulsory labour on agriculture in the Northern Territories, Balstone noted:

Under the present system, the whole burden of transport falls upon the local natives. In other words, it falls entirely on the agricultural class and there is no closed season when they can depend upon being allowed to work on

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"See Governor Ussher’s Despatches to Secretary of State of 18 July, 1879, 29 July, 1897 and 31 May, 1880. ADM.1/469, NAGT. and acc.no SAL/54/1 in Johnson

Hodgson to Stewart, 10 February 1897 in Metcalfe, op cit. p.494.

Northern Territories Report for 1901, p.6. In that year, sixty nine men were recruited for the Gold Coast Regiment. Ibid."
their farms without the fear of being commandeered for transport work. In my opinion this is definitely evil and I do not think any form of commercial cultivation can be attempted with success until a proper system of transport is introduced.\textsuperscript{67}

Political officers obtained compulsory labour through chiefs. For example, when the Lawra station was opened in 1906, the Chief Commissioner wrote:

the site having been selected, the buildings should be erected by the station carriers and carpenters assisted by local free labour to be supplied by the chiefs who should be informed that they would, on completion of the work, be given presents in proportion to the amount of labour they supplied.\textsuperscript{68}

Also, in 1907 when it was decided to build the headquarters in Tamale, each chief was asked to provide a number of workers every month. Free labour was used for a year to build the new headquarters before the workers were given a shilling a week; this was later increased to 3d a day.\textsuperscript{69} Tamale was divided into ten sections under headmen who were to provide carriers and labourers for work on the roads and in the station. Indeed, every headman was required to send a man daily to work in the government section of the town while Africans from the coast, Asantes and traders paid

\textsuperscript{67}A. Balstone, Acting Inspector of Customs, Tariassu Station, 26 June 1911 to Comptroller of Customs, Accra. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{68}Acting C.C.N.T., Gambaga, 30 December, 1906 to Commissioner, North-Western District, Wa: Opening of the New Station at Wa. ADM.56/1/4; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{69}C.S.P., Tamale, 6 March, 1915 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/80; NAG, Accra.
ten shillings a year to the chief to be exempted from work. The use of unpaid labour could not go on for ever. From a modest beginning in 1909, when labourers were paid 3d a day within the region, the amount rose to 9d per day in 1914. The increase in the cost of labour led Longhurst, acting Director of the Public Works Department, to complain that if the labour market was not controlled it would be impossible to hire labour. One reason for the increased cost of labour was that many young men were leaving to work in the south because food was said to be cheaper and labour was better paid. This compelled the Chief Commissioner to issue a memorandum to all Political Officers on the need to control the price of labour. Labour cost in the Dependency continued to rise in spite of efforts to control it.

Until the introduction of vehicular traffic in the mid 1920s, human porterage was the major system of transportation in the

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70Handing over Report, Southern Province, March 1909. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra.

71F.H. Longhurst, Acting Director, Public Works Department, Victoriaborg, Accra to Hon. Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/188; NAG, Accra.

72C.C.N.T., Tamale, 22 February, 1915 to all Political Officers. ADM.56/1/188; NAG, Accra. The replies to this memo are very interesting. For example, the Acting C.N.E.P. said that wage labour would continue to rise so long as there were better prospects elsewhere. He went on to say that the people in his province showed so little enthusiasm to work as paid labourers that it was doubtful even if an offer of 1s a day would attract them to work for wages. Acting C.N.E.P., 21 March 1915 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/188; NAG, Accra. The Commissioner for the Southern Province wrote that the people of Salaga were prepared to accept 6d a day if they could return home every day. See C.S.P., 6 March, 1915 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/188; NAG, Accra.
region, particularly during the rainy season.\textsuperscript{73} Because of the long distance from the coast, Northcott suggested that light motor cars should be introduced to run between the north and the south. He also suggested the use of bicycles for inter-district communication. The Colonial Office supported Northcott’s views and asked that the Governor start construction of a road for this purpose.\textsuperscript{74} Governor Hodgson did not give his support to the project pointing out that although motor transport had increased in efficiency they still had their problems and he would therefore not try them. He also said that it was premature to introduce bicycles in the Northern Territories.\textsuperscript{75} With the turning down of this project, human porterage continued to be the chief means of transport for goods and officials within and without the Protectorate. Unlike the other forms of labour, the carriers were paid right from the beginning because they travelled away from home. Chiefs who provided carriers were paid a penny for each labourer they provided.\textsuperscript{76} However, no one person became a carrier twice in the same year. Porterage was the most preferred labour particularly, during the slack season. The District Commissioner

\textsuperscript{73}Northern Ghana lies in the Savanna zone and therefore has only two seasons, viz. rainy season (May to October) and dry season (November to April).

\textsuperscript{74}Enc.3 in No.180 pp. 321-322., African (West) No.855, H.P.Northcott to C.O. in Iliasu Papers.

\textsuperscript{75}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{76}They were paid six pence per diem when carrying load and three pence without load. Handing Over Southern Province, 14 April, 1919. ADM.56/1/92; NAG, Accra.

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for Gambaga for example remarked:

In the dry season, after the crops have been gathered, the people do not mind going to Kumasi for loads, as they buy cloth there very much cheaper than they can provide here. It is therefore a good plan to pay them the largest part of their money before they leave Gambaga.77

In spite of its relative cheapness, carrier service had its disadvantages because of the long distances involved. For example, a report of 1908 noted:

...with constant walking for a twelve month averaging 400 miles a month, the work this year having been rather harder than usual, a large number of carriers have been incapacitated from sore feet, the metalling of new roads making matters worse. In one gang the majority had soles almost completely worn through, to say nothing of cracks. The experiment was then tried of tarring the carriers' feet. Coal tar is most suitable. It fills the cracks and is good antiseptic, besides affording some protection if applied thick. These results have proved good and many carriers are now able to keep to the road who would otherwise have to lie up.78

Had the recruitment of labour been restricted to carrier service alone, the policy of turning the Northern Territories into labour pool would have ended with the introduction of vehicular transport. Recruitment of labour for the mines and railway lasted longer. People from the Northern Territories visited the "south" before intensive gold mining and cocoa farming on a large scale began. But they did not go as labourers. Kimble notes that "they came as far as Accra as traders to sell shea butter, leather goods, local cloth and livestock", commodities that had been manufactured

77Handing Over Report, Gambaga District, 24 October, 1911. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra.

78Transport Department Report of 1908
during the so-called season of slackness and underemployment.¹⁷⁹ Labour shortages started when deep mining began in the latter part of the 19th century. The labour shortage was a reflection of the unwillingness of the coastal, eastern and Asante people to work underground in the mines. These tasks had been performed by immigrants from neighbouring countries such as Liberia and Nigeria but was reduced due to the development of rubber plantations in Liberia.¹⁸⁰

The mines began to experience serious labour pressure at the beginning of the century. In 1905 they made their first move to the Northern Territories when they requested labour from Watherston, the Chief Commissioner. Watherston asked for certain guarantees, since, according to him, the chiefs did not want their young men to leave, particularly in the farming season.¹⁸¹ Among them were: 1) men from the same village should work in the same mine; 2) they should be able communicate with their chiefs always and; 3) a Political Officer should escort them as far as Kumasi.¹⁸² Nevertheless, the Chief Commissioner launched what Kimble calls the "labour crusade" in 1906.¹⁸³ He issued a circular to all officers which was to be the model speech in their campaign for labour. In

¹⁷⁹Kimble op cit. p.11; Levtzion (1966);
¹⁸¹C.C.N.T. to Secretary for Mines, 8 November, 1905. ADM.56/1/3; NAG, Accra.
¹⁸²Ibid.
¹⁸³Kimble op cit. p.41.
it, Africans were to be told that in the "white man's country all men work and only old men sit down" and that young men should go to work in the south to make money, purchase cattle and become rich.\textsuperscript{84} To make mine work attractive, specially selected intelligent men - many of them were said to have never left their villages before - from the Protectorate, were taken by an Officer on a trip to the mining district. They were shown the work, method of living, rates of pay and general treatment.\textsuperscript{85} This approach seemed to have been successful for shortly after their return, a gang proceeded to Abbontiakrom Mines, and many others were ready to follow when there was an outbreak of cerebro spinal meningitis.\textsuperscript{86}

Apparently, the mines' management approached the administration in the Protectorate again for labour because another circular was issued in 1907. In the second circular, District Commissioners were enjoined to stress to the young men the need to go and work to earn money to buy clothes and other necessities. It even went further to assert that any good man in the village who could get a gang together should take them to the District

\textsuperscript{84}Circular of 13 June 1906. ADM.56/1/4; NAG, Accra. Watherston imagined that if a gang of 25 men managed to save £10 each in a year, £250 would have been realised which could purchase 200 cattle. He however advised that no compulsion should be used in the recruitment drive but the "chiefs should understand that we want their boys to go so that they can make money." \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{85}Annual report on the Northern Territories for 1906. ADM.5/1/15; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{86}\textit{Ibid.} Periodically, the outbreak of that epidemic still occurs usually between February and April even in these modern times.
Commissioner who would give him a "paper" to be taken to the Inspector of Mines. The volunteers were to be given time to make their houses and farms, and could also take their wives with them. Some form of coercion was used because the people were to be reminded of the outbreak of the epidemic (possibly, cerebro spinal meningitis) that caused much harm during the last two years. They were to be told that it might return and that the young men should leave their country temporarily so that the epidemic could be stamped out. The outbreak of the epidemic seemed to have given the Chief Commissioner the idea that chiefs should be given some incentives to recruit labourers. Writing to the Colonial Secretary, Watherston suggested that "head money" of 5s per head should be paid to chiefs who supplied a gang. He believed the money would influence them to persuade the young men to go down to work in the mines.

Some of the District Commissioners were only too willing to coerce the young men to volunteer. For example, the District Commissioner for Tumu recorded:

I found the whole men of Tumu to comprise twenty three, half which (sic) were of the "sitting variety". Threatened to fine all Tumu headmen 20s and Bawa [the chief] 40s, if 150 men were not present at 3 pm. At 3 pm,

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87Circular of 12 June, 1907; ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.

88Ibid.

89C.C.N.T., Gambaga to Col. Sec., 3 September 1907; ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. Watherston further suggested that each recruit should be given 10s for the journey. He still believed that the departure of the young men would help "stamp out the epidemic of cerebro spinal meningitis." Ibid.
there were only 44, so I fined them."

When the area around Tumu was combed, 160 men were produced and the fines were refunded. E.O. Warden, the District Commissioner for Navrongo who was a strong believer in young men going to work in the mines wrote:

I think it is to the advantage of the people themselves that they be kept at work of some kind from the months of November to April, otherwise, they do nothing but drink, dance and get into mischief.

By mid-1908, there was a major labour shortage because of the construction of the Tarkwa to Prestea and Accra to Kumasi rail lines. Political officers immediately went to work recruiting labour. The first group ever to be recruited from the north-east was 540 strong but 200 deserted before they reached Tamale. Only 258 reached Tarkwa. By the end of July all had fled. The Chief Commissioner interviewed the deserters at Obuasi and claimed that they had not fled because of ill-treatment:

but on account of the rains, the food which differed from their usual food, and to which they could not get accustomed, and that they were frightened by the death of some of their party from pneumonia.

However, some of them had been badly treated. For example, Basomah, interviewed by the acting District Commissioner of Tarkwa said:

the white man who gives us chop and sissy money put some men for ground and flogged them. He flogged one man six

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91 Handing Over Report of the Navarro (Navrongo) District by E.O. Warden, 1 May, 1912. ADM.56/1/61; NAG, Accra.

92 C.C.N.T to Acting Col. Sec., 2 December, 1909.
strokes with shambok a man called Bugheeg. People held him down. The next two men came from Yarba, near Gambaga. I don't know their names I can point them out. They were held down on the ground and had six with the shambok each. The next man had twelve lashes with the shambok but was not held down. He ran away that night. It was the same man who flogged them all.  

Similarly, 163 men, a majority of the second group either deserted or refused to work underground on arrival. Thomas has pointed out that most of the people recruited from the North-Eastern Province deserted and contrasts it with the "generally satisfactory behaviour of labour recruited from the north-west." He attributes this to two factors, namely, that people from the north-west had been to the mines in 1907 and 1908 and, secondly, to the nature of recruitment. This does not fully explain the differences. The difference stems from the fact that farming activities in the north-west are more vigorous and energy sapping than those in the north-east. Besides the cultivation of cereals which is common to the two, those from north-west cultivate yams which involves much digging as mining. Another explanation lies in the fear the people of the north-east had for Asantes. As the biggest slave trading nation before abolition, Asante often raided the north-east for slaves. This made the people of the north east, particularly the "Grunshis", dread Asantes. A report by the

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93Statement of Basomah No. 6909, in Acting D.C. Tarkwa to Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, 18 June 1909. Sissy is a corruption of "subsistence."


95Thomas (1973), p.82.
Commissioner for the North-Eastern Province explaining his inability to meet his quota of work men noted "our people have an all-consuming dread going to work, particularly if it entails passing through Coomassie". Due to these desertions and the need to increase production, it was reported in the middle of 1909 that there was an "acute" labour shortage in the Gold Coast. The Mining Companies therefore appealed to the government for assistance. Giles Hunt, their solicitor, suggested that the solution lay in either getting more labour from the Northern Territories or importing them from the "Eastern part of the world." Hunt further suggested that laws similar to those in Witswatersrand to control labour and the formation of a Native Labour Association charged solely with the recruitment, supervision and discipline of labour. A meeting of the Acting Governor, the Attorney General, the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories and Hunt which considered the latter's suggestions arrived at the following decisions: 1) that a Labour Bureau through which all future recruitment of unskilled labour would be done should be established; 2) chiefs be paid "headmoney" per man; 3) that labourers be given a minimum daily wage of 1s 3d and subsistence money enroute to the mining districts; 4) that the workers should

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96 C.N.E.P., Gambaga, 28 November, 1910 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/66; NAG, Accra.

97 Six thousand labourers were employed on public works, including 4,500 on the railway construction, while the mines were employing an average daily force of 15,000. Departmental Annual Report for 1909; p.40.

98 Giles Hunt to Col. Sec., 30 May, 1909 in Iliasu Papers.
be housed in zongos supervised by European zongo Managers who would have the powers to punish them by fines and, if possible, by imprisonment; 5) that payment of wages over 6d be delayed and; 6) that labour be contracted for twelve months. The Governor rejected these recommendations on the grounds that the government should have control over Native Labour if it was to have monopoly over recruitment. He was unwilling to give punitive powers to the European managers in view of the flogging previously reported. Governor Rodger noted also that he felt the existing regulations were adequate if the mines wanted labour to contract for a year. In his views people deserted because they were not accompanied by their wives, they were unfamiliar with the food and were forced to work underground.

The Governor then requested reports from the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories and Secretary for the Mines. The Chief Commissioner stressed the need for the establishment of a Labour Bureau to which all mining companies should register for labour, the payment of 5s as "headmoney" for chiefs who supplied labour and a staggered payment of the workers. He further suggested that the labourers should be paid not less than 3d but not more than 6d per diem and that they be given two

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100Governor Rodger to Lord Crewe, 30 October, 1909, PRO CO 96/486 in Iliasu Papers. See also Col. Sec., to Hon. Giles Hunt, Sekondi, ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.
fifths of the balance at the end of the contract. The rest should be paid to the Commissioner of their Province to keep in trust for them. With these conditions in mind, the Chief Commissioner, the Secretary for the Mines and the Transport Officer presented a new scheme for recruiting labour. In it, they suggested that District Commissioners should not be involved in any future recruitment; this was to be the sole responsibility of the mining companies. Two possible explanations for these suggestions are that, it was to prevent chiefs courting the favour of the officers by forcing their young men to "volunteer" for service in the mines, and secondly, that it was to prevent strained relations between the Commissioners and the chiefs over deaths in the mines, poor wages and the refusal of some of the recruits to return home after the expiry of their contracts. Any company that required labour was to send an agent to the north, who, if possible, should be the head of the gang. The agents were to be given a "paper" to present to the District Commissioner stating that they had been authorised to collect labour. On completion of recruiting, the agent was to bring the labourers to the District Commissioner who would explain the terms of their contract to them. The Committee further suggested that all recruits were to be medically examined and vaccinated before departure, and further medical examinations should be

101Draft Rules by the C.C.N.T: Mine Labour, (undated) ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. Although all of the suggestions were not implemented, they resemble in detail laws in Southern Africa which control labour in the mines. See Ruth First, Black Gold, The Mozambican Mines, Proletarians and Peasants. (Sussex, Harvester Press, 1983).
conducted at various stages of the journey to the mines.\textsuperscript{102}

None of these suggestions was of immediate relevance to mine managers who were only interested in disciplined labour. However, the desire to have labour that would contract for a long period of time also went counter to the aim of officials in the Northern Territories. They wanted labourers to move to and from the mines "since it would bring money to the North and encourage trade." To this end, a number of stores were opened in most of the district headquarters. To partially satisfy mining interests, in 1912, a compromise amendment to the Master and Servant Ordinance was passed. The amended Ordinance increased the powers of the courts when dealing with breach of contracts, but did not change the procedure involved. Also, contracts were limited to a year and rules on medical examination and sanitary inspection were strengthened.\textsuperscript{103}

New developments between 1916-1919 intensified the need for recruits. The first was the discovery of manganese at Aboaso in 1916. The second was the increase in cocoa production. The third

\textsuperscript{102}Kumasi, 17 January 1910. Signed; Acting C.C.N.T, Secretary of Mines and Transport Officer. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. Other suggestions were that before the arrival of the recruits, unfenced houses similar to those they were used to should be provided. Lastly they stressed the necessity of governmental supervision in the whole exercise. \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{103}Ordinance No. 1 of the Gold Coast, 1912. In spite of this, the management of the mines were not satisfied. They pointed out that while under the new amendment, the Governor was granted powers to make rules "for the return of servants deserting from the service of their employers" no such rules had been framed for the mines. To them this made the amendment useless. See West African Chamber of Mines to C.O., 14 August 1912 in Iliasu Papers.
factor was the First World War and the need for soldiers. The discovery of manganese was of the most interest to the government because it was used to make weapons. Since manganese was important to the war effort, political officers were instructed to propagandize among the chiefs. The Chief Commissioner, in response to a letter from the Governor, wrote to the District Officers as follows:

Sir Hugh Clifford has written to tell me that very valuable extensive deposits of manganese ore has been discovered by Mr. Kitson at a spot close to the Tarkwa-Sekondi Railway. Manganese is used as an alloy for the purpose of hardening steel and it is in great demand for munitions purposes just now. Will you please appeal to the chiefs in my name and tell them that it is an opportunity, such as may not occur again to demonstrate in practical manner their loyalty to the British Government... and tell them they and their people should look upon it as a privilege to help in this matter and so feel that they have contributed in some measure towards the aims we have in view... the crushing of Prussian Militarism and the preservation of the world... let me know as soon as possible the number of labourers that you will be able to recruit in your province.

A good response came from the Dagomba chiefs, for whom the defeat

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105 C.C.N.T. to C.N.E.P., C.N.W.P. and the District Political Officer, Yendi, 29 July, 1916. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.
of Germany would mean the reunification of their kingdom.\textsuperscript{106} In December 1916, the mines requested a further 200 men, describing the Dagombas as the best workers they had.\textsuperscript{107} This recruitment generated a conflict between the mines and the government. The West African Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Colonial Office in relation to the shortage of labour which it attributed to government recruiting.\textsuperscript{108}

The period 1919 to 1924 saw one of the most intensive drives for labour in the Northern Territories. Three reasons account for this. First, in 1919, Gordon Guggisberg, the new Governor, launched his Ten Year Development Plan which involved many public works such as the construction of roads and railways and the building of the Takoradi Harbour and Achimota School.\textsuperscript{109} Secondly, there was an increase in cocoa production. Lastly, there was the influenza

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{106}291 men were supplied by the chiefs of Karaga, Savelugu, Gushiego, Yendi and Sunson. See C.C.N.T. to Ford, Abbontiakrom Mine, 2 September, 1916, and C.C.N.T. to Col. Sec., 7 September 1916. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. The first two were and are the dukedoms that supplied and still supply the Ya Na. Mion, the other, was part of German Dagbon.
\item \textsuperscript{107}Ford to C.C.N.T., 2 December, 1916. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. A further 110 men were sent from the Bawku and Wa Districts in February 1917. See C.R. Miller, Dagwin Mine to Acting C.C.N.T, 15 March, 1917. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.
\item \textsuperscript{108}West African Chamber of Commerce to C.O., 1 August, 1916.
\item \textsuperscript{109}Historians such as Boahen, Agbodeka and Kimble have pointed out that the Ten year Development Plan was the first ever development plan in Ghana. See Boahen (1975), pp.108-118; Agbodeka (1972), pp.96-99; Kimble \textit{op cit.}, pp.55-60. For details of the Plan see Wraith, R.E., \textbf{Guggisberg} (O.U.P: 1967), pp.98-128
\end{itemize}
epidemic of 1918-1919.\textsuperscript{110} Indifferent to the 'death crisis' the region faced, the mines once more began demanding more labour or to be allowed to import labour from elsewhere.\textsuperscript{111} The government once more rejected the demand to import labour and the Northern Territories remained the only place where such labour could be recruited.

In November 1919, Guggisberg launched his development plan intimating that a labour force of 27,000 men would be needed immediately, and suggesting that a special recruiting scheme in the Northern Territories should be organised.\textsuperscript{112} An intensive campaign by political officers began in December. The Mines reacted by forming a Joint Recruiting Organisation. This organisation could not compete with government recruiting agents.\textsuperscript{113} They therefore

\textsuperscript{110} It has been conservatively estimated that the influenza epidemic killed at least 28,000 people in the Northern Territories alone. Most of the chiefs did not count children who died. See Annual Report of Northern Territories for 1918. Also see David Scott, \textit{Epidemic Disease in Ghana 1901-1960} (London, 1965), Chapter 7. According to Scott’s estimation, the influenza killed 60,000 people out of the Gold Coast population of 1.5 million.

\textsuperscript{111} West African Chamber of Mines, 20 February 1919 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.


\textsuperscript{113} Meanwhile, the Mines had requested the assistance of the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories in recruiting men who had been discharged from the Gold Coast Regiment. See D.B. Donovan, Fanti Consolidated Mines Ltd. to C.C.N.T., 25 November, 1919. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra. The Chief Commissioner pointed out that the impact of the influenza epidemic made it difficult to comply with their demand although he was ready to assist them if the disease had run its course. C.C.N.T. to Manager, Fanti Consolidated Mines Ltd., 27 December, 1919. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.
joined in a new organisation, and in September 1920, a new amendment was written to the Master and Servant Ordinance which placed all labour under contract for 15 months.\textsuperscript{114} Under this, however, the minimum wage was fixed at 2s a day for underground work, and payment was staggered with a maximum of 1s a day to be paid, and half to be paid on completion of the contract. The rest was to be given to the labourer when he returned home.\textsuperscript{115} Between 1919 and 1923, in addition to its own needs of labour, the government deliberately recruited for the mines. The available statistics are as follows:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{lcc}
\hline
\textbf{YEAR} & \textbf{NUMBER} & \textbf{TYPE OF WORK} \\
\hline
1919 & 966 & Railway \\
1920 & 4,365 & Mines, Railways, etc. \\
1921 & 1,365 & Mines, Gov't., etc. \\
1922 & 1,047 & Railways and Mines \\
1923 & 4,354 & Railways and Mines \\
\hline
Total & 12,235 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

Guggisberg told the Legislative Council in December 1923 that he was terminating recruitment for the railways but promised to assist the mines to get labour. The government stopped making special recruiting efforts for the railways because the men were now

\textsuperscript{114}Ordinance No 11 of 1921.

\textsuperscript{115}C.C.N.T to C.S.P., 14 July, 1921. ADM.56/1/256; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{116}Northern Territorial Annual Reports (ADM.56/1/453; ADM.56/1/496; ADM.56/1/256; NAG, Accra.) Also see Mines Departmental Annual Report for 1921-3.
showing up at the work sites and labour camps seeking work. Thousands of villagers from the Northern Territories, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) and northern Ivory Coast began to migrate into the Gold Coast in search of work. The table below is an illustration:

**Monthly Returns of Voluntary and Recruited Labour for 1922/23.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>Recruited</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>10,376</td>
<td>1,694</td>
<td>12,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>9,154</td>
<td>1,451</td>
<td>10,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>9,561</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>10,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>8,517</td>
<td>1,071</td>
<td>9,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>9,287</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>10,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>9,008</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>9,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>6,143</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>6,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>6,840</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>7,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>6,496</td>
<td>1,055</td>
<td>7,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>7,828</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>8,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>9,272</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>10,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>8,093</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>8,932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two major reasons account for this. The first was the outbreak of famine in the Protectorate and Burkina Faso towards the end of 1922. Reports reaching the Chief Commissioner spoke of a growing threat of famine in North Mamprusi and Zuarungu districts where villagers were said to be practically eating grass and weed. Indeed, by the end of August 1922 scarcity of food had already reached famine proportion in districts like Builsa. The famine therefore forced many young men to "stream down the road in search of work."\(^{117}\) As many as 16,816 casual labourers migrated south to look for work on the railway, mines and cocoa farms. The second was

\(^{117}\)C.N.E.P., 15 February, 1928 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/97; NAG, Accra.
the penetration of the money economy and the desire to obtain cash to purchase European consumer goods. Many young men were therefore motivated to sell their labour to obtain cash. Closely linked with the need for cash was the desire to meet social obligations like payment of dowry and bridewealth. Before the introduction of money as a means of exchange, dowry and bridewealth were paid either in the form of labour or cattle for the prospective in-laws. Some in-laws now demanded cash hence young men who hoped to marry migrated south to seek employment.\textsuperscript{118} Guggisberg lived up to his promise of helping the mines by collaborating with them in a scheme to prove to chiefs in the Protectorate that working conditions in the mines were good. This involved an exhibition of "before" and "after" pictures of some miners.\textsuperscript{119} The Governor then gave out orders to Commissioners in the Dependency to produce a thousand labourers.\textsuperscript{120}

Officers were free to use any method to recruit the labour required. For example, in May 1922, the Acting District Commissioner for Yendi asked whether it "is up to the DC to force

\textsuperscript{118}The introduction of cash as bridewealth in a way made the young men independent of their fathers since they could easily work for money while hitherto only fathers owned cattle and used it as a means of controlling their sons.

\textsuperscript{119} C.C.N.T, Tamale, 22 November, 1921 to Provincial Commissioners, Acc. No. 1398, Case No. 5/1920.

\textsuperscript{120}The officers complied with this directive and a total of 1470 labourers were sent to the Tarkwa mines under the supervision of the C.C.N.T. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories. April 1922 to March 1923. ADM.5/1/32; NAG, Accra.
people down to the Mines as well as the Railways. Sometimes, threats were used to get labour. The District Commissioner for Northern Mamprugu while travelling through Buisaland, recorded:

..addressed the assembled chiefs and told them that they must produce labour for the Railway, that if they did not find the labour, Government would probably resort to forcing. Chief of Sandema added his words and said that the labour must be produced.

Sometimes, incentives were promised to chiefs who would provide most labourers. For example, in March 1921, the Commissioner for the Southern Province had talks with chiefs on labour and told them the "the men who supplied most labour would be attended to first in the matter of wells in their village". Indeed, Wheeler, Commissioner for the North-Western Province, explicitly put it:

as far as going to work in the south is concerned, there is practically no volunteer labour in the accepted manner of the term after the prior claims of local roads, Rest Houses and Government Stations have been met. This labour under the three headings is the only free labour we have.

Against this background, it is difficult to accept Guggisberg’s assertion that as far as work for the railway and public works were concerned "in no single instance has there been anything approaching forced labour in the Gold Coast in the present

\[1^{121}\] Acting D.C, Eastern Dagomba to C.S.P., 11 May 1922. ADM.56/1/256; NAG, Accra. Of course, he did not get a reply to his question.

\[1^{122}\] D.C., Northern Mamprusi Official Diary, 26 July 1922. ADM.56/1/319; NAG, Accra.

\[1^{123}\] C.S.P. Official Diary, 4 March 1921. ADM.56/1/276; NAG, Accra.

\[1^{124}\] Captain Wheeler, 1 September, 1916 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/84; NAG, Accra.
Although Chief Commissioner Irvine was assured by the chiefs in 1912 that they were pleased to supply labour for the roads and Rest Houses, some officials in the Protectorate felt the area’s needs were not being met. The District Commissioner for Lawra-Tumu, for example, noted:

When we want labour for the Railways and the Mines we talk a lot of hot air about it eventually being for the good of the people of the NTs, but the work eventually is so long that the youngest child will never see the beginning of any result.  

Also, the District Commissioner of Yendi, overwhelmed by the exodus of the youth with its disastrous economic consequences pleaded that the interests of the people:

should be safeguarded as a matter of common humanity... that the Protectorate has its own economic destiny to work out, and that the destiny is not solely to provide a reservoir of labour for the commerce and industry of the Colony and Ashanti.

Though a bit different but with the same objective in view, the District Commissioner for Kusasi pointed out:

It is not known at the moment how it is intended to develop these on any other farm produce industry in the

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126Annual report of the Northern Territories for 1912. ADM.56/1/21; NAG, Accra.

127Quarterly Report, Lawra-Tumu District, September, 1922. ADM.56/1/495; NAG, Accra.

128D.C., Yendi, 21 July 1937 to C.C.N.T. ADM.1/167; NAGT.
future: but one thing may be counted, and that is, that no system which would tend to convert these people from an independent small holders into labourers on a large scale would ever be successful. The Kusasi is first and foremost a farmer, he is this by nature, training and necessity. He is also a landowner. Attempt to make him into a labourer for hire and he would lose interest and self-respect. Leave him undisturbed in his tiny farm over which he is lord and master and any good there is in him (and there is much) will be developed. In this he is no different from the rest of mankind. Responsibility develops character in other peoples - notably in ourselves; it has no lesser effect on the Kusasi.\(^{129}\)

The mines stopped recruiting labour in November 1927 because, as we have seen, labour became available from Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) and Ivory Coast. This is illustrated by the figures below.\(^{130}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>British subjects</th>
<th>French subjects</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>4,434</td>
<td>28,677</td>
<td>33,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>6,148</td>
<td>32,556</td>
<td>38,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>8,741</td>
<td>48,070</td>
<td>56,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>55,862</td>
<td>110,527</td>
<td>166,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>69,486</td>
<td>68,283</td>
<td>137,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>55,205</td>
<td>81,019</td>
<td>136,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,876</strong></td>
<td><strong>369,132</strong></td>
<td><strong>569,224</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the end of the decade the "invasion" had become so serious that the Secretary for Native Affairs suggested that the Government should make strong representations to the French Government, the Chief Commissioner for the Northern Territories to dissuade migrant labour going to the south since there was the possibility of

\(^{129}\)Report of Bawku District for the Second Quarter of 1922. ADM.5/1/30; NAG, Accra.

\(^{130}\)Population of Labour collected at Yeji from the Annual reports on the Northern Territories for 1924-30.
starvation.\textsuperscript{131}

While recruitment of labour existed the people reacted to it in many ways. Firstly, instead of waiting to be recruited for the "hated" underground work in the mines, they decided to migrate to the south to work in cocoa farms where remuneration was higher.\textsuperscript{132} For example, while touring the Western Gonja District in June 1922, the Chief Commissioner noted a "visible absence" of young men at village meetings. He was told by the chiefs that they had gone down south voluntarily to work for money. The chiefs further complained that they had to work the farms with old persons and children.\textsuperscript{133} Secondly, people often jumped the borders from sparsely populated areas to densely populated ones. In 1919, the chief of Santijan in the Tumu District complained that the people of Nemanla had crossed to the densely populated area of Navrongo.\textsuperscript{134} They were not repatriated for the correspondence on it developed into a question of whether a chief had the right to claim the bodies of people

\textsuperscript{131}S.N.A, 1 February, 1928 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/317; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{132}Guggisberg claimed that cocoa farmers were prepared to pay wages as high as 10s a day for carrying cocoa to the market centres when the mines were offering 1s 6d per day for underground work. Guggisberg to Lord Milner, 21 May 1920. Cocoa prices reached a height of 60s a load at Koforidua at the beginning of 1920, so the figure was not impossible. See Kimble \textit{op cit.} plate 1.

\textsuperscript{133}C.C.N.T., 6 June, 1922 to Secretary of Mines. ADM.56/1/315; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{134}C.N.W.P., Tumu, 30 April, 1919 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra. This led to heated exchange of correspondence between the two Commissioners as to the advisability of returning them. See C.N.E.P., 4 June, 1919 to Acting D.C. Navarro (Navrongo) District. ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra;
resident on his land. Cardinall, Commissioner of the Navrongo District to which people migrated, argued that if chiefs had such a right, it was "tantamount to the feudal system of serfdom which did not exist in native custom." Another way chiefs protested against recruitment was to send off unfit people as labourers. The Acting District Commissioner for Western Gonja reported in 1924 that the chiefs were such "nonentities" that they did not have the authority to order the fit men to go to the mines and therefore, sent only the weak.

The recruitment of labour from the Northern Territories obviously had negative effects on the region. The first was that it reduced a section of the population from self-sufficient subsistence farmers to wage earners. In the pre-colonial era, these farmers owned their tools and produced for direct home consumption and for trade. However, through the various mechanisms we have mentioned, they became wage labourers at capitalist mines and public projects. The government’s economic policies compelled the region’s population to adopt a pattern of life in which they derived a proportion of their subsistence from the returns of wage labour. Since extra farming activities like the production of

135A.W. Cardinall, Navarro (Navrongo), 14 June, 1919 to Acting C.N.E.P. ADM.56/1/278; NAG, Accra.

136Acting D.C., W. Gonja to C.S.P, 19 August, 1924. ADM.56/1/276; NAG, Accra. One really wonders how they could send "fit" men since, as we have already seen, most of the young men voluntarily went down south to work.

137This, like the methods of retaining labour discussed above, was the same as labourers from Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, Lesotho, Botswana who went to work in mines either in Zimbabwe or
crafts, repairs of houses and clearing of bush fell on the male population, this forced migration led to a deterioration in community life.¹³⁸ In addition, many people from the Northern Territories died enroute or in the mines. By 1924, frequent reports and complaints of deaths in the mines compelled the suspension of recruiting and William Simpson, an eminent surgeon, was asked to investigate. His report threw light on both conditions in the mines and labour coming to them. Sir Simpson recommended improvements in the mines, but also pointed out that the labourers on arrival were heavily infected with hookworm, tropical ulcers and pulmonary diseases.¹³⁹ Perhaps this loss through death and other factors accounts for the low population density of Northern Ghana. Also, some of the labourers returned home with bad habits like drinking and smoking, and brought venereal diseases such as gonorrhoea and syphilis which they spread in the region.

Some of the returned labourers flouted chiefly authority in the region and resisted political officers. The provision of

South Africa and whose families back home depended on remittances from their husbands and sons. See Onselen (1976); First (1983); Jeeves, A., Migrant Labour in South Africa's Mining Economy: the struggle for the gold mines' labour supply. (Kingston, Ont., McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985)

¹³⁸One of the earliest complaints of the newly established Native Authorities was the lack of local trade from which to obtain taxes. See the complaints in ADM.56/1/46; NAG, Accra.

¹³⁹Report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the Sanitary Conditions of the Mines and Mining Villages of the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti. Sir William Simpson to the C.O., 24 November, 1924. The recorded deaths of labourers from the Northern Territories were 6.5, 3.1 and 10.3 per cent respectively for the Abbontiakrom, Prestea and Tarkwa and Aboaso Mines for 1923-4.

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manpower for the army and the police and as labourers in the South probably also served to distract the attention of the government from the need to invest in infrastructure and productive capacity in the North. More importantly, like the earlier conflicts between the Northern kingdoms and Asante, the pattern of forced migration helped to strengthen the North-South divide and fostered the creation of the notion of low esteem that southerners have for northerners. This is mainly because, until independence, most menial jobs such as working in the mines, cocoa farms, road construction and the rank and file of both the army and police were done and occupied by people from the North. W.J.A. Jones again aptly summarised the role envisaged for the Northern Territories when he declared in 1937 that the people of the region:

were regarded as amiable but backward people, useful as soldiers, policemen and labourers in the mines and cocoa farms; in short only to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for their brothers in the Colony and Ashanti.

6.3. DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE: THE STILLBORN RAILWAY.

Roads are to be built so as to connect the most important towns. The main roads from Kintampo to Gambaga and thence northward to the frontier should be 14 feet wide. Subsidiary roads are to be 8 feet wide. The roadway should be raised to at least 6 inches. Culverts are to be

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140 For a fuller discussion of this notion of the inferiority of the northerner see Plange op cit. pp, i-iv

141 Annual Report on the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1937-8, p.3.
made of stone where possible.\textsuperscript{142}

Before the onset of colonialism, various parts of Northern Ghana, like other parts of the country, were linked to each other in two main ways, - paths and caravan routes. The maintenance of the paths to the boundary of the village land was the responsibility of the entire village.\textsuperscript{143} Maintenance and security on the caravan routes was the responsibility of the various kingdoms through which they traversed. The collection of caravan tolls by chiefs was a sign of sovereignty and it also enabled them to maintain armies which ensured the safety of the routes. The size and number of caravans on a particular route indicated the relative strength and importance of the kingdom through which it passed. Both kings and people derived benefits from the trade.\textsuperscript{144}

Before the boundaries of the Northern Territories became well defined, Northcott was charged with the improvement of the lines of communication between the various posts, the protection of trade

\textsuperscript{142}Circular Memorandum: By Order, from Staff Officer, Gambaga, 9 March, 1899. ADM.56/1/35; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{143}Most often, natural features such as river courses, hills, prominent rock outcrops and big trees were used to demarcate boundaries. Among the Nchumuru, a big raised mound agreed by all, in addition to the above features, also served as boundaries. For the nature and definition of traditional boundaries in the Northern Territories see Bening (1971), pp. 1-11.

and collection data on the resources of the country. In 1898, he realised the importance of substituting a fast and efficient means of transport for human porterage. Northcott therefore recommended the introduction of light motor cars and a "Volta Transportation Service" which would link the north to the coast and the use of bicycles for inter-district communication. The Colonial Office supported Northcott’s views and requested the Governor to start with the construction of the route Northcott proposed, i.e., the direct road from Accra to Gambaga, then the headquarters of the Protectorate. This route passed through Attebubu, Yeji, Salaga, Patenga and Karaga. By May 1899, about forty seven miles of motor road had been constructed in the vicinity of Gambaga and other roads were made around Wa and Kintampo in anticipation of the arrival of vehicular traffic. Unfortunately, the Governor turned down the suggestion. The Colonial Office, after failing to obtain the interest the Governor in Northcott’s scheme, acquiesced in its suspension. Governor Hodgson was however urged to make a trial of vehicular traffic on one of the coastal roads. This was done in 1901. Whatever success attended the experiment with the motor cars, it was clear to all that it could not immediately reduce the cost of transportation between the coast and the Northern Territories because there were no roads in the Dependency capable of taking motor cars. By 1903, the permanent road between Gambaga and Salaga via Patenga had been completed and the use of

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145 African (West) No.549. Enclosure in No. 166 in Iliasu Papers
146 African (West), No. 585, Enc. 3 in No. 180 in Iliasu Papers.
soldiers on bicycles to carry mail on this route reduced the journey between Kumasi and Gambaga by six days.\textsuperscript{147}

River transport, the other alternative was also unreliable. The extreme regime of the rivers - almost complete absence of water during the dry season and the wide spread of floods during the rainy season- made them undependable. Also, the presence of disease carrying insects such as the simulium fly rendered most of the river valleys and adjacent lands uninhabitable.\textsuperscript{148} Most rivers had rapids and in the absence of bridges, and large boats, they tended to separate rather than unite communities. However, the River Volta was an exception because it was navigable from its confluence at Ada to Kete Krachi where there were rapids. Goods therefore had to be off-loaded and re-loaded before they could be transported to Yeji where they were distributed by land. The use of river transport reduced the cost of transporting goods by head porterage from the coast to Gambaga from £100 to £40 per ton.\textsuperscript{149} Unfortunately, apart from salt, the transportation of goods by river was abandoned when the railway line reached Kumasi in 1903.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{147}Report on the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for the year 1903, pp. 13-14.
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{148}The simulium fly carries the disease of onchoderciasis, which, until recently, was a common disease in the North-Eastern Province. According to Iliasu, in Mamprugu, onchoderciasis (river blindness) is referred to as "the potency of the Na Yiri’s curse" Iliasu (1975), p.15.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{149}Annual Report on the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for 1903, p.328.
\end{flushright}
various parts together. He therefore gave much attention to road construction. In 1898, work on the permanent trunk road from Kumasi to Tamale which was christened the Great North Road, N.T. 1. was begun. It was however, abandoned shortly after reaching Ejura, only sixty fives miles from Kumasi, because of lack of funds. Other roads such as Tamale-Gambaga, Wa-Tamale and Gambaga-Navrongo were begun around the same time. No central body controlled road construction. Each District Commissioner was asked to construct roads to link the most important towns, particularly those through which caravans passed, to the district headquarters. Indeed, they were instructed to make all the important roads in the provinces and district radiate from the Provincial and districts capitals respectively to the capitals, the focus of administration.150 People of one village constructed the road from theirs to the next gratia in lieu of direct tax. Also, the 1894 Trade Roads Ordinance empowered the chiefs to call their people for six days’ labour in each quarter. The Ordinance also gave legal sanction to the existing system of fines and payment.151 Commenting on the construction of the roads in his province, one Commissioner noted:

> With regard to the payment of the chiefs and their people for work on the roads, I found the most satisfactory method was to give the chiefs a small present out of the money allocated to the permanent roads in their respective districts and with the balance buy hoes which can be purchased at 1s from Messrs. Hutler & Rahim’s store and distribute them among the natives who actually worked the roads after reserving a portion for their

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chiefs. This method ensures that all those who work on the roads got something in return for their labour. I found out that they appreciated payment in hoes much more than equivalent in cash.\textsuperscript{152}

However, labour was recruited from all chiefs in the construction of major roads such as the Prang to Tamale or Tamale to Bolgatanga roads. Failure to keep the roads clear of grass and roots often led to a fine. The Commissioner of the North-Eastern Province reported that:

All the roads had been cleared between Navarro (Navrongo) and Sandema with the exception of the Kunkor section between Kardema and Kunkor. For this I fined all compound holders £17 5s because their section of the road had not been cleared of grass and roots.\textsuperscript{153}

Sometimes, the people of towns and villages which "misbehaved" were punished to supply a number of workers for the roads. For example, the people of Winduri in the North-Eastern Province were asked to "supply 20 labourers for the roads for three months" for rioting over the picking of "dawadawa" (Parkia Filicoidea ver glauca).\textsuperscript{154}

To co-ordinate road construction in the Protectorate, the Public Works Department\textsuperscript{155} was established in Tamale in 1920. The

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\textsuperscript{152}Handing Over Report, Southern Province, March 1909. ADM.56/1/92.

\textsuperscript{153}C.N.E.P., Navarro (Navrongo), 2 October, 1911 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/123; NAG, Accra.

\textsuperscript{154}W.O. Warden, C.N.E.P., Winduri, 15 May, 1913 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/165; NAG, Accra. \textit{Dawadawa} (Parkia Filicoidea ver glauca) is one of the important economic trees in Northern Ghana. Its fruits are used to make a local condiment while the pulp is mashed and drunk as a beverage. Northerners attach so much importance to it that only the owner of the land has the right to pick its fruits.

\textsuperscript{155}Hereafter P.W.D.
maintenance of trunk roads came under its purview while the Political Departments were in charge of the other roads. The formation of the P.W.D brought a great improvement in road construction and soon all trunk roads became "all weather." In 1929 it was reported that:

there are about 500 miles of "all weather roads" and a further 1597 miles which are open to traffic in the dry season. The P.W.D. maintains 197 miles of the total and the remainder by the Political Department.\textsuperscript{156}

The outcome of the improvement in the road network in the region was the introduction of vehicular traffic in the mid-1920s and the gradual elimination of carrier service. In 1921, Governor Guggisberg, was able to motor from Kumasi to Tamale for the first time. Five years later, it was reported that practically all parts of the Protectorate could be reached by motor cars. The report further asserted that Commissioners could visit various places, and tours, which usually lasted weeks, could be done in a matter of days. The report ended by emphasising that the shortness of the journeys allowed political officers ample time to attend to their office duties. Besides, it reduced the burden of head carriage on the community enormously.\textsuperscript{157} Motor traffic between the Northern Territories and the South picked up rapidly thereafter, as indicated by the following figures for the numbers of lorries carried across the Volta River at Yeji: 222 in 1922, 500 in 1923

\textsuperscript{156}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the Year April 1929 to March 1930.

\textsuperscript{157}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the Year April 1925 to March 1926. ADM.5/1/33; NAG, Accra.
and 1,962 in 1924.\(^{158}\) The increase in motor traffic also stimulated agricultural production in the Dependency. For example, it was reported in 1929 that export of yams from the Yendi, Bimbilla and Krachi areas to Asante and the Colony increased by fifty per cent.\(^{159}\) Another effect was increase in trade between the North and the rest of the country as shown by the figures below:\(^{160}\)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>45,271</td>
<td>29,396</td>
<td>43,405</td>
<td>47,397</td>
<td>42,234</td>
<td>51,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep &amp; Goats</td>
<td>38,398</td>
<td>40,361</td>
<td>57,302</td>
<td>79,059</td>
<td>61,834</td>
<td>98,196</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>647</td>
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Indeed it was reported in the same year that trade had increased by the following per cent in the following goods: kola 9.8, salt (bags) 45, kerosene 325 and flour 56.\(^{161}\) Because of the increase in the number of vehicles visiting the Dependency, it was reported in 1930 that head porterage was now practically unknown except for mails and during the rainy season and occasional use by government officials.\(^{162}\) In spite of the major improvement in the transport

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\(^{158}\)Annual Reports of the Northern Territories for April 1924 to March 1925. ADM.5/1/32; NAG, Accra.

\(^{159}\)Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1929, p.27. ADM.5/1/68; NAG, Accra.

\(^{160}\)Trade figures from 1923 to 1929 in ADM.56/1/238; NAG, Accra.


\(^{162}\)Annual Report of the Northern Territories for the year April 1930 to March 1931.
system in the Protectorate, there was one means of transport which had not been developed; this was the railway.

The need for the construction of the railway to the Northern Territories was recognised by George Ferguson who remarked in 1896 that "the contour of the interior offers facilities for animal transport and railway." Realising the importance of the railway in the economic development of the country, some merchants in London sent a memo to Her Majesty's Government in which among other things, they said that:

the Gold Coast being entirely without beasts of burden or means of water transport, there can be no real or important development of its resources or trade without the formation of the railway. In 1898, the Sekondi-Tarkwa line commenced. It reached Tarkwa in 1901, and two years later, the people of Kumasi enthusiastically welcomed the train. One would have expected the railway line to be continued to the Protectorate in view of its economic potentials. But this was not to be. In connection with the extension of the railway to the Protectorate, Governor Hugh Clifford said:

In this matter (railway), however, the Northern Territories must be content to await its turn. At the present time... many of the richest and most developed districts of the Colony and of Ashanti are still without any efficient means of transporting their produce to the coast; and it is not until these districts have been opened up by railway extensions that the Northern


\[164\] Memorial of Merchants in the city of London engaged and interested in the Trade with the Gold Coast and Lagos, London, 7 December 1883. Metcalfe op cit. pp.413-415.
Territories can be regarded as practical politics.\textsuperscript{165}

Meanwhile, Ormsby-Gore, on his visit to West Africa in 1926, reported that:

Consequently, the Gold Coast cannot be said to have been fully developed until the railway to the Northern Territories have been constructed. That it is the duty of Government to construct such a railway as soon as the financial situation permits, is, I think, clear.\textsuperscript{166}

Opponents of the extension of the railway to the North argued that: 1) it would not be a paying project in the near future; 2) all railways serve thickly populated areas and a thriving cocoa industry while the railway to the North would pass through a country where the population was one third as dense as in the Colony and around Kumasi and; 3) it would cost fifty per cent more than the most expensive railway yet built in the Gold Coast.\textsuperscript{167}

Sympathisers of the extension of the railway to the Protectorate however pointed to Northern Nigeria as an example of railway stimulating production. Thus Lt. Col. Whittall, Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, in a memorandum titled "The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast; their Future" remarked:

> Showing the influence of recent railway extensions in the

\textsuperscript{165}State of Trade in 1912, Speech of Sir Hugh Clifford in the Legislative Council, 3 October, 1913 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.544-548.

\textsuperscript{166}Report by the Hon. W.G.A. Ormsby-Gore (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies) on his visit to West Africa during the year 1926 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp. 609-615.

\textsuperscript{167}See speech by Sir R. Slater in Legislative Council, 17 February 1930 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.} pp.624-626.
Northern Province, attention may be directed towards the largely increased exports of groundnut, hides and skins and shea products. In 1911, the year before the railway to Kano was opened, the total value of the three products shipped overseas was £89,000 only compared with £737,000 in 1914, £1,637,000 in 1917 and £1,999,604 in 1919 ... there was also a large increase in cotton goods to Kano.\(^{168}\)

Believing that trade follows the rails, Whittall wondered why the Northern Territories could not follow Northern Nigeria’s example. He noted that to make the extension of the rail to the North profitable, the people should be encouraged to undertake a communal system of producing shea butter and groundnut oil near the proposed rail line. Whittall further suggested that crushing machinery and refinery vats should be imported from the United Kingdom to maximise the oil production and to make it competitive.\(^{169}\) The Chief Commissioner suggested that light railways of the "Decaulville" type were the best because initial cost would not be great while the lines could be relaid if larger ones were needed. Whittall estimated that it would cost £3,500,000 to construct the 350 mile rail to the North, but with an increased production of shea butter, groundnut, livestock, the rail line could start making profits in the first year of its existence.\(^{170}\)

Cozens-Hardy, General Manager of the Sekondi Railways in responding to Whittall’s memo commented:

I must concur with Whittall’s opinion on the necessity for improved transport ... the capacity of the population

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\(^{168}\)P.F. Whittall 22 September, 1923. ADM.56/1/359; NAG, Accra.

\(^{169}\)Ibid.

\(^{170}\)Ibid.
for sustained productive work is evidenced by the fact that work that has proved too exacting for the inhabitants of the Colony has for years been done by migratory workers.... I am therefore of the opinion that given cheap transport by rail, and fair price for agricultural products, labour may take the same course it has taken in the colony proper viz. to settle along and cultivate saleable produce in the vicinity of the railway. 171

In the same vein, the Superintendent of Agriculture and Forestry for the Northern Territories was of the view that the extension of the railway to the North was viable, since apart from the known crops such as groundnut and shea nuts, other products to be given a boost are benniseed (sesamum indicum), neri (citrullus vulgaris) fibre (Hibiscus sabdariffa) and hides and skins. 172

It was not only agriculturalists who favoured the extension of the railway to the Dependency. The technical experts who evaluated the proposed project were unanimous from a technical perspective. Their decisions were due to, as their reports indicate, the existence of materials locally to minimize cost. These local materials could be used to make concrete for culverts in addition to the existence of ballast (laterite or gravel) on fifty per cent of the proposed route. 173 It was reported that the presence of

171 Cozens-Hardy, Gold Coast Government Railways, Sekondi, 20 June, 1924 to Hon. Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.

172 "The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast: their future." Criticism by the Superintendent of Agriculture and Forestry. 26 May, 1924. ADM.56/1/359; NAG, Accra. Indeed, the Principal Veterinary Officer also supported the extension of the railway to Northern Territories. He concluded his memo thus "there is a future for the Northern Territories with the extension of the railways as profits would be made a few years later." See Principal Veterinary Officer, 17 May 1924 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/359; NAG, Accra.

173 Plange op cit. p.249.
these would help reduce the cost which had been estimated at £3,414,496 or an average of £9,756 per mile. This was comparable to the Central Province railway which cost an average of £12,350 per mile. In spite of all these favourable reports, the administration did not extend the railway to the Northern Territories. Governor Slater gave it the coup de grâce when he said while addressing the Legislative Council in 1930:

A railway to the Northern Territories, however, could not depend for its revenue on the success of one low-priced product and I remain of the opinion that it would be imprudent for the Government to assume, at this juncture, heavy additional debt charges amounting to over £200,000 per annum) for a project of which so many of the factors are uncertain.\footnote{Speech of Sir R. Slater in Legislative Council. 17 February, 1930 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.}, pp.624-626.}

The question of extending the railway to the North was revived again in 1948. In that year, the Northern Territorial Council in a resolution asked for the extension of the railway to the North.\footnote{Northern Territorial Council, Third Session, 12-13 March, 1948, p.12.} Shortly after his appointment as Minister of Communications and Works, J.A. Braimah, from the North, presented a memorandum to the Cabinet in which he recommended that the railway be extended from Kumasi to the Northern Territories. A Cabinet sub-committee was set up to examine the question of cost and routes. The Committee estimated that it would cost £7 million to construct the route and another £3 million to purchase the locomotives. The Ten Year Development Plan approved by Cabinet in 1951 included £10 million to meet these expenditures. The Development Plan justified the
railway primarily in terms of its potential contribution to agricultural production by enabling large areas of good agricultural land to be brought into production, and also by facilitating the movement of people and the transport of consumer goods. \(^{176}\) Like the 1920s, the railway project to the North was not implemented. Two major reasons account for this. Firstly, there was a general disagreement among the Northern leadership as to the railway route. Two routes were suggested, one following the Kumasi to Tamale road (N.T.1) to Navrongo while the other passed through Damongo in the west to Navrongo. This route was to avoid Tamale and most of the populous areas of Dagbon. The government decided to shelve the project because of the division it was creating among Northerners. But it would seem that the shelving of the project was just an excuse for Nkrumah's Government had its eyes on the construction of a dam on the Volta River which appeared not only economically viable, but promised to provide the basis for rapid industrialisation. Nkrumah and some of his Ministers therefore changed their minds about the Northern railway when they realised it would require enormous sums of money and threaten the Volta River project. As compensation for the failure to extend the railway to the North, the government agreed to step up road construction not only to link the north to the south, but to improve the road network within the region itself.

\(^{176}\) The Gold Coast, The Development Plan, 1951, Accra, 1951, pp.15, 60.
CHAPTER VII.

THE EMERGENCE OF NORTHERN CONSCIOUSNESS.

7.1. EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT.

The pursuits of the Northern Territories people are mainly agricultural and pastoral. Their need is not a high academic standard but enough English education to carry on business and a practical acquaintance with such trades as will fit them to be useful members of the community. So far as I am aware, the majority of the Northern Territories communities are self-sufficing. There is, of course, a certain amount of trade and the prospect in future of big business. In the end, however, the problem is the training of useful and law-abiding citizens.¹

The development of education² in the Northern Territories during the Colonial period was mainly dictated by administrative necessity. The Northern Territories consisted of a variety of ethnic groups with different languages.³ At the beginning of the colonial era, almost all African government employees were from the coast and could not speak any of the local languages. Although a corrupt form of Hausa was used as a common medium of communication especially in the large commercial centres, it was by no means the lingua franca. In 1907, Lt-Colonel Watherston, the Chief

¹R.F. Honter, Memorandum on Northern Territories Primary Education Generally, pp.5-6, n.d., ADM.56/1/88, NAG, Accra.

²I use the concept of "education" in the rather restricted sense generally used in the colonies or ex-colonies to stand for formal instruction in European-style schools. In this sense, those who had been through these institutions were described as "educated", making them available for labour in the newly established occupational structures, largely as teachers, clerks and others.

³There are about thirty languages in Northern Ghana now.

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Commissioner, expressed the need to establish schools at the various administrative centres to train the new generation of chiefs and to educate a few selected intelligent men of each ethnic group in English. These would then be interpreters for teachers from the south when funds became available for the opening of schools. Because of the prevailing linguistic conditions of the region and the necessity of frequent transfer of political officers, Watherston was of the view that:

the pushing of the English language in the country is of a more lasting benefit than forcing the Commissioners to learn one of the many languages.

Formal western education under the auspices of the British administration started in 1908 in Tamale when a boy, Amadu Sambu (later Wemah), the son of a sergeant armourer of the Northern Territorial Constabulary, organised the sons of the Police men into a band, which dressed in "paper hats and equipment made of grass match-boxes and cotton reels, did military drill in imitation of their fathers." The Chief Commissioner took keen interest in the band and ordered a constable clerk to teach them reading and arithmetic. In 1909, a school was opened in Tamale and a Hausa speaking school master was appointed and some Dagomba were either persuaded or conscripted to go to school. Indeed, before the

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1 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1907, p.11.


6 Balme Library (University of Ghana) Dp/JS 76 49 95 A1 N82, Africana Section: Report on the Northern Territories, 1955 (Tamale) p.82.
opening of the Tamale school, the White Fathers had opened one at Navrongo in 1907.

Prior to the opening of the Tamale school, the Chief Commissioner had encouraged the formation of what he called the Boys Brigade at the districts with the view of sending the most intelligent of them to school. Even before then, in 1908, four intelligent boys, all described as the "sons of chiefs" were sent to the government school in Cape Coast. A year later they were transferred to the new Technical School in Accra. Initially, the official policy was to educate children of the ruling classes but later an attempt was made to enrol the sons of serving members of the Northern Constabulary since it was believed that the latter would provide the best breed of men to deal with local criminals.

The Gambaga school, which was the next to be opened after that of Tamale, also, like the latter, started as a Boys Brigade of thirteen boys. The children had an hour's drill in the morning and another hour's lessons. However, it was reported that "the greater part of the day they are idling about or doing odd jobs for the

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7A Boys Brigade consisted of a group boys of school going age who received a daily hour's drill by a non-commissioned officer.

8Among the boys sent to school in Cape Coast was one Atchulo (Samuel William) Braimah, the father of J.A. Braimah one of those who played a leading role in the early politics of the Northern Territories. J.A. Braimah has aptly described how his father was selected. See Braimah and Goody op cit., p.86.

Four years later the Gambaga school was said to be in decline. It was reported that some of the boys had left to look after horses and assist on farms while two of them married and left school. Some parents were said to have withdrawn their children because schooling "made them lazy." Some of the children were also said to have refused to do their homework preferring instead, to "spend their free time playing and dancing around the town". Although officials attributed this lack of interest to the influence of Islam, it seems that the main reason was the lack of materials and enthusiasm of the first teacher posted to Gambaga. Writing to the Chief Commissioner about the efforts clerks were making to instruct the pupils, the Commissioner asserted that one of their major problems was the lack of books and necessary materials. He later wrote that he managed "to get a blackboard, and a few slates that Tamale can spare." The Commissioner also stated that although Hinney, the fourth grade teacher was painstaking and sincere, he was "inexperienced with northern children." This might have dampened the interest of the parents and pupils because initially it was reported that:

\[C.N.E.P., 16 August, 1909 to C.C.N.T., Tamale. ADM.56/1/86; NAG, Accra. The Liman was the head of the Muslim Community.\]

\[C.N.E.P., 9 November 1915 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/86. \]

\[Ibid. \]

\[C.N.E.P., 1 December 1909 to C.C.N.T. on Boys Brigade and School. ADM.56/1/95; NAG, Accra. \]

\[D.C., Gambaga, 25 September, 1915 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/86; NAG, Accra. \]
so far as I can gather, the chiefs have not objected to their sons coming to Gambaga where they live with the Liman who treats them well.15

Other schools opened were Wa (1917), Lawra (1919), Yendi Junior Trade School (1922)16 and Salaga (1923). In general however, the development of education in the Northern Territories was beset with problems. The first of these was the problem of language. All the teachers were from the coast and could not understand any of the Northern languages. Although Hausa became the lingua franca because of trade and Islam, it could not be understood by most of the pupils, who came largely from the outlying villages. Teaching was therefore carried out in English for children most of whom had never heard an English word before. The second problem was the diversity of languages spoken in the Dependency. Since the schools were established to serve large districts, it was difficult to get orders understood by all pupils. Pupils who spoke more than one language became interpreters with the result that orders lost their original meaning through omissions and additions.17

Realising this problem, the following local languages were selected as media of instruction in schools in the various areas: Tamale (Dagbani, Hausa and either Twi, Fanti or Ga), Wa (Dagari, 15Tbid.

16 According to Bening, the location of the Junior Trade School in Yendi was influenced by the criticism of the British Government for the continued absence of educational facilities in the northern section of the Mandated area. Bening (1971), p.23.

17See H.M.Grant "School mastering in the Northern Territories 25 years Ago", Gold Coast Teachers' Journal Vol.5, Nos.1-3, 1933, p.102. Grant was one of the pioneering teachers in the Northern Territories.
Wali), Gambaga (Mampruli), Salaga (Hausa, Gonja), Navrongo (Kasem, Buili, Nankam). It was reported that the use of these languages was marked by quick grasping, increased pleasure and interest in learning on the part of the pupils.\textsuperscript{18} Another problem was the reluctance of parents to send their children to school. This was mainly because subsistence agriculture was the main economic activity. Children were regarded as a labour asset while schooling was said to make them ill-equipped to return to the land. Indeed, Sergeant Abudu Kanjarga stated it categorically when he said going to "school made them (school children) lazy."\textsuperscript{19} Also, since the hated Boys Brigade was a common feature of the school system, parents erroneously thought that schools were preparing their children for the detested army life. Another important factor which accounts for the initial dislike of schooling in the Northern Territories was that the children had to walk long distances to the few schools. This naturally made parents reluctant to part with their children since they would be losing their services for a greater part of the year. The Ya Na made the point clearer when he stated that:

\textsuperscript{18}Minutes of the Northern Territories Board of Education held on 14 June 1930, p.3. ADM.1/191; NAGT; Annual Report on Education, Northern Territories 1931-32, p.7. ADM.1/214, 215; NAGT. Earlier, the Imperial Educational Conference of 1932 recognised that "the language best known and understood by the child on his entry into school life is, from the educational point of view, the most effective medium for his instruction in the preliminary stages of school education." Cited in Bening (1990), p.59.

\textsuperscript{19}C.N.E.P., 9 November, 1915 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/86; NAG, Accra. Sergeant Abudu refused to allow his three children to return to school because he needed them to look after his horses and assist him on the farm. \textit{Ibid}. 

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his people objected to sending their sons away to Tamale as it meant losing them altogether for the greater part of the year whereas if they went to school in Yendi they could do a certain amount of work on the farms after school hours.  

Schools were opened in Wa and Lawra because parents were reluctant to send their children to the Tamale school. Making a request for the opening of a school in Wa, the Commissioner for the North-Western Province stated that the Wa Na and his chiefs complained of the long distance and the dangers their children were exposed to on the way to Tamale. In addition, there was the problem of board and lodge. Parents of children from the outstations made independent arrangement for their children to be housed and fed. The children in turn paid for the board and lodging by rendering services such as taking their landlord’s livestock to graze and working on their farms on week ends. Some landlords did not properly care for the children hence some parents complained that their children did not benefit from schooling. Indeed, one report noted among other things that the children arrived in school already tired and underfed. Also, when eventually the people understood the benefits of education and were prepared to open schools in their various areas, they were told that funds had not

20 DC, Eastern Dagomba, 14 August, 1924 to C.S.P., ADM.56/1/342; NAG, Accra.

21 C.N.W.P., 17 February, 1911 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/110; NAG, Accra.

22 They did odd jobs like fetching water and firewood and taking animals for grazing. See S.D. Nash, C.N.E.P., 16 September, 1919 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra.

been allocated for the establishment of schools in their areas. For example, when the people of Bole requested a school in 1921 they were told that "no expenditure can be sanctioned at any rate during the financial year" even though the Yagbumwura and Bolewura offered to finance the construction, supply the school and provide money to feed the pupils. The colonial administration was unwilling to incur the expenses of teachers' salaries and school equipment. The opening of schools at Bole, Yendi, Krachi, Bawku in response to popular demand was halted in 1923 because: 

owing to the necessity of rigid economy and to the fact that considerable expenditure will be incurred in the near future in the building of Achimota College, His Excellency has decided that no additional day Primary Schools will be opened in the Northern Territories in the next three or four years.

All Government activities in the Northern Territories were thus deferred in favour of the Colony and Asante. As often happened the Dependency was always the first casualty in all cuts. The attitude of the chiefs and people towards the reluctance of the administration to open schools was aptly summed up by Kpembewura Soale when he pointed out that:

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24 Deputy C.C.N.T., 20 December, 1921 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/303; NAG, Accra.

25 C.C.N.T, 15 October, 1921 to Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra.

26 Col. Sec., Christianborg, 11 December, 1923 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/88; NAG, Accra. The documents are replete with requests for the opening of schools. See C.N.W.P. 27 February 1911 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/110. C.N.W.P., 28 February, 1911 to Acting C.C.N.T; Acting D.C., Lawra, 6 January, 1919 to C.N.W.P. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra. See Deputy C.C.N.T., 20 December 1921 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/303; NAG, Accra.
Many children will no doubt come - perhaps too many, but the position is that until the school is actually in being, it is difficult to ask illiterates with no ideas of education to answer in the affirmative or bind themselves." 27

One solution to the problem of underfeeding the children from outstations was the establishment of boarding schools. Realising the problems children from outlying villages encountered, S.D. Nash, Commissioner for the North-Eastern Province suggested that the government should give a grant of 5s a month per child to feed them. 28 Based on the reports he received from the Provincial Officers, the Chief Commissioner appealed to the Director of Education to provide 6s per child for every month to "redeem the children from semi-servanthood." 29 No action was taken to establish boarding schools until 1923 when Lt. Col. P.F. Whittall, introduced one at Wa. Whittall noted that only six of the sixty school children came from Wa. Consequently, most of the pupils were "hungry, dirty, unpunctual and unhappy" 30 mainly because they had practically become domestic servants. It was reported that although the boarding system entailed extra work for the District


28 S.D. Nash, C.N.E.P., 16 September, 1919 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra. H.M. Berkeley, C.N.W.P. on his part, suggested that parents should be asked to pay 3s per child a month and three women would be hired at 5s a month to cook meals for the children while the government provides money for the construction of the boarding house. See C.N.W.P., Wa, 3 October, 1919 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra.

29 C.C.N.T, Tamale, 16 October, 1919 to Director of Education, Christianborg. ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra.

30 DC, Wa, 5 March, 1923 to C.N.W.P., ADM.56/1/232; NAG, Accra.
Commissioner:

the genuine pleasure of the boys in their improved
surroundings and the undoubted addition it makes to the
general efficiency of the school is ample reward.\(^{31}\)

7.2. **GOVERNMENT, CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND EDUCATION.**

Before the boarding school was started in Wa, the White
Fathers Mission had opened one at Navrongo in 1907. The White
Fathers from Wagadugu applied for permission to settle in Navrongo
in the Northern Territories in 1905. The Governor turned down the
request because he felt that the area was not yet sufficiently
pacified to permit the establishment of a mission station:

as the Government are not willing to make themselves
responsible for the protection of the lives and property
of missionaries, especially those of a foreign power.\(^{32}\)

The Governor added that their application would be considered the
following year but only if they fulfilled the following conditions:
1) the clergy were British subjects; 2) English was the medium of
instruction; 3) they settled at an administrative station which was
not a predominantly Muslim settlement and agree to abide by all
future regulations for the administration of the Northern

\(^{31}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{32}\text{Col. Sec., 4 July 1905 to Acting C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/33; NAG,}
Accra.\)
Territories and the management of its schools. The mission agreed to all the conditions and it was allowed to settle in Navrongo in 1906.

Since the White Fathers could not start any missionary activities or education without understanding Kasem, the local language, they confined themselves at first to learning the local customs and language. The administration was however worried about the possible consequences of the presence of the "first four idle" Europeans on the people. The Chief Commissioner was thus requested to:

report as to whether the establishment of the Mission at Navarro is not detrimental to the status of the White man in this country, as they are the first ones to appear to the natives here as settled in their country, doing nothing, and with no visible reason for remaining there. The Governor insisted that the White Fathers should not be permitted to establish themselves elsewhere unless they showed that their work deserved government support. Father Oscar Morin, the Superior of the Navrongo Mission observed that the conditions under which they worked differed from those of their counterparts along

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\(^{33}\)C.C.N.T., 3 February, 1906 and 1 June, 1906 to C.A. Templier. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra. It is clear that the White Fathers were given these stringent conditions partly because, Watherston, the Chief Commissioner, did not like them. He saw them as "deceitful and very untrustworthy" and thus believed "a watchful eye" was needed on their activities. C.C.N.T., 11 June, 1906 to the Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

\(^{34}\)C.C.N.T., 20 September, 1907 to DC, Navrongo. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

\(^{35}\)Col. Sec., 27 August, 1907, C.C.N.T., 5 July, 1907 to Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.
the coast. According to him the people of the coast had many centuries of contact with Europeans and had come to admire and accept their way of life and education. On the contrary, the Kassena among whom they lived and worked had not been so fortunate. The Kassena according to him, never travelled outside their area and wanted to remain so. Therefore, they did not know the value of instruction which to them would make the younger ones migrate.\(^{36}\)

According to Morin, the apprehensions of the government about the alleged evil influence of four idle white men were unfounded since:

> the natives see plainly the difference between officers and missionaries, and their mutual ends. I have often heard them distinguish one from the other. The white man of the military station, they say, takes care of the country, prevents conflicts, murders, robberies, etc.; you show us the way of the good.\(^{37}\)

Nevertheless, to avoid the threat of expulsion from the Northern Territories, the White Fathers started a school in Navrongo on 16 December 1907 and thereby for the first time, introduced formal western education into the region.\(^{38}\)

The White Fathers school had a chequered history in its formative years. It began with twenty-six pupils, sixteen of whom were almost grown men and six of whom were apprenticed to a carpentry workshop because they were advanced in age. Attendance was fairly regular until February 1908 when it was decided that

\(^{36}\)Rev. Oscar Morin, 6 November, 1907 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/86; NAG, Accra.

\(^{37}\)Ibid.

\(^{38}\)Col. Watherston, 19 March, 1908 to Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra. For the contribution of the White Fathers to education in the North see Der (1983)
many of the pupils were too old to begin education. Accordingly, ten of them were sent away but only two of the replacements started schooling. Attendance began to dwindle and by March 1908 only three reported at school regularly. In December 1908, it was decided that the boys should live at the school and the mission undertook to feed and clothe them. The pupils were given an hour's daily drill by a non-commissioned officer of the Northern Constabulary. The School received a favourable report from H.T.C. Wheeler, the District Commissioner, who inspected it in November 1909.

Wheeler reported that the boys could be divided into two classes. Boys in the first group could "read, write to dictation, add columns of figures with accuracy and pick out the countries of Europe on the map." They could also answer questions intelligently in English and "even tell the time by the clock." The other pupils could also read, write, do arithmetic and answer general questions in English although they had not completed a year's instruction at school. Captain Wheeler further noted that the boys looked happy, well fed and decently and uniformly clothed. With the exception of a few pupils, the Commissioner was struck by the general air of intelligence of the boys and agreed with Father Morin that they compared favourably with children of other African

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40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.
ethnic groups with whom he had contacts. The above views were confirmed by the annual report of 1909 which stated that:

the boys are well clothed and cared for, very intelligent and very well mannered. The School Workshops have also proved useful, and planks, windows, etc. have been supplied from them to the new station at Zouaragu. According to Bening, the establishment of a boarding institution at Navrongo and the provision of clothing for the pupils was a departure from official practice. Reporting about the boarding facilities, Father Morin stated that it cost 5s a month to feed a child mainly because the foodstuffs were not always available at Navrongo. He further said that the school and some of the pupils had made enormous progress although a few of the pupils had not achieved anything good.

In spite of the above favourable reports on the school, it came under criticism from Captain Armitage, the next Chief Commissioner. We have already noted that the opening of the school at Navrongo had led the administration to open schools in Tamale and Gambaga. From 1910 onwards, administrators formed the habit of comparing the efforts and achievements of the Mission and Government schools. Reporting about the progress of the school in 1912, Father Oscar Morin, the Superior of the Mission said this of the pupils:

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42 Ibid.


they speak English all the day long, and can generally say in this language all what they want to say, though not always in the same purity of language as Shakespeare would have said it.\(^4\)

Some political officers held contrary views. For example, Captain Berkeley who inspected the school in October 1912 noted:

> their reading is laboured and their arithmetic very slow. I do not think by the time they arrive at man’s estate they will be capable of being of any use as a clerk or interpreter, or that they would pass the necessary examination of the civil service. It would hardly seem if the school has justified its existence.\(^4\)

Berkeley’s report seems to have prejudiced the Chief Commissioner against the efforts of the White Fathers. His attitude was anti-Missionary and he indicted the Missionaries’ efforts as follows:

> The efforts made by the White Fathers in this direction cannot be called successful, which is not surprising, when the real object of their presence in the Northern Territories -proselytism - is recognised. In view of the comparative failure of the mission as an educational factor in this Dependency, I do not consider that it should be allowed to extend its sphere of influence.\(^4\)

The administrators in Accra agreed with the Chief Commissioner. They considered the work of the missionaries as disappointing and stated that unless the Fathers showed a marked improvement in the standard attained by the pupils, they were not to be allowed to open any more schools.\(^4\)

\(^4\)Father Oscar Morin, "Report on Roman Catholic School," Navarro, 16 February, 1912. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

\(^4\)Captain Berkeley, 4 October, 1912 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

\(^4\)Armitage, 18 October, 1912 to the Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

\(^4\)Acting Col. Sec., 21 November, 1912 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.
Six months later, the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories was still lamenting that the work of the White Fathers in the educational field "has been and still is a failure." The administration's criticisms of the efforts of the White Fathers was unfortunate and showed a lack of appreciation of the problems they encountered. The school suffered from lack of funds and teachers from the beginning. Formal western education was also a new factor in the life of the people.

The mission also came into conflict with the administration over school attendance by the pupils. The White Fathers were of the view that since they had been compelled to establish a school, it was the duty of the administration to coerce the pupils to attend school. The teachings of the mission seem to have been felt in another way. The administration's fears that the missionaries were a major source of ideas which undermined traditional society, particularly traditional authority soon came to light. In 1911, the chief of Navrongo complained that the converts had stopped working on his farms and presenting him with basketfuls of farm produce after the harvests. The complaint by the Navropio, seems

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50 Armitage, 6 February, 1913 to Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

51 According to Kimble, the missionaries had gained a stronghold in the southern areas of the Colony and their teachings "encouraged Africans to think for themselves, allowed them to challenge officialdom, and even giving them active support in recent protests." Kimble *op cit.* p.82. See also Der, (1974), pp.41-61

strange since chieftaincy in his area was a new phenomenon introduced by British administrators. The request therefore had no traditional basis. It however, indicates the growing powers of chieftaincy, the new established institution, vis-a-vis the Tindana, who in pre-colonial time was rather the one entitled to the first fruits of the harvest. According to the Provincial Commissioner, although the missionaries preached obedience and submission to legitimate authority, their doctrine of equality of races was not particularly palatable to the administration.53

The Government was also worried about the origin of the Mission. Coming from Burkina Faso, the Missionaries were considered French spies.54 Another reason for the apprehension of the administration towards the White Fathers was that the latter had learnt Kasem faster than the political officers. It was observed about the Bremen and Basel Missions that:

The real danger is that the Missionaries are the only white men in the Gold Coast who can converse freely in the vernacular languages ... and nothing gives a white man a greater influence over the natives than the possession of that faculty. They thus have a power-whether they use it or not- to which we have nothing to oppose."55

The administration should not have been worried about the alleged growing influence of the Missionaries because their activities were

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53C.N.E.P., 29 August, 1911 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/33; NAG, Accra.

54Oscar Morin, 19 September, 1924 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/298; NAG, Accra.

55Cold Coast Conference of 19 May, 1915. ADM.12/1/21; NAG, Accra.
terminated at the onset of the First World War as a result of lack of funds.

The Wesleyans were the only other Missionary body that made efforts to establish schools in the Protectorate. Between 1912 and 1920, they, like the White Fathers, encountered problems in their attempt to open missions. C.H. Armitage, the Chief Commissioner, claimed to have received a telegram in code from the Colonial Secretary instructing him "to grant Rev. Martin (Wesleyan Minister) no encouragement, direct or indirect, to establish a mission in Tamale."56 Meanwhile, the Secretary of State for the Colonies had informed the Mission that he had no objection to their establishing a mission in Tamale.57 The Chief Commissioner still observed that the time was not yet ripe to open up the Protectorate to further missionary enterprise. He condemned the:

introduction into a country such as this of numerous denominations which tend to confuse the natives, who eventually play off one against the other to the detriment of the spread of christianity among them.58

Meanwhile, Rev. H.G. Martin arrived in Tamale to begin work. The Mission was informed that it could not open schools at Wa, Gambaga, Tamale, and Navrongo in direct opposition to existing and projected schools. The Wesleyans were again informed that they could not build stations in Muslim strongholds or within the sphere of

56C.C.N.T, Salaga, 29 March, 1913 to Hon. Acting Col. Sec., Christianborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra.

57M.J.Read for Under-Secretary of State, Downing St., 30 December, 1912 to Sec, W.M.M.S. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra.

58C.C.N.T., 18 November, 1912 to the Acting Col. Sec. ADM.56/1/139; NAG, Accra.
influence of the White Fathers. In the Chief Commissioner's view, Mission schools were not only not to be allowed to compete with government schools, where these already existed; they were unnecessary in such places. In spite of his opposition, Armitage could not prevent the Wesleyans from starting a school in Tamale.

Between 1914 and 1916, the Wesleyan Mission ran a school in Tamale. Information on the school is scanty although it is known that 38 boys were reported to be attending the school. The school did not make any visible sign of progress and the administration seemed not to have encouraged it. It was eventually closed down in 1916 due to the restrictions Armitage placed on Rev. Stormonth, Martin's successor.

The closure of the White Fathers's school at Navrongo and the

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59 C.C.N.T., 18 November, 1912 to Acting Col. Sec., C.C.N.T., 5 June, 1912 to Governor. ADM.56/1/139; NAG, Accra.

60 Rev. J.M. Stormonth, 28 November, 1914 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/139; NAG, Accra.

61 Rev. Martin, the first agent in Tamale fell out with the administration for breaking his promise not to give children religious instructions without their parents consent. He was also alleged to have discussed the amorous relations between Government officials and African women with a non-official. See C.C.N.T., Salaga, 29 March, 1913 to the Acting Col. Sec., Christianborg, Accra. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra. The issue was not about the allegation but the fact that it was discussed with a non-official.

62 In a reply to a letter from Armitage accusing him of travelling outside Tamale without informing the administration, Rev. Stormonth accused Armitage of attempting to thwart the efforts of the missionaries. See John Stormonth, W.M.H., Tamale, 6 April, 1914 to Captain Armitage, C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra. In another letter on the same subject Stormonth asserted that he had "the rights and privileges of a citizen but now I find that I have less liberty than my native cook." See Rev. Stormonth, Mission House, Tamale, 9 April, 1914 to Captain Armitage, C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/160; NAG, Accra.

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withdrawal of the Wesleyan Mission from the Northern Territories meant that for almost a decade the Government had a monopoly over education. In theory, education in the Northern Territories continued to be controlled by the Education Department but in practice, they were not supervised by personnel of that Department. Rather, political officers who had no training as school administrators, were left to supervise them. There was no educational policy and the curriculum was unrelated to the social life of the people. By 1922, there were only 243 pupils attending government schools out of a population of over half a million.

7.3. **GUGGISBERG'S EDUCATIONAL REFORMS.**

It has been pointed out in the proceeding section that there was lack of direction in the field of education field. Governor Guggisberg provided the answer by introducing reforms in the educational system. The former system was unrelated to the needs of the people and succeeded in producing only clerks. The products

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63 For example, the first school inspected by personnel of the Education Depart was the Gambaga school in 1923. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1926/27, p.9. ADM.5/1/65; NAG, Accra.

64 Although I have not come across any syllabus in the records, yet, the programme of activities for "Vacation Day" gives one an idea of how it was unrelated to the life of the people. For example, among the items are 1) Hurrah, Hurrah for England; 2) The song that Britons love; 3) Playing the Church. See Programme for Vacation Day in 1916. ADM.56/1/88; NAG, Accra.

65 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1922, p.28.

of the schools acquired a knowledge of the English language, reading, writing and some elementary arithmetic but did not learn any trade. Indeed, it was reported that:

the government schools would soon let lose boys with no qualification beyond a smattering of English and Arithmetic and with a profound dislike for manual work which they will regard as below their dignity.67

After a tour of schools in the Dependency, the Governor expressed his dissatisfaction with them and decided to introduce "a general educational system suited to the needs of the Northern Territories."68 He believed that "in the Northern Territories we practically have a clean sheet, for the few schools that do exist are merely a drop in the bucket."69

In his new scheme, a central school was built in Tamale as a model for infant and primary education. It became the centre from which the whole system of primary education radiated throughout the Northern Territories. In line with the new policy, the standard of education in the outstations was not to exceed Standard 3.70 The school in Tamale provided finishing classes for specially selected pupils who showed ability and character.71 According to Guggisberg,

67 D.C., Wa, 31 July 1922 to the C.N.P., ADM.56/1/323; NAG, Accra.
68 Minutes by Guggisberg, 1 October, 1924. ADM.56/1/305; NAG, Accra.
69 Guggisberg to Secretary of State, 20th June, 1925.
70 That is, six years of primary education.
71 See The Gold Coast; A Review of the Events of 1925-26 and the Prospects for 1926-27, pp. 227-9. Education at the Tamale school was to reach Standard VII, that is, ten years of primary education.
the finishing classes would be devoted to a large extent, to such vocational training as typing, book keeping, road and bridge-building, hospital dressing, specialised agriculture and veterinary work. Lastly, the training of "native" teachers was also done in the school.\textsuperscript{72} The curriculum as stated, was to have a strong "practical bias". The pupils were taught to use local materials for handicrafts such as rope and mat making, raffia and leather work, rough carpentry and masonry. They spent fifty minutes at parades, three and a half hours work in secular learning and about four hours in practical work.\textsuperscript{73} In 1929 it was reported that the Tamale School boys had made articles of furniture such as louvre doors and windows for houses and certain boys with their instructors built a store for the school press during the holidays. It was also reported that:

the Gambaga boys can now use the skins of sheep, dressing and dyeing them by native process to make sandals, bags and head gear. They can also spin, weave and make into local smocks, cotton grown on the school farm.\textsuperscript{74}

Guggisberg's programme sought also to avoid the breakdown of traditional authority. He believed that this had taken place because of the misdirected educational expansion in the Colony and

\textsuperscript{72}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{73}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1st April, 1931 to March 1932. ADM.1/214-215; NAGT.

\textsuperscript{74}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1928/29, p.6. ADM.5/1/57; NAG, Accra.
Much stress was therefore placed in the fostering of "respect for native rulers and institutions" to avoid "denationalisation" and the creation of "a half-baked European." To this end, the boarding schools were organised:

on dual lines of government by chiefs and administrative officers... each house has its elder, each compound its Chief and each school its Paramount Chief, the Teachers, Masters and Superintendent of Education, Northern Territories, reproducing the Commissioner grade.

As part of the re-organisation, the Educational Department of the Northern Territories was made separate under a Superintendent who was directly responsible to the Governor.

In undertaking all these reforms Guggisberg was also influenced by the Educationists Committee he set up in 1920. The Committee's report revealed that the system of education in the Gold Coast as a whole needed change. According to the report, teachers were ill-paid and inefficient, text books were inadequate...
and unsuitable and there was lack of technical education. According to the new scheme, education in the south would progress from primary school stage to University level at Achimota College. Meanwhile, in the north, education was to be rigidly controlled and kept to the minimum level with the objective of producing handymen and clerks. No provision was made for higher education in the Dependency and Guggisberg’s insistence on keeping the standard of education up to Standard 3 in all schools except Tamale, meant the exclusion of a majority of pupils from acquiring Standard V11 education.

Neither Guggisberg nor his officers realised the implications of the new educational policy on the North. Carried to its logical conclusion, the policy would produce a semi-literate mass. Guggisberg did not make provisions for those artisans to be employed since no large market existed for their products. Also, looked at from a national perspective, the system of education in the North was perpetuating the North-South divide with one area producing only artisans. Neither was there any way of ensuring that every ex-Standard 3 graduates returned to the rural area or went back to the land for which they were trained. It could thus be said that in the long run Guggisberg’s policy created the "semi-standard European" in the North.

To ensure that his educational policies were not undermined by Christian Missions, the Governor imposed severe restrictions on them. The Northern Territories Education Ordinance of 1927 stipulated among other things that:

No Mission Society, body or Corporation or individual shall open any station within the Northern Territories without the sanction of the Governor; and after the lapse of a period to be determined by the Governor, his further sanction in writing is necessary before any school or any other educational institution may be started in the station.\(^{81}\)

Progressive as Guggisberg's policies were for the south, they rather retarded the educational advancement of the Northern Territories. It is not surprising that Lord Hailey felt that the policy of isolating the North from the South was detrimental to the progress of the former.\(^{82}\) The Governor's policies helped to increase the educational disparities which had grown over the years between the north and south rather than correct them.\(^{83}\)

\(^{81}\)Northern Territories Education Ordinance, 1927. ADM.56/1/305; NAG, Accra.


\(^{83}\)For example, while in 1932 there were only four mission and five government schools in the Northern Territories, there were forty-six government and assisted schools in Asante. In the Gold Coast Colony, the figures were three hundred and twenty three and one hundred and seventy-eight respectively. See Education Department Report 1932-33, p.15. Also, in 1950, there were 2,601 schools in the South (Asante and the Colony) serving a total population of 2,875,000. The total per cent of the population in school was 8.1. For the North, there were 83 schools serving an estimated population of 1,093,000. with a total enrolment of 0.5 per cent. Forster, *op cit.* p.117. There were no non-assisted schools in the Protectorate. A similar situation obtained in Nigeria. See Fafunwa, B.A., *A History of Education in Nigeria.* (George Allen & Urwin, 1974).
Another area neglected until 1935 was education for girls. Before then, female education was not popular.\textsuperscript{54} Because of the difficulties involved parents, particularly mothers, were reluctant to expose their daughters to the dangers of trekking over long distances. Marriage customs which permitted the betrothall of girls even at birth, and the feeling that boys were better wage earners and should therefore receive attention first, further limited the chances of girls being sent to school. Some colonial officials took steps to correct this imbalance. For example, realising that most opposition to female education came from women, the District Commissioner for Lawra arranged for a "Mothers' Day" and forty five mothers visited the schools.\textsuperscript{55} These efforts led to more girls attending school. Consequently, Girls Schools were opened in Navrongo, Jirapa, Tamale and Damongo. But apart from the teaching of needle work the education given to the girls did not differ from that of boys.

Although no provision had been made for higher education in the Protectorate, a few Northerners went to the colony for further education. As we have already noted, in 1908, four boys were sent to the Government School in Cape Coast and subsequently, to the Technical School in Accra. Also, between 1917 and 1920 six northern

\textsuperscript{54}Between 1912 and 1928, the average per cent of girls who attended school was 5.3. See Gold Coast: Report in the Blue Book, 1912-29.

\textsuperscript{55}Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1938. ADM.56/1/374. Three years later, the Lawra Confederacy Council allotted three fourths of the vacancies in the schools to girls. See District Commissioner's Office, 12 November, 1943 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.
boys were admitted to the Training College in Accra although the Principal felt that those admitted in 1917 were poor academically. The number of boys from the Dependency attending higher institutions of learning continued to increase and from the 1930s, those who passed the Standard V11 examinations were sent to Achimota College to train as teachers. By 1940, seventeen were attending Achimota College but they were not permitted to follow the secondary school programme. There was no Teachers Training College to train Northerners to teach in schools until 1944. In 1925, Guggisberg proposed a teachers' College but Rev. A.G. Fraser, Principal of Achimota College argued that North was not yet ripe for such an institution. Fraser rather advocated the training of indigenous teachers under close supervision of European staff so that:

the teachers for sometime to come should be the best disciples of the European teachers, trained in close personal contact with them teaching under their close personal supervision and sharing their outlook for the villages. Thus wise, experienced leaders of the coming educated community will be produced, not scholars, but men of sense and patience and service. Their scholars will some day soon outstrip them in information, but they will not lose the regard and reverence of the community they will have led gradually to the light.

The White Fathers who left in 1914 because of the war returned in 1920 and re-opened the School a year later. It was closed down again in that year because of lack of funds but was opened in

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86 Memo on Northern Territories Primary Education, Generally. n.d. by Deputy Director of Education.

87 A.G. Fraser, Memorandum of a tour in the Northern Territories, p.11. ADM.56/1/342; NAG, Accra.
In 1931, the White Fathers started a seminary class at Navrongo because of the need for teachers. On the advice of the Director of Education who visited Navrongo in 1936, the White Fathers adopted the syllabus Candler had prepared for Northern Territories teachers. This was the humble beginning of the St. John Bosco's Training College at Navrongo. By 1940, the colonial administration favoured the opening of a Training College in Tamale, partly in order to train a greater number of Northern teachers, but also to reduce the unhealthy influence to which, in the eyes of the administration, the Northerners were exposed at Achimota. The exigencies of war did not allow for the immediate opening of the College until 1944 when the Government Training College, the first institution of higher learning in the Protectorate was established. In a sense, the establishment of the first college in the North was not motivated by a planned policy of rapid educational expansion but by the necessity to prevent the propagation of "southern" and progressive ideas in the North.

Between 1930 and 1946, efforts were made to isolate the

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89 The Government Training College in Tamale is now called Bagabaga Training College named after the area in which it is sited. Other institutions of high learning opened during our period of study are Government Secondary School (1951) but now also called Tamale Secondary School, St. Charles Secondary School, Tamale (1953) and Government Training College, Pusiga, (1954) but also now named Gbewa Training College. The latter was established as a response to the repeated concern by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations about the disparity between the state of facilities in the northern and southern sections of the Mandated Togoland.
Northern Territories from Asante and the Colony in the field of education, just as it had been done earlier, to make the region the labour pool of the country. The first of these was the use of Dagbani as the lingua franca in the schools. Although the 1923 Imperial Committee of Education had recommended the use of local languages in the child's early schooling, the use of Dagbani restricted the provision of education as the establishment of schools depended upon the availability of teachers who could speak and write Dagbani. Unfortunately for the Northerners, the English language had been successfully imposed as a lingua franca and taught at all levels of instruction elsewhere in the country. Thus the lower level of education Northerners received coupled with their inability to communicate in English would indeed put them at a great disadvantage.\textsuperscript{90} In 1935, one of the White Fathers observed that:

\begin{quote}

it was not until a fairly recent date that Government changed its views in regard to the teaching of English in the Schools in the Northern Territories. Previously, English was to be taught with strict moderation in order to avoid an exodus of the natives to Kumasi or the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{90}The Language Policy within the context of Education in the South was very different. Local languages were encouraged and taught in the schools but given less emphasis. At the earlier stages of the school system instruction in the English language was encouraged and dominated all levels of instruction. Secondary education emphasised nothing but English to the point that until 1963, at the final graduating examinations, students who failed the English language were considered failures and thus were not entitled to diplomas and post-secondary education. One of the familiar signs that one could see in schools in the South was "Vernacular is prohibited" and punishment was meted out to violators of this rule.
Also, part of the new system of education which discriminated against Northerners was the wearing of the local gown, the batakari to school by both pupils and teachers of Northern extraction. The argument used in introducing the dress were that: 1) the wearing of the khaki pair of shorts and white shirt created an undesirable barrier between the pupils and their illiterate brothers; 2) the wearing of the uniform indicated that there was something wrong with the batakari; 3) some parents could not afford the uniform and lastly, 4) the pupils themselves disliked them.\(^9\)\(^2\) The wearing of batakari as uniform was stopped in the late 1940s after Northern teachers protested at what they called discrimination since their counterparts from the south were not obliged to wear them. Further emphasis on northern separateness was embodied in the suggestion that as soon as practical, southern teachers should be replaced by northern ones. Another way to prevent the southern "virus" from contaminating the "innocent" Northerner was the treatment given to the students at Achimota College. After the school term, Northerners were placed on the next available train to Kumasi and then to Tamale the following day. By these and other measures, the colonial officials in the North hoped to reduce contact between Northern boys and teachers and southerners - a contact which, to the officials, could only be detrimental to the Northerners. In one

\(^9\)\(^1\)Annual Report on the Mamprusi District, 1934-5, p.53. ADM.1/549; NAGT.

\(^9\)\(^2\)C.G.R. Amery, 19 September, 1938 to Provincial Inspector of Schools. ADM.1/103-116; NAGT.
incident in 1939, Ebenezer Adam challenged allegations of snobbiness and rudeness made by W.J.A. Jones, the Chief Commissioner, against Northern students in Achimota. Adam had his government scholarship withdrawn as a result of this incident. However, he was awarded an Achimota scholarship which allowed him to complete his training. In the same year, the Chief Commissioner described Yakubu Tali, another Achimota graduate as “detribalised" and "out of sympathy" with the educational policy in the North as a result of his Achimota training. The isolationist policies in the Northern Territories set back the pace of education in the area. For example, while in 1936 only 24 Northern pupils sat for the Gold Coast Standard VII examination, the numbers were 283 and 1,752 for Asante and Gold Coast Colony respectively. A measure of success of colonial educational policy in the Protectorate is that, in 1953, the area had only one University graduate who was trained in Britain. The first Northerner graduated

33West Africa (W. A), No. 1883, 12 April, 1952. p.319; Ladouceur op cit. p.53; Bening (1990), p. 122: Saaka op cit. p.85. Kwéku Kennedy another student of Northern origin also had his scholarship withdrawn because "he has now attached himself to his father’s people despite the fact that for his education he is indebted to his Northern Territories connections. He would be altogether discontented in the Protectorate." Cited in Bening (1990), p.126.

94Thomas (1975), p.466. Yakubu Tali, Tolon Na became one of the leading politicians of the North between 1951 and 1969. Within this period, he served as Deputy Speaker of Parliament (1969-72) and Ghana’s Ambassador to the former Yugoslavia. He was also Vice-Presidential Candidate for the Popular Front Party during the 1979 elections in Ghana. For a discussion on the relationship between Northern students at Achimota and the Northern administration see Bening (1990), pp.120-125.

95Gold Coast Education Department Reports for 1936.
from the University of Ghana only in 1960. Unfortunately, this inequality in educational opportunities still exists.
CHAPTER VIII

NATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM: OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES.

8.1. INTRODUCTION OF INDIRECT RULE.

Every system of Government if it is to be permanent and progressive must have its roots in the framework of indigenous society.¹

Native Administration will cause a system of graft to be born like unto which Tammany Hall is an infant.²

The official policy the administration practiced in the Northern Territories between 1930 and 1951 was "indirect rule." On 16 December 1929, Governor Sir Ransford Slater officially indicated that the system of indirect rule would be introduced into the Dependency. He instructed Major Jackson, the Chief Commissioner, to prepare a draft ordinance by October 1930. Major Jackson in turn requested the two subordinate Provisional Commissioners to take steps to "ascertain from the chiefs their inherent rights of jurisdiction." In 1932, three ordinances were passed to give legal backing to indirect rule. They were the Native Authority (Northern Territories) Ordinance, the Native Tribunal Ordinance (later replaced in 1935 by Native Courts) and the Native Treasuries Ordinance.³

The previous form of administration in the Protectorate was

¹C.S.P., Memorandum on the Introduction and Development of Native Administration, 14 April, 1930. ADM.1/145; NAGT.

²C.C.N.T., Memorandum of 28 December, 1928. ADM.1/7; NAGT.

³They were Ordinance 2 of 1932, Ordinance 1 of 1932 and Ordinance 10 of 1932 respectively.
characterised as "direct rule." However, because the British administration was thin it depended on chiefs. Lt. Col. Northcott, recognised this when he noted:

the agency employed will be that of the native chiefs, and their power will during good behaviour, be uniformly supported except in matters of their relationships with their neighbouring chiefs and of offenses of a capital nature.4

The Administrative Ordinance of 1902 gave the chiefs a significant role in the administration. They were authorised to "exercise the jurisdiction heretofore exercised by them in the same measure as such jurisdiction had been heretofore exercised."5 However, their powers depended on the backing of the District Commissioners because there was no formal framework for them to exercise authority. Much therefore depended on their ability as well as on the initiative of the district officers. Also, although "native tribunals" were established, chiefs heard only matrimonial and land cases; all criminal cases were tried in the Commissioner’s court. The administration declined to regularise the status and powers of the tribunals. A.W. Cardinall, Commissioner of the Southern Province asserted:

The Native Courts of the Southern Province have taken no real part in the administration. As to the constitution of the Native Courts or Tribunals, nothing is on record. The system of direct rule has been so intense that how a court is formed, of whom it consists, what officers are attached to it, the nature of its procedure, have never

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4Quoted in Bening (1975), p.118.
5Gold Coast Gazette, 1 January, 1902; Northern Territories Administrative Ordinance, No.1 of 1902.
Traditional authority was therefore useful insofar as it helped in the achievement of colonial objectives, but those exercising it were not seen as having intrinsic or inalienable rights or as entitled to assert interests of an independent kind. And in the words of Cardinall the chiefs were "mere sergeant-majors." 7

The system of indirect rule introduced in 1930, was developed in Northern Nigeria by Lord Lugard and popularised in his book The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa. 8 Indirect rule aimed at preserving the traditional state and its institutions but fashioning them to suit the modern world. Its essential ingredients were the existence of an administrative structure, a bureaucracy to implement policies, a viable system of taxation and above all, a system of administering justice. Indeed Northcott advocated a system of administration for the Protectorate which differed from the Colony. He suggested that an annual tax should be collected in the area "before the pernicious doctrine of individual irresponsibility filters through from the coast." 9 The Commissioner also wanted only the best of western institutions and practices to be introduced into the Protectorate and these only very gradually, allowing the people to adjust to European ideas at their own pace.

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7Acting C.S.P., 20 July, 1928; Report on Native Administration in the Northern territories. ADM.1/7; NAGT.

7Ibid.

8Lugard, Lord: The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (Edinburgh: 1922).

9Kimble op cit. p.554.
In this way, according to Northcott, the inhabitants could preserve that which was best in their own traditions.\textsuperscript{10} Northcott believed that with his system, the Northerners would not be thrust abruptly unprepared into a:

European world, nor would they acquire the overwhelming and ultimately unbenefitting desire simply to emulate their British masters to become "Black Europeans" in the possible shortest time.\textsuperscript{11}

Northcott did not live long enough to implement his ideas.

The system Northcott wanted to introduce had two elements of indirect rule, namely, the collection of taxes and allowing the people to preserve that which was best in their culture and political system. In spite of the professed policy of ruling through chiefs, administration was direct because chiefs were agents of the colonial state. Until Guggisberg advanced the idea in 1921, there was no thought of reconstituting native states. He had envisaged that Dagbon, Mamprugu and Gonja would become "strong native states" each "with its own little Public Works Department" and carrying on its business "with the Political Officer as Resident and advisor."\textsuperscript{12}

Although Guggisberg saw himself as a supporter of Indirect Rule, according to Wraith his biographer:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{10}Ladouceur \textit{op cit.} p.57.
\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{12}Minutes of Conference at Tamale, 11 March, 1921: Status of Native Chiefs. (In attendance His Excellence, the Governor, the Chief Commissioner, Deputy Chief Commissioner and Commissioner, Southern Province). ADM.56/1/258; NAG, Accra.
\end{flushright}
in fact there had never been any clear thinking on this subject in the Gold Coast, for indirect rule, though largely assumed, had never been expressly enunciated. Various expedients had been allowed to congeal into a more or less workable system, but the system, such as it was, lacked the very essence of indirect rule.  

Guggisberg was not alone in thinking that indirect rule was already being practiced in the Protectorate. Others like Walker-Leigh, the Chief Commissioner, Whittall, Commissioner for the Northern Province, Gilbert and Ruthford, District Commissioners for Eastern and Western Dagbon thought the same. As a result, when Slater instructed that indirect rule was to be introduced he faced opposition from the "Northern Defence" group. They believed that indirect rule was already being practiced. Walker-Leigh, the Chief Commissioner on the other hand thought that the introduction of indirect rule was premature. Gilbert, District Commissioner for Eastern Dagbon also pointed out:

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\(^3\) Wraith *op cit.* p.265.

\(^4\) The Northern Defence Group was made up of some colonial administrators who had served in the Protectorate for a long time and who did not want the introduction of indirect rule because they believed that what was already in operation was indirect rule. Walker-Leigh, the Chief Commissioner had been in the Protectorate since 1898. Whittall, Commissioner for the Northern Province came to the area in 1907. Gilbert, Armstrong, Moreton and Rutherford had served in the Dependency for nearly ten years. See Staniland *op cit.* Chapter 5 for the opposition of this group to indirect rule in the Protectorate.

\(^5\) For the hostile attitudes to Indirect Rule of Walker-Leigh, Whittall and others and their belief that it was not yet ripe to introduce indirect rule in the Northern Territories see Report on Political Conference at Tamale, 3 January, 1929. ADM.1/452; NAGT; Happenings During 1929, January to December for his Excellency’s Speech on Estimates. ADM.56/1/408; NAG, Accra. Report on a Northern Province political Conference held at Navrongo on 23-24 December, 1929. ADM.56/1/299; NAG, Accra; Northern Territories Handing Over Report, 1929. ADM.56/1/408; NAG, Accra.
Indirect Rule... has been my policy ever since I have been stationed here, all civil cases and all orders concerning the Dagomba country have been sent to the Na, so that the proposed innovation under the heading Indirect Rule will be a change in detail only.¹⁶

This was a wrong understanding of the indirect rule since the essential ingredients of that system which we mentioned above did not exist.

The "Northern Group" argued that the Northern Territories were not yet ripe for the implementation of indirect rule because of: 1) lack of educated Northern Territories Africans; 2) chiefs were universally illiterate in English; 3) the collection of direct tax, a component of indirect rule, would be a breach of faith to the "natives" since they had been promised, in 1921, that census returns would not be used for taxation purposes; and 4) the number of "French" settled in the Northern Territories who might return to "French Territories to avoid payment of tax."¹⁷ The above arguments clearly indicate that the "Northern Group" did not understand what indirect rule entailed. The Sokoto Caliphate which was the model of indirect rule had clerks not literate in English. And, the French taxed their West African subjects more than the British. The imposition of taxes in the Protectorate therefore would not drive the "French" subjects away. All the officers most closely identified with the Walker-Leigh regime were transferred or retired

¹⁶D.C., Eastern Dagomba, 8 February, 1930 to C.S.P., ADM.1/145; NAGT.

¹⁷C.C.N.T., Memorandum of 28 December, 1928. ADM.1/7; NAGT. See also Northern Territories Handing Over Report, 1929. ADM.56/1/408; NAG, Accra.
before Indirect Rule was introduced in 1930.

The underlying principle of indirect rule as it was implemented in the Protectorate, was the policy of preserving the North from the "disruptive" outside influence in order to foster traditional values and institutions. According to its supporters, it would permit the gradual acquisition of skills necessary for traditional rulers to exercise degrees of political authority while remaining firmly rooted in traditional political institutions and practices. But there was a conceptual weakness in indirect rule. The idea of "tradition" as embodied in the Native Authority frequently reflected more the colonial administration’s notions of what a traditional political system should be rather than what pre-colonial systems actually were. Nor, as we shall come to see, was the administration willing to recognise that traditional rulers had any inherent rights to govern.

But before the system of indirect rule could be implemented, the British had to recreate the Northern states which had almost ceased to exist before colonial rule. It was again necessary to know the nature of those traditional institutions which were to be

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18 Walker-Leigh for instance, was retired in 1930 after thirty three years service in the Northern Territories. Staniland op cit. p.83. Ladouceur op cit. p.53.

modified to fit into the "modern world." To reconstruct the states, the government launched research projects into the histories, customs, constitutions, and land tenure systems of all ethnic groups inhabiting the Dependency. The political Officers were instructed to conduct investigations in their own areas and at the same time, R.S. Rattray, Special Commissioner for Anthropology, compiled a general study of the Northern Territories. Rattray's research resulted in his monumental books *The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*.\(^{20}\)

Following Rattray's research, a series of conferences were held to codify the traditional constitutions, rules of succession and the relations between the various ethnic groups. The most important of these conferences were Gonja (May 1930), Dagbon (November 1930), Kusasi (March 1931), Mamprugu (December 1932) and Wa (July 1933). At the Gonja conference held at Yapei, the constitution of the Kingdom was codified, the relative seniority of the chiefs and the extent of their powers was drawn, agreement on the list of chiefs qualified to mount the paramountcy was reached and the chiefs agreed to unite under the Yagbumwura.\(^{21}\) It was also discovered that certain villages which served the Yagbumwura through some Eastern Gonja chiefs were cut off from their original landlords and put under Western Gonja chiefs while others had been

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\(^{20}\) Rattray's book had Volumes 1 & 2. Other important publications of the era were Duncan-Johnstone and Blair, (1932); Eyre-Smith, (1933); and Tamakloe, (1931).

\(^{21}\) Slater, 15 February 1932 to Cunliffe-Lister. ADM.1/65; NAGT.
placed in Western Dagbon. Also of importance was the discovery that in Eastern Gonja:

chiefs who were senior or equal to the Kpembewura have been made subservient to him. This information was actually "volunteered at a palaver by the Kpembewura himself."²²

Also, certain Nchumuru and Nawuri villages in the Krachi district which were claimed by the Gonjas were restored to them without the consent of the former.²³ At the Dagbon conference, Western and Eastern Dagbon were united under the Ya Na and the chiefs of the former independent dukedoms of Karaga and Savelugu agreed to come under the Ya Na. Expressing a surprise at these events, it was asserted that:

with the reconstruction of the states, those chiefs who hitherto enjoyed unwarranted status as a result of the Anglo-German boundaries divisions suffered a loss of prestige. It is therefore greatly to their credit that they readily acknowledged the paramountcy of their former head-chiefs and consented to resume their correct positions.²⁴

This could not have been otherwise because the few years of colonial rule in the Protectorate had convinced most people that it was futile and foolish to question the administration's decisions however arbitrary these might be. Besides, the chiefs of the

²²Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1929 to March 1930.

²³Interviews with Adikrofo of Jambuai, Wiai and Nana Bande 11, Nanjiro-Owure on 13, 15 and 16 December, 1994 respectively. Bourret's assertion that those villages were allowed to reaffirm their allegiance to the Yagbumwura is not borne by the fact. See Bourret op cit. p.97.

²⁴Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1937 to March 1938.
dukedoms agreed to serve the Ya Na because they knew that they could become Ya Na one day. Ferguson and Wilks have noted that by attempting to restore supposedly traditional constitutions, the colonial bureaucracy did not allow the evolution which was going in Dagbon chiefship.

By 1933, only the former kingdoms of Mamprugu, Dagbon, Gonja and Wa had been constituted into Native Authorities. However, three years later Native Authorities were established for Nanun, Builsa, Tumu, Lawra, Kassena-Nankanni and later for Krachi, Prang, Yeji and Mo. In creating these Native Authorities, it was ensured that no one ethnic group was incorporated in two different Native Authority area except in the case of Nchumuru and Nawuri who lived in both the Eastern Gonja and Krachi districts. In the case of Krachi it was not possible to get all Krachis into the same Native Authority because some of them lived in the Asante Protectorate. Some of the Native Authorities such as Krachi and Lawra-Tumu were created through amalgamation of many ethnic groups. The Krachi District for instance, consisted of eleven ethnic groups with nothing in common except the worship of the Dente fetish. This hodgepodge of

25 The Ya Naship rotated between the three dukes of Mion-Lana, Yo Na, Karaga Na and the Gbonlana. The Gbonlana was the eldest male of the deceased Na and he became the regent on the father’s death.

26 Ferguson and Wilks op cit. p.329. The evolution was that some "gates" and claimants were being eliminated from chiefship since they could not marshal enough human and material resources to back their claims.

27 Many of them except the Ntrubu, Atwode, Krachi and Nchumuru moved into the area to seek sanctuary from the powerful Dente shrine during the nineteenth century. See Maier op cit. pp.98-119 for the creation of what she terms the "Bron Confederation";
peoples presented a problem; there was no cohesive material with which to build a Native Administration embracing them all; and yet individually they were too small both in numbers and amount of land to permit the establishment in each of a formal local government. By reason of their numerical strength and their ownership of the fetish, the Krachi acquired a limited influence over the others hence Kete Krachi was made seat of the administration. Three other areas where difficulties were encountered in establishing Native Authorities were in Builsa, the Kassena-Nankanni and the Lobi-Dagarti. The difficulty arose because according to one report they "had not emerged from the patriarchal stage." After much explanation by the political officers about the benefits of amalgamation, the Kassena-Nankanni of Navrongo and the Lobi-Dagarti of the Lawra sub-district formed confederacies in the one case of eleven members and in the other of three functioning under a

Bourret *op cit.*, p.96. Indeed one report stated that the people "agreed, not, it must be admitted, with any readiness, to the formation of the Confederacy." Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1932, p.8.

*Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1937 to March 1938.* This was a wrong notion about them because although chiefdom is among them is a British creation, the Builsa had rallied round the Sandema to defeat Babatu. Besides a report of that year indicated that the Builsa and Isala produced some of the best chiefs. See Annual report of the Northern Territories for 1929/20. When Afoko, headchief of the Builsas died in March 1927, it was reported that the Government had lost "a loyal and energetic chief." See Annual Report for 1926/27, p.12. Indeed, the Jirapa Na, of the Lawra-Tumu confederation was the first chief in the Protectorate to be awarded a medal by His Majesty's Government for meritorious work. See *The Gold Coast: A Review of Events for 1925/26* and Prospects for 1926/27, p.233. ADM.5/1/65; NAG, Accra.
President who was subject to re-election every year. The Builsa and Isala on the other hand decided to appoint the Sandemanab and Tumukoro respectively as their headchiefs. The administration wanted the Builsa to be absorbed under the Nayiri as it had done to the Kusasi. But more careful inquiries proved that the course would be incorrect unless readily agreed to by them, as it would have been an arbitrary act, unsupported by historical facts, to have appointed Nayiri, as was done in 1912, to be paramount over them.

The Native Authority Ordinance empowered the Chief Commissioner, with the approval of the Governor, to constitute Native Authority areas and to "appoint any chief or other native or any group of natives to be the Native Authority for any area." In this sense, the Ya Na, the Nayiri, the Yagbumwura, the Wa Na, the Bimbilla Na, and the Krachiwura for example, became the Native Authorities for Dagbon, Mamprugu, Gonja, Wa, Bimbilla and Krachi respectively. Subordinate Native Authorities were also created for the large districts such as Dagbon, Mamprugu and Gonja. For example, thirteen Subordinate Native Authorities were created in

29Ibid.

The people objected to any amalgamation with Mamprugu pointing out that the only common connection between the two ethnic groups was the worship of a certain fetish. As the administration found out that this formed an insecure basis for even a confederacy, they were allowed to select their own headchief. To the surprise of the Commissioner they selected the Sandemanab, which is what the administration wanted. Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1937 to March 1938.

31Native Authority (Northern Territories) Ordinance, section 3.
Dagbon, which was one of the largest and mostly densely populated Native Authority areas.\textsuperscript{32} Such appointments could be revoked, and the Ordinance laid down penalties for any person who professed "to exercise administrative functions." The Ordinance also prescribed the functions and powers of the Native Authorities. These included the duty of maintaining law and order. They were also empowered to issue rules on a wide range of matters such as firearms, liquor, markets, sanitation, infectious diseases, and others "generally providing for peace, good order, and welfare of the natives" of "an area."\textsuperscript{33} They could hire employees and impose charges for services provided. Each Native Authority had its own court and treasury.

8.2. **INDIRECT RULE IN PRACTICE.**

To enable the Native Authorities carry out their functions effectively, there was the need for revenue. "Without a tax" Lord Lugard had pontificated in 1922 "there can be no treasury and without a treasury no real eventual measure of self-government."\textsuperscript{34} Revenue could not be collected without any legal backing hence the passage of the Native Treasuries Ordinance of July 30, 1932. Native Treasuries were established for each of the Native Authorities. Sub-treasuries were also created at Kusasi for Mamprugu, Kpembe for

\textsuperscript{32}The Native Authority (Northern Territories) Ordinance No. 2 of 1932 (30 January 1932), Cap. 84; Order No. 1 of 1933 (constituting Dagomba divisions as Subordinate Native Authorities); Order No. 2 of 1933 (constituting the Dagomba Kingdom as a Native Authority).

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.} sections 4, 8, 12, 14 and 17.

\textsuperscript{34}Lugard \textit{op cit.} p. 219.
Gonja and Savelugu and Gulkpiego (Tamale), for Dagbon. These Sub or Divisional Treasuries collected and sent the revenue to the central treasury, the idea being to strengthen the control of the latter over the former. Indeed, the treasuries were said to be the foundation stone of the Native Administration. The Native Treasuries played an important part in the education of chiefs in the management of local affairs since they were involved in the collection and spending of taxes. Also, it conferred on them some measure of financial control. This is because one of the conditions for the establishment of the Native Administrations was the delegation of financial control to chiefs. The main sources of revenue for Native Administrations before the introduction of the administrative reforms were court fees and fines, tolls and monies paid to a Native Authority in respect of fees, rents and royalties under the Minerals Ordinance.

These sources of revenue seem to have been productive, but the amounts derived from them were too small to run the Native Administrations successfully. For example, the total revenue collected by the Treasury in Yendi in 1930/31 was £149. This rose to £593 two years later. Fees from markets and "kraals" accounted for eighty per cent of the revenue but they fluctuated so much as

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35 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April, 1930 to March 1931.

36 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1930 to March 1931.

37 C.S.P., 23 January, 1931 to C.C.N.T. ADM.2/18; D.C., Dagomba, Informal Diary, 5 March 1934. ADM.1/235; NAGT.
to make them unreliable as a foundation on which to build up Native Administrative finances. According to one report, some areas far away from the main trade routes collected revenue sufficient only to pay the workers and a few employees. The low level of revenue, the Slump of 1929-33, the ratification of the Geneva convention on forced labour and the need for more money to provide social services led to the re-introduction of direct tax in 1936.

Much preparation was made before the taxes were introduced to avoid a repetition of events in Eastern Nigeria. The views of chiefs and people were sought, the capacity of the people to pay, and how, and how much was investigated and widespread propaganda as to the reasons and objectives of the tax was undertaken. It was eventually agreed that the tax should be collected in cash although in very rare cases, livestock could be collected in lieu of cash. The tax was to be known as a "tribute tax" because it was regarded as a commutation of the tribute in labour or kind which the chiefs formerly levied on the people. Steps were taken to ensure that the rate was not higher than the ordinary person could afford to pay. To this end, the average income of the individual farmer and other

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38 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1929 to March 1930.


40 Annual report for 1935.
classes of workers in the territory was assessed and on the data thus collected, it was decided to vary the tax in relation to the economic conditions of each area. A great part of the clerical work was carried out by literate Moslems and school children on holidays. When the government gave its approval, the tax was fixed at the following rates; for Krachi and Gonja, 2s 6d, for Dagomba and Kusasi 2s, and 1s for Konkomba and Bimoba. The tax was imposed by legislation on the part of the government but was collected in the name of the Native Authority. This was to strengthen their position and of course, do the government’s dirty work and impress on the people the connection between the tax and the Native Authority. The central government did not take part of the proceeds of the direct tax which was supposed to be spent in the area where it was collected. In this respect, the system of taxation in the Northern Territories differed from the rest of the colony. Earlier at a conference in 1932, the Ya Na asked to be relieved of much of the development work such as the building of a Police line, court and maintenance of Caravanserai without getting any reimbursement for his efforts. The king complained that the government was appropriating all local revenue and concluded "I would like to say that even the best horse will not go unless he is fed.”41 All male adults resident in a particular area and irrespective of their country of origin became liable to payment of the tax. Only those who by reason of infirmity or age were unable to work were

41 D.C., Western Dagomba, Informal Diary, 21 July, 1932. ADM.1/232; Minutes of the Annual Dagomba Conference Held at Yendi on 21 July, 1932. ADM.1/519; NAGT.
The officers were surprised at the eagerness with which the people paid. In Kusasi for example, an old man, on being informed by his sons of the grounds on which they had obtained exemption for him, insisted on his name being added to the roll. When asked the reason for this he replied that:

if his wives learned that he had been classed as infirm they would laugh at him to scorn and consider themselves at liberty to contract new alliances.

There was also the pathetic case of a leper who declined exemption. He contended that despite the loss of some of his fingers, he was able to earn a living, and therefore there was no justification for differentiating between him and his brothers. He said that to him, it was a matter of honour to pay tax. The willingness of the people of the Protectorate to pay the tax is interesting since payment of tax was detested by most colonial subjects and was often

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42 The methods of collecting the tax were as follows; each subordinate chief was provided, through his headchief with a quantity of receipt discs, serially numbered, corresponding to the total taxable males under his jurisdiction. A clerk visited his area during the collection of the tax and kept a record of the sums paid through the heads of the individual compounds. At convenient intervals the subordinate chief paid the collected sums into the Native Treasury for which receipts were obtained.

43 The only people who objected to paying the tax were southern civil servants in Navrongo. But it was short-lived. See C.C.N.T., 26 May, 1936 to Col. Sec.; ADM.1/32, NAGT.


45 Ibid. The only place where there was opposition to the payment was in the Krachi Native Administration but even that was short lived. Although the Krachiwura and his council showed their willingness to collect the tax, the chief was threatened with destoolment if he collected the tax. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1936.
a cause of revolt.

At first doubts were cast on the ability of the chiefs to carry out the collection, but it was decided to entrust this responsibility to them. However, the able manner in which they performed proved such doubts completely groundless. When the amounts received were checked against the estimates of the various areas, it was found that the estimates were exceeded.\(^6\) While this proved the inaccuracy of the nominal rolls, it provided evidence of the keenness and honesty of the Native Administrations. Indeed, there was so much honesty that no one was prosecuted for embezzlement. The revenue of the various Native Administrations increased as the years went by. This enabled the administration to pay the chiefs. In the opinion of the District Commissioners, the payment of chiefs more than anything else raised their prestige in the eyes of their people and taught the chiefs the reality of their powers and responsibilities.\(^7\) The payment of chiefs, however, also meant that they were expected to pay into the treasury monies which they formerly regarded as the perquisite of their office.\(^8\)

\(^6\) Some of the estimates and amounts received were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Amount Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Krachi</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>£580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagomba</td>
<td>£2500</td>
<td>£4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamprusi</td>
<td>£3500</td>
<td>£7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bimbilla</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>£290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Annual Report of Northern Territories for 1936.

\(^7\) Memo on the administration of the Northern Territories during the financial year 1934-35. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.

\(^8\) This was a major problem because some of the chiefs particularly the paramount ones did not like to lose the pleasure and conceit of distributing largesse. For example, H.A. Blair, District Commissioner for Dagbon noted that the Ya Na was reluctant
However, some District Commissioners such as Rutherford and Gilbert objected to the idea of paying chiefs salaries on the grounds that this:

would change them from tribal rulers to the equivalent of minor Government officials. They would (Rutherford argued) lose the confidence of their people and would themselves be more apt to consider how any actions would affect their standing with the Government than whether such action would be good or bad for their people. In other words, the Chiefs must be taught to work for their people and not as Government hangers-on. 49

The increase in revenue enabled the Native Authorities to provide more social services for their people. The revenue was mostly spent on three main areas namely, Development, Administration and Capital Works. 50 There was a marked increase in the revenue collected as the native Authorities gained the confidence of the people. For example, while during the 1931-2 fiscal year, the total revenue for Dagomba Treasury was £240, it was estimated to be £6,055 for the

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49 D.C., Dagomba, to C.S.P., 28 February, 1930. ADM.1/145; NAGT.

50 Under Development was included expenditure on items such as road maintenance, public health, education and water supplies. Capital expenditure was spent on Cattle Development Schemes and markets while the payment of chiefs, workers of the Native Authorities fell under Administration. Over fifty per cent of the revenue was always voted for Development. See all the estimates of the Native Administrative areas. Development became so important that the Dagbon and Mamprugu Native Administrations for example, jointly shared the remuneration of a European foreman they had employed. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1938, p.2.
first half of 1936-37.\textsuperscript{51} To assist the poorer Native Administrations in 1936, the government introduced the Benefits Trust Fund Ordinance. The objective of the ordinance was to provide funds from which the poorer Native Administrations would obtain assistance for certain prescribed purposes such as education, sanitation, animal husbandry and agriculture.\textsuperscript{52}

The chiefs and their councils played an active part in the affairs of the administration and did not slavishly act upon the advice of the local administrative officer. They did not hesitate to express their discontent with suggestions if they were not satisfied. In spite of this, Packham has pointed out that most initiatives in development were taken by the political officers.\textsuperscript{53}

Towards the end of each financial year, the chiefs comprising the Native Authority held what were called estimates' meetings. The District Commissioners outlined the financial situation and then

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
Item & Estimated Expenditure \\
\hline
1) Native School at Yendi & £1000 \\
2) Two dispensaries at Karaga and Zabzugu & ? \\
3) Improving dam at Yendi & £200 \\
4) Maintenance of roads & £500 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{51}The increased revenue enabled the Native Authority to plan a budget which included the provision of the following:

\textsuperscript{52}The initial capital was £1,000. Sources of income for the fund were: one sixth of the fees, rents and royalties imposed under the Minerals Ordinance, one sixth of the rents imposed under the Lands and Native Rights Ordinance and one third of the net receipts derived from ferries operated by the government in the Protectorate. See Annual Reports of the Northern Territories for 1936.

inquired from the chiefs the objects on which they advocated expenditure. The recommendations usually were of a general nature. The District Commissioner then prepared a draft estimate for their consideration which was discussed and implemented with some alterations. Through the involvement of the traditional rulers in such discussions they became aware how the modern bureaucratic state operates.

One area the Native Administrations took a keen interest in was Western education. After a tour of the schools in the Protectorate in 1933, Gerald Power, Director of Education suggested that the management of schools should be handed over to the Native Authorities. He was of the opinion that if the Native Authorities were to be successful it was necessary that "provision to be made for the education of the future chiefs and officials of such administrations." 54 Consequently, in 1935 existing schools in the Protectorate except the mission ones were taken over by the Native Administration. After this move, the apathy which chiefs had for education was said to have rapidly given way to a keen interest in education. For example, in 1938 eight chiefs paid sixty one visits to the Kpembe school and feeding arrangements were in the hands of the Kpembewura who also gave lectures on local history to the pupils. The four compounds of the Yendi School were named after the four sections of the town whose elders acted more or less as house

54 Gerald Power, "Suggestions Regarding Educational Policy in the Northern Territories". 30 May, 1933, pp.1-3.
masters and were said "to have taken their duties seriously." The Chief Commissioner wrote that the Chief of Mion who lives seven miles of from Yendi:
and whose duties demand his frequent appearance in Yendi holds the chair of native History and Folklore and delivers lectures regularly to the school on the ancient Dagomba traditions...soon after the school opened [he] took it upon himself to address the boys on the subject of obedience to authority.\(^5^6\)

Between 1935 and 1940, seven schools were opened by the Native Authorities. The Native Authorities also took steps to encourage the attendance of girls in schools. For example, after 1936, all Native Authority schools offered:

free education to all girls whose parents agreed that, if required, they will accept employment under the native administration at the close of their education.\(^5^7\)

This persistent encouragement, as noted earlier, led to the increase in the number of girls attending school and the opening of Girls’ Schools. Some of the Native Authorities gave scholarships to deserving pupils to pursue further education in Tamale and Accra. For example, it was reported that the Dagomba Native Authority was spending £600 annually on such scholarships.\(^5^8\)

The advocates of indirect rule naturally wished to restore judicial powers to the chiefs. This was an area in which the

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\(^{55}\) Provisional Inspector of Schools, 16 December, 1937. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.


\(^{57}\) Education Department Report 1936-37, p.28.

\(^{58}\) C.S.P., Memorandum on the introduction and Development of Native Administration, 14 April, 1930. ADM.1/145; NAGT.
previous regime had treated "native" institutions with contempt. Under the former system chiefs' tribunals derived their authority, if indeed they may be said to have functioned at all, under section 9 of the Administrative Ordinance for the Territory. The provisions were so vague and indefinite as to be completely valueless for controlling the exercise of jurisdiction by "native" authority, whose powers were restricted to those of a court of arbitration. Chiefs had no criminal jurisdiction and they were unable to enforce their judgement even in petty civil cases, except with the approval of, and through the District Commissioner. To correct this anomaly and give chiefs some power the Native Tribunals Ordinance was passed in 1932. "Native" courts were established to "administer native law and custom" obtaining in the area specified, except in insofar as law and custom were not "repugnant to natural justice or morality" or were inconsistent with the provisions of existing ordinances. They also had the following civil jurisdiction: 1) suits to establish the paternity or custody of children other than suits in which some question affecting rights arising out of any Christian marriage is or may be involved; 2) suits for divorce or other matrimonial cases between "natives" married under "native" customary law.

In 1935, another ordinance, the Native Courts Ordinance was passed which modified the terms of the previous one. Under the new Ordinance, Native Courts were graded into three categories: those

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59Native Tribunals Ordinance No.1 of 1932 amended by the Native Courts (Northern Territories) Ordinance of 1 July, 1935
in category A (tribunals of paramount or headchiefs) had jurisdiction in civil matters to a maximum of £50 or imprisonment not exceeding six months. Those in category B (tribunals of divisional chiefs) had their jurisdiction limited up to £25 and penalties in criminal cases were restricted to £25 or three months imprisonment; for those in category C (tribunals of sub-divisional chiefs) civil jurisdiction was restricted to £10 and penalties in criminal cases to £5 or one month’s imprisonment.60 Under the Ordinance, eligibility for appointment was not confined to chiefs and elders, although no effort was made to appoint commoners, educated or otherwise, until after the Second World War. However, in the case of the Ya Na’s court, the king insisted that "personal qualifications" would be "the only real criteria" governing selection, and a number of elders were dropped from tribunals on grounds of idleness or incompetence.61

The jurisdiction of the courts was hedged by administrative controls. The Commissioners had access to all courts and to their records at all times, and the Governor could exclude persons or classes or persons from their jurisdiction. Also, the District Commissioner’s court was the court of appeal and he could order any case to be transferred to his court. However, the highest grade of the Native Court had appellate jurisdiction for cases heard in subordinate tribunals, although, again, with the provision for

60 Schedule to Native Courts (Northern Territories) Ordinance, 1 July, 1935; Hailey op cit., p.476.

61 D.C., Dagomba, Informal Diary, 4-8 March, 1935. ADM.2/29; NAGT.
appeal to the administrative courts. Because of these controls, the Native courts seem to have had a harmonious working relation with the political officers. The District Commissioners often invited the chiefs to witness how their courts arrived at decisions. Before announcing his decision, the District Commissioner often asked the chiefs what their verdict would be and, if it differed from his own, asked reasons for their conclusions and pointed out where he thought they went wrong. In this sense the courts seem to have become an avenue where the chiefs came into contact with how British administrators thought justice should be dispensed. The courts seemed to have functioned to the satisfaction of the administrators to such an extent that some of them resorted to them instead of the District Commissioner's court. Also, the number of cases tried in the Native Courts began to increase over the years. For example, the number of cases, in all categories heard by the Native Courts in Dagbon went up from 1221 in 1934/35 to 2178 in

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62 For example, it was noted in 1930 that "during the year the Kpembewura and his Councilors have sat regularly on the bench with the District Commissioner for instruction. He also keeps a responsible representative at the court of the District Commissioner who issues all instructions through him to Kpembe." Northern Territories Administration, Activities for January - December 1929. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra. This was not the first time such a thing was being done in the history of the Gold Coast. George Maclean had done that in the third decade of the 19th century. See Boahen (1975), pp.38-44; Kimble op cit, pp. 203-204

63 For example, the Medical Officer for Tamale referred sanitation cases to the divisional court. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1938, p.34.
1937/38. In the latter year only four appeals were lodged.\(^6\) To ensure that the decisions of the Native Courts were obeyed, the administration set up a force of Native Authority police in 1932. Members of the force swore allegiance to the paramount chief and were responsible for ensuring that summons were carried out and order was maintained in the courts. The Native police, as they were called, were allotted to the Subordinate Authorities who contributed to their upkeep.\(^5\)

In spite of the alleged smooth functioning of the Native Courts and the willingness of the political officers to refer traditional cases to them, the administration was in a dilemma on certain occasions. One such awkward case occurred in July 1930 when a young wife of the Yo Na limped into Tamale with her legs in iron, seeking sanctuary with the government after having been severely beaten by her husband. Duncan-Johnstone, the Commissioner for the Southern Province acknowledged that "a very delicate issue had risen" namely, how far indirect rule required an uncritical acceptance of custom. He noted in his diary:

> although to our ideas it is repugnant to see a woman in leg iron, it is not to the native, and according to Native Custom the Chief of Savelugu was acting within his right. To have given way to natural indignation at the sight of a woman hobbling through Tamale with her feet in leg irons and to have taken action against the Savelugu


\[^{5}\text{The training, duties and upkeep of the Native Police (humorously called Nana kana, literally meaning "chief says come") who came to be associated with unalloyed loyalty and honesty can be found in Documents and correspondence ADM.1/232, 1/480, 2/18. NAGT.}\]
would have served no good purpose, on the contrary it would probably have succeeded in antagonising the Chief and would not have been in accordance with the policy of ruling indirectly.  

His solution of the problem was to refer the case to the Ya Na meanwhile warning that "Government views such practices on the part of the chiefs with grave disapproval" and that it must be understood that:

under indirect rule the chiefs or Native Authorities are not independent rulers, they are the delegates of the Governor. The advice therefore of the Political Officers must be followed, although the Chiefs will issue their own instructions to their Divisional Chiefs.... Everything must be done to redeem the Chiefs and their people from practices which are unhealthy or degrading while cherishing at the same time all local associations and traditions which are good.  

Another intriguing aspect of the vaunted indirect rule was the position of the chief vis-a-vis the administration. The question was whether the powers of chiefs were inherent in them by virtue of the position to which they had been selected by their people or whether on the other hand, they were derived from the paramount power namely, the English Crown, and were exercisable only at the will of its representative, the Governor. In the case of the Native Administrative Ordinance of 1927 pertaining to the Colony, the answer was seemingly in favour of the former, that is, the confirmation by the Governor of a chief's election was not demanded

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66C.S.P., Informal Diary, 8 July, 1930. ADM./1/132; NAGT.

67Ibid. The Yo Na was fined £10 by the Ya Na "for setting a bad example to his people in the matter of treating wives." But the Ya Na did not dissolve the marriage. See C.S.P. Informal Diary, 3 July, 1930. ADM.1/132; Acting D.C., Eastern Dagomba, to D.C., Western Dagomba, 27 August, 1930. ADM.1/18; NAGT.
as a condition to the exercise by him of judicial and executive powers.\textsuperscript{68} But, neither the Native Administrative Ordinance nor the Native Courts Ordinance of the Protectorate left any room for doubt on the point. Under section 4 of the former Ordinance, the Governor could appoint a chief or chiefs, as in the case of a confederacy, to be "native" authority for a particular area. He then had \textit{de jure} power over his people.\textsuperscript{69} It therefore meant that an order of a chief who was not a recognised "native" authority was legally unenforceable. No rules made by him in his capacity as a native authority had any legal effect until they received the Governor's approval. In regard to jurisdiction, the Native Courts Ordinance complied with the pronouncement made by the Secretary of State in 1905:

\begin{quote}
The Crown is in strict law the only font of justice and every court of Justice must derive its authority from the Crown. As soon, therefore as protected territory becomes British soil, the Native Court has either to become a British Court deriving its authority from the sovereign or else to disappear as a court of justice.\textsuperscript{70}
\end{quote}

Although it would appear that the Native Courts did not have authority, in reality they did. But that power was derived from the colonial state and exercised subject to the will of the colonial state. Until 1951, Local administration in the Northern Territories

\textsuperscript{68}For how the Native Administrative Ordinance of 1927 functioned in the Colony see Kimble \textit{op cit.}, pp.492-502; Boahen (1975), pp.116,134 & 136; Metcalfe \textit{op cit.}, pp. 635-6, 646-8, 669-71.

\textsuperscript{69}Native Administrative (Northern Territories) Ordinance, 1930 section 4.

\textsuperscript{70}Cited in Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1937/38.
continued to be governed by the ordinances passed between 1930 and 1935.

Following the 1948 riots in the Gold Coast,\(^7\) the Coussey Committee\(^2\) proposed the replacement of the old Native Authorities by a three-tier system of local government, consisting of councils with up to two-thirds of their members directly elected.\(^3\) The Coussey Committee had been critical of the Native Authorities, pointing out their inflexibility, clumsiness, and domination by illiterate or "semi-educated" members. It suggested that all "local government" functions should be taken away from the traditional bodies and vested in "entirely new councils more democratic in composition."\(^4\) To implement the recommendations of the Coussey Committee, the 1951 Local Government Ordinance was passed. It established 37 District Councils, 230 Local Councils and 11 Urban Councils, all under the control of the Ministry of Local Government in Accra.

The structure and functions of the new Local and District

\(^7\) For the events which led to the 1948 Riots and subsequent developments in the Gold Coast see Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 in Metcalfe \textit{op cit.}, pp.682-686; Austin \textit{op cit.}, pp. 48-74; Boahen, \textit{op cit.}, pp.149-165.

\(^2\) The Coussey Committee, an all African Committee was set up by the Colonial Government to examine the recommendations made by the Watson Committee which investigated the events.

\(^3\) See Austin \textit{op cit.}, pp.85-6, 103; Apter, \textit{op cit.}, pp.170-73; Metcalfe, \textit{op cit.} pp.682-6.

\(^4\) On the development of local government following Coussey Committee see Nsarkoh, J.K., \textit{Local Government in Ghana} (Ghana Universities Press, Accra, 1964); \textit{Journal of African Administration} (1951), (1952); Apter \textit{op cit.}, pp.193-6.
Councils did not differ much from the Native Authorities. With the exception of the elective principle which was introduced, the two were almost the same. Even here, as the 1954 elections were to demonstrate, chieftaincy was still a strong phenomenon. Indeed, in most council areas, a substantial number of chiefs and elders were returned for "representative" seats, to join those appointed as "traditional" members. In Dagbon for example, at least 35 chiefs and elders took "representative" seats and there may well have been more among the remaining 65. The reforms introduced into the local government did not therefore produce any redistribution of power between chiefly classes and commoners. They did however, redistribute power in certain sectors since the reforms established a distinction between "traditional" and "local government" functions, a distinction which broke away from principles of indirect rule. The role allotted to "traditional authorities" in representative bodies was progressively reduced during the early 1950s: territorial members disappeared from the Legislative Assembly of 1954 and traditional representation was abolished in 1959. Yet chieftaincy in the politics of the Northern Territories was not dead as events of 1954 were to reveal.

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75 Staniland *op cit.* p.128.

76 For example, Coussey stated: "We recommend... that a clear distinction should be made between the functions of the State Councils and the new local authorities, and that all local government functions should be assigned to the local authorities. Annual Report of the Gold Coast, 1949. Coussey Report, p.26.

77 Chiefs played a major role in the formation of the Northern Peoples Party of 1954. See Chapter 7.2.
8.3. **INDIRECT RULE AND ETHNICITY.**

Beneath the apparent stability and smooth functioning of the Native Administrations lay deep undercurrents of resentment. It should also be noted that most of the reports which praised the smooth running of the Native Administrations were written to impress officials in Accra and London on the benefits the Protectorate gained by its docile acceptance of government advice.\(^7\) Cracks in the over-praised Native Administrations however began to appear. As seen previously, by 1933 the British recreated states out of the decayed empires of Mamprugu, Dagbon, Gonja, Wala and Nanun. In doing that, it amalgamated certain ethnic groups against their wishes. The dissatisfied people began to protest two years after the inauguration of the Native Administrations. The Tapa and Ntrubu were the first to protest against their amalgamation into the Krachi local administration. It has already been indicated that the Krachi Native Administration was a hodgepodge of people who had no common identity apart from the worship of the Dente fetish. Soon after the formation of the Krachi local administration, the Tapa petitioned the government to be permitted to secede and become an independent division. Later they

\(^7\)To show the achievements of the Native Authorities, a documentary film *A Mamprussi village* was made which depicted the collection of the revenue and a budget session which the District Commissioner held with various chiefs. "Developments" which had taken place in the village because of the inception of the Native Authority system were also shown. As mentioned earlier this was part of the administration's piece of propaganda and to crown it all, Nana Sir Ofori Atta and other Gold Coast Chiefs were invited to tour the Protectorate in 1937 to witness for themselves the "strides" the Dependency made. See Bourret *op cit.* p.105.
changed their request and asked to be allowed to join the Buem state in the Southern section of the Mandated Territory. The requests were turned down. Following the example of the Tapas, three out of the seven chiefs who formed the Ntrubu subdivision, without consulting the government expressed their intention of joining the Buem state, and actually swore allegiance to the paramount chief. The government refused to condone the action and the chiefs were told that they must remain in the Northern Section of the Mandate. The government attributed the actions of the Tapa and Ntrubu to two factors; the introduction of the Native Administration and the passage of the Land and Native Rights Ordinance. This alone is not a satisfactory explanation for their action. It was due to the fact that they wanted to maintain their independence of the Krachiwura, an independence they possessed before the introduction of the Native Administration. By the amalgamation, the Krachiwura was now sovereign over them. As a result of his exaltation, the Krachiwura began to go against the custom of his people, hence the people of Kantankofri wished to

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80A Resume of the Activities of the Political Administration in the Krachi District for the Year 1936-37. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.

81Ibid. By the passage of the Ordinance chiefs could not alienate land without the consent of the government. Just like the Lands Bill of 1897, the Ordinance aimed at preventing the sale of lands by chiefs without consulting their councilors.
destool him.\textsuperscript{82} It should be remarked that, initially, had the Tapa and Ntrubu not resisted the imposition of the Krachiwura on them as their paramount chief, they would have lost their independence to the Krachi, as some Nchumuru later learnt to their chagrin.\textsuperscript{83}

Other ethnic groups who lost their autonomy were the Nchumurus, Nawuris and Kusasis. We have already pointed out that the Yagbumwura’s claims over some Nchumuru and Nawuri were acceded to and they became part of the Gonja state. In 1934, it was reported that:

With regard to the small areas of Mamprusi and Gonja situate in the Mandated Territory, their reunion with their former paramount chiefs has been entirely voluntary. Their wishes in this matter have been respected and they would never be condemned as displaying seditious tendencies in the event of their amalgamation.\textsuperscript{84}

Before the transfer was effected, it was wondered whether they were

\textsuperscript{82}Report of Togoland under British Mandate for the Year 1938, p.12. Some of the people who wanted to destool the chief were fined £250 while others were jailed. However, the enquiry which was set up found that the chief "had committed certain offenses against the custom of the people." See A Resume of the Activities of the Political Administration in the Krachi District for the Year 1936-37. ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra. It should be remarked that going against the "custom" of the people alone was sufficient grounds for the chiefs destoolment because he had sworn an oath to uphold the custom of the people.

\textsuperscript{83}The Krachis later claimed that the Nchumuru who were left in the Krachi District had always been subservient to them. The Nchumuru regained their independence when Nana Obrimpong Kanyah II, Chief of Bejamso resorted to the law courts in 1971. Information by Nana Kanyah II, Messrs. Odzidzator and Kapi on 11 and 17 December, 1994 respectively.

\textsuperscript{84}Annual Report of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for 1934.

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not going to lose their sovereignty. A year later, the Nchumuru rebelled against Gonja rule which compelled the Kpembewura to send a force ostensibly to restore his control over them. Conditions in the Kpembe division compelled the Yagbumwura to visit Salaga in 1936. A report of that year noted that:

The somewhat unsettled conditions of the Nchumuru in the southern part of the area has shown signs of improvement. They failed to take the advantage of the visit of the Yagbumwura to Salaga in April to place before him their complaints, which was a proof, if one needed, that they knew themselves to be in the wrong. But the Nchumurus claim that their refusal to appear before the Yagbumwura was an indication that they did not recognise him as their chief much less his subordinate. Again between 1951 and 1955, the Nchumurus and Nawuris in the Northern Territories unilaterally withheld payment of the annual levy to the Kpembe Local Council. They petitioned the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations Organisation and later sent a delegation to New York to present their case to the Council. In March 1955, the British government set up the Dixon Commission to examine their alleged

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65 Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1933.

66 For the factors that led to the rebellion and subsequent events see Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1934. ADM.56/1/240; Braimah, J.A., The Two Insarwurfos (Longman, 1967)

67 See Annual Report for the Northern Territories for 1936.

68 Interview with Nana Kwesi Mensah, Odikro of Jambuai (13 December, 1994); Nana Kwesi Otchere, Odikro of Wiai (15 December, 1994) and Nana Bande II, Nanjiro-Owure (16 December, 1994).

69 J. Dixon was an Administrative Officer Class One in the Colonial Service in the Gold Coast. For the terms of reference of his Commission see Dixon’s Report (1955), p.1.
grievances. Although the Dixon Commission made a number of recommendations giving them some representation on the Kpembe traditional Council, the Nchumuru and Nawuri continued to be dissatisfied with Gonja rule.

The Kusasi area was another where the changes introduced in 1930 brought trouble. We have already pointed out that in 1912, the Nayiri Mahama was formally appointed "paramount chief of all lands situated within the North Eastern Province." Iliasu has also pointed out that this had no historical basis as the powers of the Nayiri were hardly ever enforceable in most places especially in the Frafra and Kusasi districts. He contends that the relationship between them "was more ritual than political" because the Nayiri was only the elector of small chiefdoms founded by Mamprusi immigrants. As a prelude to the establishment of the Mamprugu Native Administration, the nineteen canton chiefs of the Bawku area were brought under the Bawkunaba who was said to be of Mamprusi


91 Report by Mr. Dixon, Administrative Officer Class I, on Representations made to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations Organisation, concerning the status of Nawuris and Nanjiros (Nchumuru) within the Togoland area of the Gonja District, 1955, pp.30-36. In 1991, 1992 and 1994 the Nchumuru and Nawuri combined with Konkombas and Basaris to fight Gonjas. These ethnic conflicts which were among the bloodiest since the inception of colonial rule, fall outside the scope of this study.

92 See Executive Order by C.H. Armitage, C.C.N.T., 14 April, 1912. ADM.56/1/252

descent and "largely, Mamprusi in sympathy."94 The second step was to incorporate it into Mamprugu although it was reported that:

of the remaining 18 (chiefs) only five were of Mamprusi stock originally and only one of the Kusasi chiefs had ever identified more than superficially with the Na of Mamprusi.95

Realising the incompatibility of the people, the report further noted:

yet there are good reasons for believing that the unanimous election of the chief of Bawku as their leader may gradually cause them to be drawn into closer union under the Na.96

This was not the case for the Kusasi began to fight to be free from what they regarded as Mamprusi domination. This explains why they joined the Convention People’s Party in 1954 while the Nayiri was in the Northern People Party. Tension began to mount between the Kusasi and the Mamprusi over the desire by the former to be relieved of what they thought was the "Mamprusi" yoke.97 From the 1970s, periodic clashes occurred until 1982 when there was a major

94 See Assistant District Commissioner, Bawku, 3 December, 1932: "Progress Report on the Activities of the Political Department in the Kusasi Sub-District of Mamprusi during 1932." ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.

95 Assistant D.C., Bawku, 3 December, 1932. "Progress Report on the Activities of the Political Department in the Kusasi Sub-district of Mamprusi during 1932." ADM.56/1/374; NAG, Accra.

96 Ibid.

97 What is even surprising is that with the creation of the then Upper Region in 1959, the Kusasi were severed from their "former lords" politically because while the Kusasi were in the Upper Region the Mamprusi were still in the Northern region and yet traditionally, the Nayiri was lord over the Mamprusi.
war between the Mamprusis and the Kusasi around Bawku, in which the Mamprusis were routed. The government was compelled to intercede and finally gave the Kusasi their autonomy in 1983. It is thus clear that although the establishment of Native Administration in 1932 was to give the traditional rulers a bigger voice in the local affairs, the powers it thrust on them over their people were to lead to ethnic conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s.

8.4. **EMERGENCE OF A NORTHERN ELITE.**

It was impossible for the chiefs to appreciate what was going on in the South; they were isolated and out of touch with the South. They had difficulties in understanding the debates in the N.T.C. so they trusted the literate who were mostly their sons. Their educated sons understood much better than they themselves.footnote{A. Karbo, M.P., 1954-65. Quoted in Ladouceur op cit. p.85.}

Although by the end of the Second World War the Northern Territories seemed politically as backward as ever, conditions were changing beneath the placid surface in ways that would permit the rapid growth of political activity. For one thing, education in the North, limited as it was, began to bear fruit when in 1917, the first batch of three students from the Northern Territories were sent to the Accra Training College to train as teachers.

Unlike the Gold Coast Colony where an elite emerged in the latter part of the 19th century, a Northern elite emerged only in
the 20th century. This was mainly because of the limited educational opportunities available and the determination of the colonial officials to isolate the North from what they regarded as the southern "virus." But the unintended actions of the Colonial administration also led to the emergence of a Northern elite. Three factors were responsible for this. The first, and perhaps, the most obvious was the introduction of a western type of education which enabled some students, as we have noted, to attend school in the Colony. Also, the centralisation of the system at the middle school level resulted in a mixing of pupils from all parts of the Northern Territories at the Tamale schools and facilitated the emergence of a Northern elite. This mixing undoubtedly helped to promote a sense of solidarity and common identity among the future leaders who became prominent in the period after the Second World War. Finally, there was the employment policy of the administration. At first, it was necessary to employ Southerners as

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99 One of the first activities of the elite from the Colony was the formation of the Fanti Confederation in 1868 with the view of Africans to rule themselves if the British departed. See Kimble, op cit., pp.222-263; Boahen (1975), 52-55; Agbodeka, op cit., p.6. on the activities of the Fanti Confederation. The other was the Aborigines’ Right Protection Society which was formed to fight against the Lands Bill Ordinance of 1894-7; See Boahen (1975), pp.62-55; Agbodeka, op cit., pp.54-62; Kimble, op cit., pp.330-1; Apter op cit., pp.35-36; Metcalfe, op cit., pp.542-3.

100 Mention has already been made of efforts to prevent Northern students in Achimota from circulating in Accra when school closed. Also, from the 1940s Northern teachers who once taught in the Colony or Asante were looked at with suspicion. For example, the administration refused to employ one Amoro Gabriel as a teacher because he had taught at Abosso "where he was likely to learn little of value and much of evil." See M.F. Wentworth, Notes on a visit to the Sandema Native Administration School, 6 and 8 March, 1937, p.i. ADM.1/214-215; NAGT.
clerks, teachers and artisans for all positions in the North. But, as Northerners became trained, they displaced the Southerners many of whom, in any case, did not like the North. As a deliberate policy, only local people were employed by the Native Administrations because it was believed that they understood the people, customs and problems of the locality. In time, these educated people became the elite and spokesmen for their people.

Before the first Northerners in the Accra Training College completed their course in 1918, they informed the Chief Commissioner that:

We will try our best with your help, to get ourselves experienced and properly trained to become good qualified teachers. We will honour and obey our masters in order that they may impart to us what they have in them. And we beg to promise faithfully to continue working hard after our course, to become a credit to our country, and to do the good we can, to satisfy you and the Director of Education.

This group helped to chart a role - that of the elite - which subsequent Northern teachers were to play in the political and social life of the region. Between 1917 and 1920 six more people from the Protectorate attended the Accra Training College. But it was the opening of the Achimota College in 1927 that saw an increase in the number of Northerners trained as teachers. These Northern Achimota trained teachers began to criticise the system of education and administration which existed in the Dependency. In

\[101\] For the employment policies of the Native Administrations see Staniland, *op cit.*, pp.98-101; Ladouceur, *op cit.*, p.59.

\[102\] J.B. Harruna, W.A. and D.A. Mahama to C.C.N.T, 31 January, 1918. ADM.56/1/88; NAG, Accra. They were posted to Wa, Gambaga and Tamale respectively after completing the course.
1931, three Northerners were admitted into the Achimota College but eight years later they were twenty. By the late 1930s, officials in the Protectorate began to raise objections to the training of Northerners at Achimota because they noted signs of discontent among them. The chief complaints were that they adopted an independent attitude and outlook when they returned home.¹⁰³

Yakubu Tali, one of the Achimota trained teachers, was reported to have been critical of the British administration in the North. He made it clear to the District Commissioner at Yendi that he was out of sympathy with indirect rule. Yakubu also criticised the educational system which he thought was not sufficiently progressive. He pointed out that much of the farming and other practical work in the schools was a waste of time since their products could not enter either the Agricultural or Forestry College because of the low level of education. He again criticised the use of smocks as uniforms by pupils of the Native Administrative Schools.¹⁰⁴ Politically, Yakubu Tali was regarded as a disruptive element. W.J.A. Jones, the Chief Commissioner, wrote that Yakubu did not only condemn the Native Administration but showed his contempt for the Native Authorities by wearing sandals of a pattern which were reserved for the use of chiefs.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Minutes of the Political Conference held at Tamale, 4th-6th April, 1936. ADM.1/533; NAGT.

¹⁰⁴C.C.N.T., 16 March 1939 to Col. Secretary enclosing the views of H. Spafford, Provincial Inspector of Schools, Northern Territories.

¹⁰⁵W.J.A. Jones, 25 January, 1939 to the Principal, Achimota College.
On Yakubu’s behaviour the Chief Commissioner noted:

> It is the inevitable result of sending a boy at an impressionable age to live for four years under conditions he has never been accustomed, enjoying luxuries which he has never known and bringing him back to lead once more the simple - and probably to him drab - life of the Northern Territories people.¹⁰⁶

Yakubu’s views were, however, apparently supported by most Northern teachers trained at Achimota and led to the rise of an incipient resistance movement. Ebenezer Adam, another Achimota trained teacher courted disfavour when he also expressed doubts about the Chief Commissioner’s statement that he was not concerned about the interests of any individual but only the progress and welfare of the community as a whole. The colonial administration in the Protectorate became worried about this trend because the official duties of the Northern teacher did not end in the classroom like his counterpart in Asante and the Colony. He was often the only literate person in his area and was central to the life of the community. According to the Chief Commissioner, to the African mind the teacher had received the highest possible level of education and had acquired a wide knowledge of affairs; therefore his judgement was sound. If he was therefore against any system it meant that something was wrong with the system.¹⁰⁷ The Chief Commissioner was however full of praise for Mahama Yakubu and J.Y. Bayensi, also trained at Achimota but who in his opinion, had

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¹⁰⁶C.C.N.T., 16 March, 1939 to the Col. Secretary. CSO/10/39. Yakubu’s views earned him a transfer to Bawku from where he was recalled to be the Tali Na.

settled down remarkably well. According to him:

they were glad to return to their country and seemed pleased to have an opportunity to aid its development. They paid the Native Authorities the respect and deference to which their position entitled them. They are numbered among those whose aim is to promote harmony and progress. For them and teachers of this type, I have high admiration. They are an invaluable asset.\textsuperscript{108}

The dissatisfaction of the Northern literate, mostly teachers, about the backwardness of the Protectorate led them to form an association in Tamale in 1936 to promote Northern interests, particularly in education. The association was small and isolated and it made no efforts to contact the chiefs to form a united front. Nevertheless, the colonial administration felt the establishment of the association represented a threat. The administration feared that its demand for more schools could lead to more explicitly political interests, possibly along the lines of the Aborigines’ Right Protection Society. W.J.A. Jones, the Chief Commissioner, together with the Senior Provincial Inspector of Schools moved against the association, first by warnings and intimidation, then by penalties and transfers of the teachers involved.\textsuperscript{109} The association was soon disbanded since all members were civil servants. Although this nascent association did not gain anything, it is possible that the opening of four more schools in the Protectorate between 1936 and 1938 was the result of its activities. Officials in the Protectorate were apprehensive of the

\textsuperscript{108}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{109}The insignificance of the association is testified to by the fact that J.S. Kaleem and J.A. Braimah, two of its leading members disagreed on its name. Ladouceur \textit{op cit.} p.97, footnote 37.
emergence of any group that took the character of a nationalist movement. They therefore also took a strong line against the Turbushi\textsuperscript{110} clubs. It was alleged that their members "spent most of the night singing and dancing and so took little interest in the day's work." They were also thought to be "undermining the authority of the elders."\textsuperscript{111}

The establishment of a Government Training College in Tamale in 1944 gave a further boost to the emerging elite. Established to produce teachers for the Protectorate, the administration also hoped to stop sending prospective Northern teachers to Achimota College. This will in its view, prevent them from contamination by the southern "virus". The College started with sixteen students but by 1956 together with St John Bosco's and Pusiga Training Colleges, had an enrolment of a hundred and seventy four students.\textsuperscript{112} The students like their counterparts from Achimota soon became aware of the enormous gap between the North and the South. Some of them began to assume a leadership role among their colleagues and the Northern community at large. For example, E.A. Mahama and Abayifa

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{110}These were associations for the young people which started to appear in the North in the late 1930s.
  \item \textsuperscript{111}Assistant D.C., Dagomba, Informal Diary, 2 January, 1939. ADM.1/304; D.C., Dagomba, Informal Diary, 9 June, 1937, 10 June, 1937. ADM.1/271; NAGT.
  \item \textsuperscript{112}The figures were compiled from Reports of the Gold Coast and Togoland 1954-56. The figure includes 12 women. We have already pointed out that the Navrongo and Pusiga Training Colleges were established in 1936 and 1954 respectively. See 6.2. Admittedly, all the students were not from the North but the administration ensured that a large majority of them were Northerners and remained to teach in Northern schools.
\end{itemize}
Karbo, protested against the rule which obliged Northern teachers and pupils to wear smocks at all times on school premises. This incident focused attention on the administration's discrimination against Northern teachers since their counterparts from the South could wear any dress of European fashion. The establishment of the Northern Territories Territorial Council in 1946 gave the students another chance to play leadership roles. Some of them became interpreters and advisers to the delegates from their district. This allowed them to be acquainted with issues at the territorial and national levels and because of their wider knowledge of the outside world, they often guided the chiefs as to what to say or spoke on their behalf. Within five years of the establishment of the Territorial Council, the illiterate chiefs gave way to non-chiefs without a struggle because the former could not follow the complexities of debates in the Council chambers. Besides, the illiterate chiefs saw no fundamental conflict of interest between themselves and their educated advisors, who were often their sons. In spite of the restricted development of education in the North the area had a reasonable number of people educated to Standard VII and a small number of trained teachers by the late 1940s. In the 1948 population census 990 persons educated to

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113 See 7.1 for a discussion of the Northern Territorial Council.

114 This was in direct contradiction to the south where there was a conflict between chiefs and the elite as to who were to be the "natural rulers" of the people. For the nature of the conflict and how it was solved see Boahen (1975, pp.119-135; Kimble, op cit., pp.87-93.
Standard VII level or higher were recorded in the Northern Territories.\textsuperscript{115}

The Colleges and Native Authority schools were not alone in producing people who became leaders of Northern society. The Christian Missionaries, particularly the White Fathers Mission, were others. Christian Missionaries, like western education, came late in the Protectorate. Although a few Missionaries like David Asante, Theophilous Opoku and Beck conducted preaching tours in the Dependency in latter part of the 19th century,\textsuperscript{116} it was not until 1905, as we have already noted, that the White Fathers opened a station at Navrongo to propagate the gospel. After establishing schools in Navrongo, Wa, Nandom, Wiaga and Jirapa as we have already noted,\textsuperscript{117} the White Fathers opened a school at Jirapa in 1932 to train catechists. The catechists were planted in all villages where there was a Catholic community. They shepherded the converts and tried to convert the unconverted. Their sole job was to prepare the grounds for the dissemination of the Christian faith. The homes of the catechists became centres of much activity.

\textsuperscript{115}Census Population, 1948 pp. 86 and 296. Of these 304 were resident in Tamale. However, this number was likely to include people from the South working in the North.

\textsuperscript{116}See the acc. no. SAL/61/1; acc. no. SAL/33/1; acc. no. SAL/85/1; acc. no. SAL/3/1 in Johnson for an account of the preaching tours by the early missionaries.

\textsuperscript{117}Apart from the White Fathers Mission the only other Christian Missions which established schools were the Presbyterians and Methodists who jointly opened a primary school in Tamale in 1939 to "cater specially for the children of Colony and Ashanti parents posted to the Protectorate for duty." See Education Department Report 1948-49, p.14.
in the village. There was a mass movement of converts in the North West Province because Father McCoy of the Jirapa Station is said to have performed a miracle when there was a heavy rainfall after his prayers. This ended a long period of drought and averted an imminent famine.\textsuperscript{118} The mass conversion was however looked at with alarm by some of the chiefs who felt that it would lead to a breakdown of their authority. Some of the converts were persecuted for disobeying orders of their chiefs which they regarded as repugnant to the tenets of their new faith.\textsuperscript{119} In spite of persecution, the Christian population in the North Eastern and North Western Provinces increased tremendously and Christians played an important part in the spread of western education in the area.\textsuperscript{120}

Pre-dating western education in producing an elite in Northern societies was Islam. We have already noted that Islam was introduced into Ghana peacefully through the agency of Mande and Hausa traders.\textsuperscript{121} Muslims also played a role in kingdoms like Gonja and Wala. Two classes of Muslims came into being; one attached to royal courts and the other made up of the immigrant traders who settled in the trading towns such as Salaga, Wa and Yendi. Because of the important role the former played such as

\textsuperscript{118}Der (1983), p. 49.

\textsuperscript{119}For the persecution of converts and other related matters as the problems the Christian faced in the North West Province see Der (1983), pp. 61-63.

\textsuperscript{120}The two Provinces have since 1990 become the Upper East and Upper West respectively. Together they account for over eighty percent of the elite in Northern Ghana today.

\textsuperscript{121}See Chapter 2, \textit{Outside Variables}. 

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praying for their patron's success in battle and their ability to record and communicate in writing, they formed a traditional Muslim 'class' under their own head, the Imam. The Imam was a powerful court official because of his supposed spiritual power. Muslims who lived in royal courts did not often help to propagate the religion. The immigrant Muslims on the other opened Koranic schools and taught their the pupils to read and write Arabic. Indeed, the most famous of the Koranic schools were established in Salaga and later Kete Krachi by Umar ibn Abi Bakr b. Uthman al-Kanawi, the prolific writer and scholar.  

The Muslim community as a whole did not oppose the British in their colonization of the North. However, a few like Al-Hajj Umar attacked them. In a poem, Umar deplored European colonisers and their "discreditable" and aggressive acts during the "Scramble for Africa." He listed what he termed the scandalous doings of European Christians in areas they conquered in West Africa and implored Muslim communities to place their trust in God. Some Muslims like those in Wa, as we have already noted, welcomed the British in...

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the hope that the latter would strengthen the position of the Yerna vis-a-vis the Wa Na. Islam received some encouragement from the British administration. For one thing, the peace which was established in the wake of the British conquest was congenial for the spread of Islam. Also, the religious toleration of the administration certainly gave Islam a great encouragement.\(^{124}\) In 1905, Lt. Col. Watherson, the Chief Commissioner noted "Islam has done more to bring about order, decency, and a local cleanliness than years of our administration have affected."\(^{125}\) The proselytising efforts of the Muslims did not lead to a wide acceptance of Islam by the indigenous people of the Northern Territories before the end of the 19th century. Indeed, Wa was the only important trading town with a large Moslem community as well as a centre of Islamic learning before the British occupation.

The peaceful spread of Islam in the North was interrupted in 1905 by the appearance of one Mahdi Musa. In the 1905 District Record Book for the Salaga District Musa is recorded as making his appearance in Yeji early in 1905.\(^{126}\) His puritanical mission which called for the abandonment of traditional worship and dances was

\(^{124}\)Another reason was the conversion of slaves who had been liberated after the conquest. Many of the Salaga slaves of Grunshi origin for instance later became important Moslems in the community. See for example, Braimah and Goody (1967), p.12

\(^{125}\)Annual Report on the Northern Territories for 1905, p.7.

rejected by the people and his violent method of conversion was repugnant to the colonial administration. The self-styled Mahdi was driven out of Yeji by the British administration after the people complained but he continued his vigorous campaign in other parts. The District Commissioner reported:

He seems to have exercised a great influence over the King of Yeji and persuaded him to build a mosque for the Mohammedans. I do not think he has made any converts during his stay here though, and he has certainly not succeeded in making the King of Yeji a follower of the prophet.

Musa however returned within a short time and he was to have a great effect on the town and, indeed, the whole region. With his three disciples of Al-Husayn, Abu Bakr and Al-Hasan and with Yeji as his base, Musa and his followers spread their activities as far as Nanun in the east, Kintampo in the west and Ejura to the south. Musa and his disciples were once more driven out of Yeji. The District Commissioner commented:

I have sent Mohammedan missionary and his disciples out of town. While sympathizing with his efforts to make people give up drinking, I found the strenuous way he was conducting his religious campaign was making troubles and causing a good deal of friction between him and the King of Yeji. In fact the King and his Chiefs came to see me on 2 or 3 occasions and asked that this religious revivalism be put to a stop.

After his expulsion from Yeji Musa and his disciples moved

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127 Al-Hajj Umar makes constant references to the use of the whip. See poem in Braimah and Goody (1967). However, Umar’s remarks should be accepted with caution since he regarded Musa as intruding into his territory.

128 Record Book of Salaga District, March 1905.

129 Record Book for Salaga District. Entry for April 1905.
northward to Wa. He seemed to have made many converts in the town for the Commandant of the Black Volta District reported:

Towards the end of the month a Mohammedan missionary arrived and asked for permission to order the King of Wa to collect his chiefs and people so that he could read them the orders of the prophet. This was granted and the result has been the conversion, at least the temporary conversion, of all the people to the Mohammedan faith, all the outlying villages having made fences in places of prayer that they are now using daily. Peto [beer] is now unobtainable in Wa and this commodity had been almost a necessity to the Dagarti in the past. The change in the town is altogether so remarkable that I consider it of sufficient interest to mention in my report.\(^{130}\)

Apparently Musa was once more expelled from Wa for the Commandant once more noted "I brought in Mallam who was said to be preaching against Government, but no evidence."\(^{131}\) Al-Hajj Umar saw the activities of Musa as a threat to his position. Since settling at Salaga in about 1870 Umar had built a reputation in the area as a pious and learned scholar. He therefore resented the intrusion of Musa in his "diocese" and regarded him as a mountebank and a charlatan. Al-Hajj Umar refused to assist Musa though he had himself castigated the failings of Muslims in the area and attributed the civil war in the Kpembe division to the failure of the people to observe the tenets of Islam.\(^{132}\)

The positions of Al-Hajj Musa and Mahdi Musa with regard to

\(^{130}\)Commandant B.M. Read, June 1905 to the C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/87; NAG, Accra.


the colonial regime differed from the majority of Muslims. The British were prepared to use anyone to advance their cause; the Liman of Gambaga was one such person. A report of 1908 stated that the Liman was a sensible, upright and a fair man.\textsuperscript{133} To this end, he was allowed to establish a "native court" and all women "palavers" and minor civil and criminal cases were referred to his court.\textsuperscript{134} Although this was a deviation from their policy of ruling though chiefs since - the Nayiri was the overlord of Gambaga - the British supported the Liman because the Nayiri was said to be a weak king who relied on the Liman. The Liman's court was however abolished in 1916 when the colonial officials realised that he had overreached himself and moreover, the Nayiri was reported to take his duties seriously.\textsuperscript{135} Colonial officials also used the services of some Muslims who could write in the Ajami script to prepare the nominal rolls for the collection of taxes in 1936. Although Muslims were important in the Protectorate, the religion did not spread as expected. Indeed a report of 1918 asserted:

Mohammedanism would appear to make little, if any, progress in this Dependency, and is, in the case of many

\begin{footnotes}
\item[133]C.N.E.P., 4th September, 1908 to the Officer Commanding 'E' Company, Gold Coast Regiment, Gambaga. ADM.56/1/69; NAG, Accra.
\item[134]\textit{Ibid.} The Liman's court could try cases involving debts not exceeding 20, petty assaults and theft. He could also prosecute people who did not keep their environment clean and inflict fines up to 10. Any contempt of his court was to be dealt by the Commissioner's court to which also appeals could be made.
\item[135]C.N.E.P., Office, 19 June, 1916 to C.C.N.T. ADM.56/1/137; NAG, Accra. The Liman was accused of "pushing himself to the front and made himself spokesman for the Na and went as far as to take the Commissioner's greeting first thus placing himself publicly in importance before the Na." \textit{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
of those professing its tenets, of a debased form, and more than tainted with the prevailing paganism.¹³⁶

Literate Muslims together with the products of the secular schools began to play an increasing role in the affairs of the Dependency particularly with the formation of the Northern Territorial Council and the introduction of party politics in 1949. The era of the domination of chiefs in the life of the Dependency was being taken over by the elite as will be shown in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

INTEGRATION INTO NATIONAL POLITICS.

9.1. THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES TERRITORIAL COUNCIL. 1

It is not anticipated that much time will be spent in the discussion of the administration and other problems. The idea is to get the chiefs to meet once a year. At first they will talk matters over quietly among themselves at private informal gatherings. But as time goes on, these meetings will, I am confident, develop into what, for want of a better term, might be described as the Protectorate Council of chiefs. 2

As the Second World War drew to a close, the colonial authorities thought of establishing a consultative body in the Northern Territories, partly to provide unofficial representatives for an expanded legislature which would include the Dependency. The establishment of such a body had been in the minds of the authorities since the chiefs' meeting in Tamale in 1938. The formation of the Northern Territorial Council 3 was in line with Lord Hailey's recommendation that steps be taken to establish such bodies for the Northern Territories and Asante. He saw the creation of such bodies as a necessary step towards the establishment of a

1The Northern Territories Territorial Council (N.T.T.C.) became the Northern Territories Council (N.T.C.) changing its membership from 17 to 19, to fulfil the provision of the 1950 Constitution which called for the establishment of Regional Councils.

2C.C.N.T., 11 October, 1938 to Governor Hodgson. ADM.1/319; NAGT.

3Hereafter N.T.C.
central legislature for all three administrative units.¹

In 1946, the Colonial administration created the N.T.C.² with the aim of providing a vehicle for the advancement of educated chiefs and commoners. It was a non-statutory body and its role was merely consultative. The N.T.C. had limited powers and indeed, for the first four years of its existence, it existed simply at the invitation of the Chief Commissioner of the Protectorate. In line with Lord Hailey's recommendations, its functions were: 1) to discuss matters of common interest to the Native Authorities in the Northern Territories and to make recommendations to the Chief Commissioner; 2) to advise the Chief Commissioner as to the expenditure of the joint funds of the Native Authorities and to the distribution of government grants.³

Members of the N.T.C. were to be selected by the Native Authorities but in principle, it consisted of the heads of the Native Authorities, with an additional member for Western Dagbon. But the Native Authorities could delegate other chiefs or commoners and were expected to bring with them their principal advisers.

⁴Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa with introduction by Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. (Kraus Reprint, 1979), p.138. The administrative units were the Colony, Asante Protectorate and the Northern Territories.

⁵However, when indirect rule was introduced in the Protectorate, the aim of the British as put by the Governor was to build the system such that "some day the Dagombas, Gonjas and Mamprusis should become strong states." See ADM.1/7; NAGT. If this was the ultimate aim of the British then the creation of the N.T.C. constituted a reversal of their original policy.

⁶Cited in Acting C.C.N.T, 6 November, 1946 to Senior D.C., Mamprusi. ADM.1/769; NAGT.
Initially therefore, the N.T.C was a "chiefs" Council which was in line with the long-held British view that if political power in West Africa was to devolve at all, it should devolve to the "natural rulers of the people", who were the chiefs. It was therefore hoped that through the N.T.C. the chiefs were to be trained "first to advance beyond local affairs to matters that affect all and then to play a role in the Colony-wide affairs."  

The Native Authorities were asked to provide items for the agenda which was drawn up by the Chief Commissioner. These items were presented as specific motions for discussion. However, after 1950, a question-and-answer procedure was introduced whereby the local heads of departments were called upon to answer the questions. Each session was introduced by a speech by the Chief Commissioner and this made the N.T.C. take the semblance of a miniature parliament. The N.T.C. was regarded by the British as a training school where future representatives of the central legislature would learn the art of debate, rules of procedure and other traditions associated with the Westminster form of government.

Since most of the chiefs in the Northern Territories were not literate in English, the proceedings of the initial meetings were slow and cumbersome because of the many languages in which proceedings had to be translated into.  

\[^7\text{N.T.C., First Session, 16 December, 1946, p.2.}\]

\[^8\text{At the first meeting which was held in the Dining Hall of the Senior Government School (Tamale Secondary School), only two out of the fifteen chiefs were literate. See Austin \textit{op cit.} p.8}\]
their own interpreters, usually a student attending the Government
Teacher Training College or a worker in the Native Authority.
However, within five years of the establishment of the N.T.C.,
chiefs gave way to non-chiefs without a struggle. The chiefs
realised that they could not cope with a legislature, elections and
political parties. Perhaps, the illiterate chiefs gave way to the
educated with virtually no struggle because they saw no fundamental
conflict of interest between themselves and their educated
advisors, who were often their sons.

The affairs of the Council were conducted by a two man
Secretariat consisting of the Secretary and his assistant. The
central government gave a grant for the running of the Council’s
business. After reform of the local government system in 1951, the
need to reform the N.T.C. became necessary. The Native Authority
(Northern) Ordinance of November 1950 established the N.T.C. by
law. The law also gave the N.T.C. administrative as well as
executive power in line with the recommendations of the Coussey
Committee. However, its membership was still based on the old
Native Authority, although by this time most of the representatives
were literate chiefs. In 1952, the membership of the N.T.C. was
changed to consist of representatives appointed by the District
Councils. In the same reforms, the government felt that the N.T.C
could function as an autonomous body without official
participation. An elected President chaired meetings instead of the

(footnote).

7See 7.2.
Chief Commissioner whose role was reduced to a formal introductory speech after which he withdrew. The Council also elected a six member Standing Committee which met about once a month. It was the Committee's duty to plan the agenda for each general meeting. The Council was only convened when there was sufficient work for its consideration. The District Councils debated all motions before they submitted them to the N.T.C. This helped to reduce the Council's agenda by disposing of more parochial problems. The Standing Committee allocated funds to the various District Councils from the central government grant. Other duties of the Committee included the follow up of Council's decisions, the employment of people for the District Councils and the award of scholarships to deserving students.

Soon after its formation, the N.T.C. began to discuss matters relating to local administration, development and social problems of the region. Beginning from the third session the Council members requested more development for the North on the grounds that the area should have everything the south had. One such problem was the extension of the rail-head from Kumasi to Navrongo. The development of education was also one of its principal concerns.

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10Yakubu Tali, later Tolon Na was appointed and remained President of the N.T.C. until its dissolution in 1958.

11Most often problems from the grass roots were brought to the regional level. They were then referred back to the local level after decisions had been taken on them. Also, in the case of scholarships, the funds were from a general pool contributed by the various Councils.

12As we saw in 6.3 the railway line was not extended to the North.
For example, it accepted a resolution calling on the Native Authorities to establish a scholarship for secondary or higher education, and for the government to pay for a second scholarship. At its fifth session in June 1949, J.A. Braimah asserted:

If we do not get the necessary education that will qualify us for senior and key posts then it means that we are going to be politically dominated by people of other regions in no time.\(^\text{13}\)

During the next session, Braimah again wanted to know the number of Northerners among African senior and junior civil servants. The reply was that as at 31 October 1949, there was no Northerner among the 219 Africans in the senior service, but that there were 80 Northerners in the junior service.\(^\text{14}\) Members then claimed that the head clerks who were mostly Southerners, were reluctant to recommend to the Chief Commissioner to send circulars to all heads of Departments "to give priority consideration to the applications of our boys for many vacant posts occurring in their Departments."\(^\text{15}\) It was not any reluctance on the part of the head clerks to inform the Chief Commissioner about any vacancies but that qualified Northerners were not available. As mentioned earlier, the few who existed had taken up appointments with the District Councils.

The N.T.C. was the only authorised body through which both internal and external matters could be discussed. In December 1949, \(^\text{13}\)N.T.C. Fifth session, 15-18 June, 1949, pp.71-2. \(^\text{14}\)N.T.C. Sixth Session, 4-6 January 1950, p.11. \(^\text{15}\)Minutes of the Seventh Session of the N.T.C., July 1950, p.45.
the Legislative Council asked the N.T.C. to advise it on the Coussey Committee's report on local government as they affected the Dependency. The Chief Commissioner selected a Six member Committee, five of whom were chiefs to deliberate on the request.\textsuperscript{16} After consulting principally "Headchiefs and their Councilors", it advocated "a slower approach to local government reforms than had been recommended by the Coussey Committee."\textsuperscript{17} The reasons it gave were: 1) the lack of political consciousness among the people of the Protectorate; 2) the paucity of educational facilities in the area which accounted for the lack of an educated class; 3) their reliance and satisfaction with chieftaincy as the pivot of Northern administration which the reforms wanted to undermine; 4) the fear that there would be an influx of southerners into the region to dominate the civil service, southerners who hitherto had shown an antipathy for service in the region and 5) fear that the introduction of a modern electoral system would lead to the election of candidates of the southern political parties.\textsuperscript{18}

This outlook, it should be remarked, was a reflection of the policy of isolation which had characterised British policy in the

\textsuperscript{16}N.T.C. Sixth Session, 4-6 January 1950. Members of the Committee were Asigiri, Wokandana; J.A. Braimah, Kabachewura; Puobe Imoru, Nandon Na; Abudu Mumuni, Dorimon Na; and Yakubo Tali, Tali Na. The only commoner was J.H. Allassani, Secretary to the Dagomba Native Authority.

\textsuperscript{17}N.T.C., "Report of the Committee of the Territorial Council of the Northern Territories appointed to make recommendations concerning Local Government in the Northern Territories", Accra, 1951, p.1.

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, pp.1-2.
region for more than fifty years. The Committee's recommendations greatly overestimated the respect and position of chiefs in the area while underestimating the pace of change in the South. It also deliberately ignored the existence of a small class of Northerners who were prepared to follow Kwame Nkrumah and who according to Ladouceur could be described as "a small faction with a dynamic political creed." The N.T.C. accepted the Committee's report without discussion although when it came to a vote on it 5 members voted against it. This was an indication of how the politics of the region was going to be. It again showed that all members were not going to follow blindly the line of the "conservative" members. The Government however modified the recommendation of the Committee's report. It agreed that the President of the District Council could be a chief but he was to have no vote. The only concession the Northern Territories had was that local council employees who did not hold executive office could be members of the Council.

Another issue which the N.T.C regarded as discriminatory against the North but which it unsuccessfully attempted to fight against was the alienation of land in the region. By virtue of the Northern Territories Lands and Native Rights Ordinance, 1927, all land in the Protectorate, whether occupied or unoccupied, became crown lands, with the right of disposition vested in the Governor. This meant that the Governor could grant land in the region to other people provided that a significant quantity was left for the

people of the North "to keep their bodies and souls together."²⁰ Although the Governor's right to dispose of land had not been used, the N.T.C. argued that such a right should be transferred to it to hold in trust for the chiefs and people of the area until a just law concerning land in the North was passed. In spite of several petitions, the Government did not give any consideration to the matter mainly because of dissension among Northerners.²¹ This would have given the N.T.C. its first executive powers. An issue which concerned both the N.T.C. and the CPP government was the question of whether the Northern section of the British Mandated Togoland was to be amalgamated to the rest of the Gold Coast or allowed to join the French Mandated Togoland to form one country.²² Both the N.T.C and the Nkrumah regime were agreed that they should be amalgamated to the Gold Coast since three paramount chiefs in the Protectorate were opposed to having their areas dismembered. The

²⁰ Debate on the Resolution of the N.T.C. on the transfer of trusteeship of NTs lands to the N.T.C., Eighteenth Session of the N.T.C., 26-27 August 1954, Appendix A. A similar law passed in the South in 1893 led to the formation of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society which campaigned and protested till the Lands Bill was withdrawn in 1897. See Kimble op cit. Chapter IX, Boahen (1975), pp. 59-61; Agbodeka op cit. pp. 19-20.

²¹ Some of the chiefs such as Navropio and the Sandemananab refused to allow government to give the N.T.C. such powers. See Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee held from 12-15 August 1955. ADM.65/5/4; NAG, Accra. It should be remarked that these chiefs were supporters of the CPP and possibly refused to do so because they might have realised the opposition the Council was giving to the central government.

N.T.C. made it clear to a United Nations' fact finding team which visited Tamale that it had always regarded the boundary as "imaginary which had been imposed during the Scramble for Africa." \(^{23}\)

Developments in the country were to draw the N.T.C. into the national political orbit. Following the setting up of Coussey Committee to study and make recommendations on the report of the Watson Committee, the Chief Commissioner was requested to select five people to serve on the Coussey Committee. He in turn asked the N.T.C. to choose four of its members. The Chief Commissioner withdrew and for the first time members discussed a matter without the presence of a British official and selected four of its members. \(^{24}\) The inclusion of the N.T.C. on the Coussey Committee symbolised the formal ending of the policy of isolating the North from events in the south. Henceforth, the North would be included in any new legislature. Representatives from the region had to therefore participate in the drawing of the new constitution. \(^{25}\)

\(^{23}\)Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the N.T.C. held from 12-15 August, 1955. ADM.65/5/4; NAG, Accra.

\(^{24}\)The members selected were Yakubu Tali, J.A. Karbo, J.A.A. Salaam and N. Yenli. The Chief Commissioner then selected J.A. Braimah.

\(^{25}\)The first time an official from the North took part in a national discussion was in 1934 when the Chief Commissioner was made a member of the Executive Council. In that same year the Legislative Council was mandated to legislate for the North. Twelve years later, the Chief Commissioner was again made a member of the Legislative Council. But the first time any voice from a Northern official was heard in the Legislative Council was in 1949 when the Chief Commissioner said "My predecessors in office and I have sat in this Chamber for nearly four years; but ow.:r. to the peculiar constitutional position of the Protectorate, ours has largely been
Northerners on the Committee were apprehensive about the pro-self-government orientation of the other members of the Committee but they managed to get some concessions for the North. These concessions were connected with chieftaincy and the rapid development of the area. Also, with regard to the North, the Cousinsy Committee recommended that the N.T.C. should be the regional council except that ten new members were to be elected to join it. The Northern Territories were not represented in the Ewart Committee appointed by the Legislative Council to translate the franchise recommendations of the Cousinsy Committee. But the Ewart Committee recommended that the North should be allocated 19 seats to be elected by an electoral college based on the N.T.C. and the Native Authorities. However, the North was invited to serve on a Legislative Council that accepted the recommendations of the Ewart Committee. The participation of the North in the deliberations of the Legislative Council was the second occasion in which Northerners were formally represented at deliberations affecting the whole country.

Although Northerners had no voice in the decision to integrate an inarticulate role. E. Norton Jones, Legislative Council Debates, 13 December, 1949; Kimble op cit. p.536. It should also be remarked that Asante was also given membership of the Legislative Council in that year.

Although the Cousinsy Committee wanted the new local authority Councils to be more democratic than the former Native Authorities, it recommended that a third of its members were to be selected by traditional authorities. See Report of the Committee for Constitutional Reforms, paragraph 248. The report also devoted a section to the need to develop the North to raise the standard of the people up to the average of the rest of the country. See Report of the Cousinsy Committee, p.68.
their region with the Colony and Asante, they used every opportunity to make known their views on the conditions under which the integration was to be carried out. They now realised the great gulf separating them from the rest of the country and what this meant for the future. For example, when Nkrumah called the "Ghana People's Representative Assembly" in November 1949 in response to the Coussey Report, the N.T.C. rejected the resolution of the Assembly which called for immediate self-government and full dominion within the Commonwealth. It argued that the Northern Territories would not be ripe for self-government for ten to fifteen years. The view of the Northerners which was articulated by the N.T.C. was that independence should be delayed until such time as the region was on a footing of equality socially and economically with the South. They therefore did not oppose independence per se but its timing. They felt justified in making these requests because as far as they were concerned, their status was different from the Colony and Asante. Northerners were "protected persons" whose relationship with Britain was defined by treaties signed by their chiefs in the closing years of the 19th century. To them as far as they were aware, these treaties had not been abrogated or denounced by either party which meant that the British Government had certain responsibilities towards the chiefs and people of the area. The same reasoning of the unpreparedness of the Protectorate is reflected in a parable Ya Na Mahama III told Nkrumah:

27N.T.C., Sixth Session, 4-6 January 1950, pp. 19 and 21.
If three women who were pregnant, one at nine months, one at seven months and the other at three months were to give birth, the woman at nine months would give birth to a child, and also the woman at seven months. But the woman at three months would deliver only blood and tissue. So the Colony and Asante could go ahead with independence but the North was not yet ready.28

Northerners therefore feared that they would forever remain subservient both economically and politically to Southerners but they did not want their area according to J.A. Braimah to "remain nothing more than a labour camp."29

In October 1952, Nkrumah invited the territorial councils, political parties and groups to submit written proposals on various aspects of constitutional reforms. At its discussions, the N.T.C. suggested that the leader of the majority should assume the title of Prime Minister and that there should be direct elections in the Northern Territories. It, however, wanted little change in the 1950 Constitution in which there were three ex-officio members with the Governor retaining his reserve powers. The N.T.C. also suggested that a second legislative chamber should be created and the representation of the North in the Cabinet should be increased.30

The Council asked its Standing Committee to prepare a memorandum on the basis of its discussions to be submitted to the government.

The draft memorandum was discussed and approved by the N.T.C. It cautioned against "undue haste towards self-government" and

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28Quoted from Ladouceur op cit. p,92.
29J.A. Braimah, N.T.C., Sixth Session, 4-6 January 1950, p.45.
30N.T.C., Thirteenth Session, 22-23 January 1953.
suggested "that political changes should be based on economic advance." The memorandum called for the retention of the three ex officio ministers, the establishment of a Second Chamber or Senate, a guarantee of one quarter of the Cabinet posts for the North, resolution of the Togoland issue before independence, safeguards for the protection of chieftaincy and the retention of the Governor's reserve powers. However, only the last two suggestions were incorporated in the Government's Proposals for Constitutional Reform published in July 1953. In May 1953, Nkrumah and the Governor met the Standing Committee of the N.T.C. and traditional rulers of the North in Tamale to discuss constitutional reform and progress for independence. Northerners expressed their hesitation and fears explaining that while they did not oppose the granting of independence, they wanted their area to be developed first. They further raised two more issues in addition to those contained in their memorandum: they wanted a Minister of State appointed for the North and the right of the Northern Territories to secede if they were dissatisfied with the new constitution. Although the two matters were not discussed it was a clear indication of the gravity with which Northern leadership viewed early independence.

The North received assurances from Nkrumah that his government would not allow their region to be divided by an international boundary as a result of the Togoland question and that defence and


external affairs would continue to be the responsibility of Britain. Others were that the North would be represented in the Assembly in proportion to its population and it would also have "adequate representation" in the Cabinet. Finally, Nkrumah promised Northern leadership that a "special development organisation" would be established to look after its development. The Northern leadership agreed to support further constitutional progress and gave way on the proposal for a second chamber and the retention of ex officio ministers in view of the above promises.

As the country rapidly approached self-government, the N.T.C. was concerned about the slow rate of development in the North. We have already noted that the memorandum of July 1953 called for economic development before constitutional advance. In line with this objective, the N.T.C. appointed a Development Committee in September 1953 to "advise the government on general development projects in the Northern Territories and in the matter of allocation of funds for these development projects." The resolution also called on the government to provide:

a special grant to facilitate rapid development in the Northern Territories during the transitional period which the Gold Coast will pass before attaining Dominion status.

This was mainly because the Northern leadership remained skeptical in spite of the government's promises. In 1951, Northern members of the Legislative Assembly had great expectations as far as

34N.T.C., Sixteenth Session, 3-4 September, 1953, p.28.
development of their region was concerned. But they were disappointed. For example, only 7.3 per cent of the funds earmarked for educational development in the country was allocated to the North.\textsuperscript{15} The Committee's report which was submitted in December 1954 was unanimously accepted with a few amendments. During the discussion, the Committee made it clear that the report was a five-year development plan for the period 1956-61.\textsuperscript{16} The report detailed development for the North under five headings, namely: social services, economic and productive services, communications, public utility services and miscellaneous services.\textsuperscript{17} In general the report can be regarded as more of a regional aspirations for development than a plan proposal. While the government may have used it as a guide in preparing its Consolidation Development Plan, it did not consider itself bound by it.

With the formation of the NPP the relationship between the NPP controlled N.T.C. and the central government became strained on economic development and constitutional advance.\textsuperscript{18} Northern leadership began to see the government as basically hostile to Northern interests. This coincided with the rise of the question of regional devolution of power. Northerners had agreed to support the

\textsuperscript{15}Revised Draft Ten-Year Plan; The Development Plan, 1951, p.104.

\textsuperscript{16}N.T.C., Nineteenth Session, 13-20 December, 1954, p.11.

\textsuperscript{17}N.T.C., Report of the Northern Territories Council Committee on General Development in the Northern Territories, Tamale, 1954.

\textsuperscript{18}See 9.2 for the attitude of the central government towards the North after the 1954 elections.
CPP, as we have seen, because of its promise to set up regional councils as recommended by the Coussey Committee. With Asante calling for federation through the NLM, the N.T.C. now felt more confident in pressing their demand for regional autonomy, taking care to point out that the North was "not singing the same song as Ashanti" but warned that unless the government considered granting a substantial degree of regional autonomy in the near future, "we will continue singing and in the end sing federation." However, there was lack of unity within the N.T.C itself. Disagreements began to surface between CPP and NPP supporters within the N.T.C. For example, when NPP members of the Council presented a motion which referred to the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly for the creation of a federal system of government and the establishment of a Second Chamber for the Gold Coast, the CPP members countered with an amendment to the effect that the N.T.C. should declare itself against a federal system and the creation of a Second Chamber.

Conflict within the N.T.C. reached its apogee prior to and immediately after the Achimota conference convened to study the report of Sir Frederick Bourne, appointed to study the devolution

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40 N.T.C., 21 Session, 24th-27th May, 1955. Voting on the amendment was 10 for and 11 against while voting for the main motion was 11 for and ten against. *Ibid.*
of power in the Gold Coast. In the face of opposition from the CPP members, the Council decided not to send a delegation until the status of the Protectorate had been clarified by the Governor at a durbar scheduled for April 1956.

At the durbar which was held in May 1956, the Governor told the chiefs and people that the powers of the crown did not differ from those it possessed from the rest of the Gold Coast. The Governor, Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke, further told them that the Northern Territories had played a full part in the creation and operation of the 1954 Constitution and that the British government no longer regarded the treaties which had been signed with Northern chiefs as significant. Finally, the Governor informed them that it

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41 For the incidents that led to the appointment of Sir Frederick Bourne as constitutional advisor and his report see Kimble *op cit.* pp. 723-44; Austin (1964), pp.301-303; Boahen (1975), pp.186-7.

42 Elections to the Standing Committee preceded the debate on whether to attend the Achimota Conference or not. Of the 8 members elected on the first ballot only one was a CPP supporter. He immediately withdrew from serving on the Committee. Subsequently the two CPP members elected, E.A. Mahama and Amadu Seidu also withdrew because they did not want to serve on an NPP dominated Committee. However, a CPP delegation led by E.A. Mahama attended the Achimota Conference not as members of the N.T.C. but as representatives of their District Councils. See Resolution of the Four who attended the Conference, 44 meeting of the Standing Committee, 13-17 March 1956, pp. 5-6. ADM.65/5/4; NAG, Accra. However, the representative of Kassena-Nankanni who attended the Conference was said to have been disowned by his people. *Ibid.* An emergency meeting called by the President to consider action to be taken against those who attended the Conference was boycotted by the CPP supporters. See N.T.C., 25 Session 17 March 1956. At the meeting of the Council, E.A. Mahama who had attended the Conference strongly objected to accepting Minutes of the meeting of 17 March 1956 on the grounds that it was *ultra vires*. See N.T.C., Twenty Sixth Session, 25-28 September 1956, pp. 30-41. He was however compelled to withdraw his motion in the end.
was the wish of the crown that the Northern Territories should form an integral part of an independent Gold Coast. Immediately after the meeting, the N.T.C. decided to send a delegation to London to plead its cause. However, the delegates were only selected after the July 1956 elections. The delegation in the company of others from Asante and the Togoland Congress went to London in August but came back without the concessions the N.T.C. expected. Thereafter, it dawned on the N.T.C. that it was fighting a losing battle. Its days as the mouthpiece of the Northern Territories had come to an end. But until its demise in 1958, the N.T.C. was the torch-bearer for the political and social emancipation of the North.

9.2 POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES.

The NPP came from us who still remained for the unity of the North. When the election was to come in 1954, we wanted a means by which the North would speak with one voice, otherwise it was unlikely we would get anything. This urged us to come together to fight on a united front, for development, education, agriculture, communication.

Party politics was first introduced in the Northern Territories by HE the Governor at a Durbar of Chiefs of the Northern Territories, Tamale, 29 May, 1956, p.2.

The N.T.C. was disbanded under the Councils (Northern Territories and Trans-Volta/Togoland) Dissolution Bill of 1958. Elections were held for new Regional Assemblies in October 1958, but these bodies, too, were abolished, in March 1959. See Austin (1964), p.380.

S.D. Dombo cited in Ladouceur op cit. p.113-4.
Territories when a branch of the United Gold Coast Convention was formed in Tamale in 1948. Initially, its supporters consisted mostly of southern civil servants working in Tamale. However, in mid-1949, Ebenezer Adam, who had been involved in political activities in the south was transferred to Tamale. Adam was made Secretary of the Tamale branch and together with R.S. Iddrisu his uncle, who had also lived in Kumasi they succeeded in drawing a number of Northerners into the party. After the Saltpond meeting of June 1949 which led to the formation of the CPP, Adam and Iddrisu led members of the Tamale branch of the U.G.C.C into CPP.

The CPP branch in Tamale began to organise its activities when R.S. Iddrisu was elected Chairman with Adam as Regional Propaganda Secretary. But right from the beginning the Tamale branch of the CPP faced opposition from the colonial officials and some literate Northerners. The former told the chiefs that the CPP was not a good party while some of the Northern elite opposed CPP for its early demand for independence. The CPP could not work through chiefs and

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46 Hereafter U.G.C.C. The U.G.C.C., the first political party in the Gold Coast, was formed in 1947 by a number of southern lawyers and businessmen.

47 The three principal CPP supporters in the North were R.S. Iddrisu, Ebenezer Adam and A.A. Chambaas. The background of the three CPP activists is significant. Adam as we have already pointed out, studied at Achimota and taught in Asante for ten years before returning to the North. Iddrisu on the other hand attended the government school in Tamale and was in the transport business first as a driver and later owned his own company which engaged in transport between Tamale and Kumasi. A.A. Chambaas became a reporter in Kumasi and later Tamale for the Ashanti Pioneer, a Kumasi based newspaper.

48 For factors that led to the formation of the CPP see Boahen (1975), pp. 160-65;
therefore it concentrated on the common man - farmers, traders, clerks and teachers - as it did in the south. It organised its activities in the villages around the serikin samari and market women around the magasia. Membership of the party began to grow when Nkrumah and some of the CPP leaders visited the North between July 1950 and November 1951. By early 1952, it was reported that there were thirty five branches in the north with nearly two thousand members. The CPP faced many obstacles in its attempts to expand in the North. These ranged from hostility of official and traditional rulers to lack of funds and poor communication. For example, R.S. Iddrisu was denied permission to hold a meeting in Yendi in November 1950 because of allegations that he had been rude to the Ya Na. In Wa in October 1951, the war drums of the Wa Na were sounded when there was a clash between CPP supporters and the chief’s followers. However, with the appointment of CPP Ministers following the 1951 elections the party faced less hostility in the North.

Realising the impediments being placed on their way by officialdom, one of the first important things CPP supporters in the North did was to challenge the right of the N.T.C. to represent the views of the North concerning the recommendations of the Ewart Committee. They further claimed that they were not granted an

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49 The leaders of the young men and queen of the market women respectively.


51 Ibid.
interview with the Ewart Committee. CPP supporters again accused colonial officials of colluding to ensure that few of their supporters were elected as members of the 1951 Electoral College. They again accused the colonial officials of ensuring that no CPP supporter was elected to the Legislative Assembly. Soon after their election to the Assembly some members such as A. Afoko, Ayarna Imoru and Ayeebo Asumda from Builsa and Kusasi where chieftaincy was a British creation, began to identify themselves with the CPP. They disliked the slow approach attitude of their colleagues to internal self-government and sympathised with the CPP's slogan of "Self-government now." However, it was the defection of J.H. Allassani to the CPP which gave the party a great impetus in the Protectorate. Before the elections, Allassani was against the party system because according to him, it set age against the youth and it "was dangerous and possibly nauseous to the vital integrity of the people as a whole." He also believed that parties were "foreign practices" that disregarded "our own traditional institutions and culture." However, after his appointment as Ministerial Secretary, Allassani was prepared to

52N.T.C., Seventh Session, 18-21 July, 1950, pp. 20-6.

53Ladouceur op cit. p.104. The Coussey Committee allocated 19 seats to the Northern Territories in the Legislative Assembly to be elected by an electoral college consisting of 16 members of the N.T.C. and 104 delegates selected by the District Councils. See Ladouceur op cit. pp. 74-77 and Austin (1964), pp. 148-9. The accusation was partially correct because when there was a tie between E.A. Mahamah, a CPP supporter and Katua Na, a subchief of Wa, the Chief Commissioner cast the deciding vote in favour of the chief.

54Daily Graphic, Accra, 19 October, 1950.
have the North throw its lot with the south. With the assistance of its supporters in the Legislative Assembly and being in power, the CPP began to expand in the region and was able to field twenty five candidates for the 1954 elections.

**THE NORTHERN PEOPLE'S PARTY.**

As noted in the previous section, the N.T.C. was apprehensive about the fast rate at which the Nkrumah regime and the Southerners as a whole were pressing for self-government. Sometimes, the attitude of the Northerners was unpalatable to other members of the Assembly. This compelled Danquah, most often a sympathiser of the Northern cause to retort one day:

> Well look, gentlemen of the North, we are prepared to wait for you, but how long do you want us to wait?. ....we are suggesting to you, go back quietly and think of the great responsibility you have placed on your shoulders, that is, you are holding up self-government.  

The Northern elite believed that the British government would ultimately hand them over unprepared to an unsympathetic independent African government controlled by southerners. These Southerners, the Northerners felt, would not consent to develop the North; instead they would leave the North as "a labour camp" and

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55One is at a loss at his sudden change. He had part of his education in the south, that is, at Achimota College where as we have already seen, he was described as a "detribalised Northerner." But it would seem that the change was due to his appointment as Ministerial Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister where he could realise the opportunities opened to members of the ruling party. Perhaps, this ambition was satisfied when he was made the Minister of Education in the first all Ghanaian Cabinet after the 1954 elections when he stood on the CPP ticket.

56Dr. J.B. Danquah, Legislative Assembly Debates, 1953, Issue 2, p.489.
undermine Northern traditions especially chieftaincy. Northerners could substantiate this allegation by pointing out the anti-chieftaincy policy of the CPP. The dissatisfaction of the Northern members of the Legislative Assembly, and indeed, most Northern elite reached its peak when J.A. Braimah, the only Northerner with a Ministerial post resigned over a bribery case and the failure of the government to extend the railway to the North. The incident came as a great surprise to many Northerners who felt Braimah had been so misled by the wickedness of Southern politics that he had allowed himself to be corrupted by a foreign contractor. The decision of the CPP to field candidates in the North for the impending elections was seen as a challenge to the

57Nkrumah is alleged to have said that chiefs would run away and leave their sandals. Staniland op cit. p.139. Sandals form a major part of a Southern chief’s paraphernalia. A chief is destooled by simply removing his sandals. Nkrumah’s alleged statement could therefore be interpreted to mean that he was going to abolish that institution. Although he did not abolish it eleven chiefs were destooled less than a year after the CPP came to power in 1951. See Rathbone, R., "Gold Coast Chiefs: Minutes by E.G.G. Hanrott on Parliamentary question about the number of chiefs destooled since the CPP took office" in British Documents on the End of the Empire Vol. 1 (London: 1992), pp.336-337.

58For the circumstances which led to the resignation of Braimah, who was one of the leading spokesmen of the North see Austin op cit. pp.164-5; Nkrumah, K., The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957), p.258; Ladouceur op cit. pp.110-111. Northerners were upset with the resignation because it meant that the North had only two Ministerial Secretaries. The NPP even sent a letter to the Governor indicating its continuous support for Braimah. See W.A, 8 May, 1954. Perhaps this support was to prevent Braimah from being harassed by the CPP since the Report of the Korsah Committee which was set up to investigate the case had not been published.
Northern leadership.\textsuperscript{59} This stiffened the resolve of Northerners to form a political party to contest the elections scheduled for July 1954. The Braimah affair, the CPP challenge and mistrust many Northerners had for that party were gradually making Northerners think of forming a party to contest the elections. Braimah and S.D. Dombo were the first to think of the formation of a party to preserve Northern unity, and to serve as the mouthpiece of the region both in and out of the Legislative Assembly and to press for the accelerated development of the area. In the house of Yakubu Tali, Tolon Na, the final decision was taken in April 1954 to form the NPP. It was officially inaugurated in Tamale during the week end 10-11 April 1954. Before the launching of the party, Mumuni Bawumia, accompanied at various stages by J.A. Nagba, and Imoru Salifu went round the North speaking to the chiefs and educated people about the need for the party and its aims and objectives. They were convinced that if the party was to have a strong hold in the region, the support of chiefs and educated people was necessary. They further believed that the question of personal loyalty and local allegiances and rivalries, based largely on traditional criteria would dominate any future election in the Protectorate and not any unfamiliar institutions and concepts such as political parties and national constitutional issues.

\textsuperscript{59}The Van Lare Commission on Representational and Electoral Reform recommended that the Northern Territories should be allocated 26 seats in the new Legislative Assembly of 104. It also recommended the extension of the franchise for the first time to Northerners. See Gold Coast: Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Representational and Electoral Reform, Accra, 1954, p.17.
S.D. Dombo, Douri Na, Mumuni Bawumia, Salifu Dramani and Imoru Salifu were made Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Organiser respectively.\textsuperscript{60} The NPP appealed to Northern regional sentiments and urged the maintenance and strengthening of regional solidarity and unity. The symbol of the party was a clenched fist, with words "Always Together" while the slogan was "United We Stand" and the party song was entitled "The more we are together." The aims and objectives of the NPP reflected the desire of the North to be at par with the South in terms of social, economic and educational development.\textsuperscript{61} One thing becomes clear about the formation of the NPP; it was the provision of a common forum, that is, the Legislative Assembly which enabled representatives of the Northern Territories to come together to seek solutions to their common problems. It did not seek to secede from the rest of the country nor did it put obstacles on the forward march to independence. Rather, what dawned on Northern elites was the realisation of the socio-economic neglect of their area, and a consciousness which was strengthened and reinforced by the resentful attitude invariably

\textsuperscript{60}Bawumia was to have been the Chairman but the leaders did not want it to look as if it was a Mamprusi political organisation since Mamprusi made up almost half of the area of the Dependency. See Tordoff, William, \textit{The NPP} (Unpublished paper, n.d.; [1954]). Braimah too almost recoiled into his shell and temporarily wanted to resign from politics completely because of the scandal. Besides, he did not want to play a leading role in the party to warrant the accusation that he had resigned from the government to lead a party. This, perhaps would have given the CPP the chance to harass him.

shown by "Southerners" posted to the North as clerks or teachers. For example, Yakubu Tali asked in the Legislative Assembly why people from the South working in the Protectorate wanted an extra remuneration of 30s a month when Europeans had not asked for such a privilege. All these helped to produce a strongly-held belief that the North was not only different from the South but that it was in danger of being subjected to its hasty and over radical politicians.

The governing body of the party was the National Executive Committee, 20 in all, made up of members of the Secretariat and other members chosen by an annual delegates conference. Also, to give the party a national outlook, each political region was to be represented by two members on the Executive Committee. The Constitution also dealt with the party's finances which were to be administered by a Board of Trustees. The enrolment fee was 2s, which entitled one to a party card. Other sources of funds for the party were an annual subscription of 12s from members, donations, contributions and endowment. It hoped to organise raffles to raise funds. In spite of the above, the party was poor in

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62 Parliamentary Debate, 2-3-53. See also Kimble op cit. p.535. Also, one Adjei, a southerner who had been transferred to Bolgatanga appealed for transfer back to the south because according to him, the houses in the North were "good for only Northerners and goats." Mumuni Bawumia, Legislative Assembly Debates, 2 March, 1954.

63 All supporters of the party who were members of the Legislative Assembly were expected to contribute £5 monthly towards the running of the party.
comparison with either the CPP or the Ghana Congress Party. For example, it possessed only one propaganda van donated to it by the Ghana Congress Party. However, as far as the Protectorate was concerned the party was well endowed. First, it had a solid organisation because the N.T.C. acted as an effective headquarters and the facilities of its Secretariat were placed at the disposal of the NPP.

The NPP can be classified as an elitist party by the standards of the North. Although membership was opened to all Gold Coasters yet only those literate in English from the North and chiefs patronised it. In terms of donations too the party had very little help from individuals except the few elite. This was a reflection of the general poverty of the area. The elitist nature of the NPP is also explained by the fact that the original founders and leading members were the elite in the North. The NPP could also be said to have taken up from where the N.T.C. left off; particularly its anti-south and pro-chiefs bias. Indeed, apart from J.H. Allassani and E.A. Mahamah all the prominent members of the Council became members of the NPP.

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64 After its humiliating defeat in the 1951 elections, the U.G.C.C. changed its name to Ghana Congress Party with Busia as Chairman of the party.

65 The close alliance between the NPP and the N.T.C. is shown by the fact that initially J.A. Nagba, Secretary of the N.T.C. served as the interim Secretary of the NPP. The NPP also used the headquarters of the N.T.C as its Secretariat until the Chief Regional Officer, who is suspected to have been the original brain behind the formation of the NPP asked it to have its own Secretariat. But even then the NPP continued to use the facilities of the N.T.C.
The other political party that emerged in the North was the Muslim Association Party. M.A.P. grew out of the Gold Coast Muslim Association which was formed in 1932 as a welfare and social organisation. Realising that their privileges were under constant attack from the CPP, the Association changed its name to Muslim Association Party to contest the 1954 elections. A branch was formed in Tamale with Alhaji Osman, a member of the 1951 Legislative Assembly as its spokesman. The Muslim Association Party, like the NPP was on the side of age and traditional authority. Also, like the NPP, M.A.P. was anti-CPP. However, while all members of M.A.P. were Muslims, NPP membership was made up of people with different religious beliefs although the latter had more Muslims than the CPP. In view of the many similarities, it was easy for the two political parties to form an electoral alliance in 1954.

THE FIRST DIRECT ELECTIONS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES.

As part of the march towards self-government, a new constitution was introduced in the Gold Coast in 1954. Under the constitution, there was first a Legislative Assembly of one hundred and four members, all of whom were to be elected, and then a cabinet which was to be responsible to Parliament and not to the Governor. Elections were fixed for June 1954 to usher the country

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66Hereafter MAP.

67Many Muslims in the south who were mostly immigrants resented the restrictions CPP controlled Municipal Councils placed on Muslim traders and butchers. See Austin (1964), p. 188-9.
into internal self-government. It has already been pointed out that the Van Lare Commission allocated twenty six seats to the Northern Territories and also extended the franchise to the people.

After its formation in April 1954, the NPP began to prepare for the impending national elections which had been scheduled for June 1954. The electioneering campaign of the NPP followed closely that of the CPP its main rival in the North. It adopted all the paraphernalia and techniques of a mass party: a flag, a salute (clenched fist), a slogan and political rallies. Also, the party's manifesto for the elections was modelled to a large extent, at least structurally, on that of CPP. These included, the adoption of "Operation United 26" which was the NPP's version of the CPP's "Operation 104" which referred to the number of seats each party was sure to win in the elections. In the election manifesto, the NPP stated that it did not "seek only the interest of the North alone but the whole Gold Coast." The manifesto was unambiguous in efforts it would make to bridge the gap between the North and the South. It stated that:

The constant endeavour to bridge the gulf which divides the peoples of the North and South of the Gold Coast in the economic, educational and social fields, is the one and noble highway to achieving a strong and united democratic nation. Except this is done, and done realistically, and as rapidly as possible, the future unity of the two major areas of the Gold Coast would not be possible. For there can be no real equality between

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68It was formed only two months before the 1954 elections. Nkrumah called the election because a new constitution was introduced in which an all African government was to take office. See Austin (1964), pp. 167-199; Boahen (1975), pp.173-182.

69NPP, Manifesto 1954, p.2.
in£erior and superiors.\textsuperscript{70} The NPP aimed at achieving development parity between the North and the South by asking for not less than eight million pounds half of which was to be a free grant from the government and the other one half a loan at a very low interest rate.\textsuperscript{71} In the second and third parts of the manifesto, the NPP talked about the need to accelerate educational and economic developments of the North by providing more schools and encouraging the production of such crops as rice, groundnuts and cotton.\textsuperscript{72} In the concluding part of the Manifesto which was devoted to the question of self-government it differed little from the ruling government when the NPP stated "We believe in full self-government within the British Commonwealth of Nations and will strive to achieve it." It could thus be inferred that the party did not oppose self-government \textit{per se} but wanted economic development of the North to precede independence.\textsuperscript{73} Being aware of Northern sentiments, the CPP wanted to take the sail out of the NPP when it included in its manifesto a special section entitled \textbf{New Deal for Northern Territories}. The manifesto contained the main thrust of the demands which Northern members of the Legislative

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{70}\textit{Ibid.}
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\textsuperscript{71}Incidentally the N.T.C. had asked for this same amount to be spent on developing the North. See Minutes of the 6th Session of the N.T.C. 4-6 January 1950, p.40. The NPP believed that the Northern Territories contributed its fair share of the country's revenue because of the labour it provided for the cocoa and mining industries. See NPP Manifesto for 1954, p.4.
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\textsuperscript{72}See Parts II and III of Manifesto of NPP 1954.
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\textsuperscript{73}See Polaris, \textit{West Africa}, 15 May, 1954.
\end{flushright}
Assembly had put forward since 1951.\textsuperscript{74}

The NPP fielded 16 candidates but did not contest in areas where its ally, M.A.P. was strong.\textsuperscript{75} Formed only two months before the elections and with poor resources, each candidate was more or less on his own, except for access to party symbols, slogans and platform. But the NPP had advantages over CPP. Firstly, the latter had been portrayed as anti-chief and the party of "veranda boys." Austin has pointed out that:

the radicalism and "veranda boy" appeal of the CPP, that often held the party steady in the south, were a disadvantage in the north where the common man was still firmly under the authority of the chief. It was only by competing with the NPP on its own terms, and by asserting its authority as a government to back its appeal as a party, that the CPP later succeeded in splintering - and eventually breaking the NPP.\textsuperscript{76}

The NPP was also regarded as the party of Northerners and was supported by most chiefs. Secondly, most leaders of the NPP were either chiefs themselves, related to chiefs or were their counsellors.\textsuperscript{77} The relations between chiefs and most leaders of the NPP were reciprocal. Many of the chiefs became political patrons in their areas and politicians courted their favour. Not all chiefs campaigned for the NPP but those who did like the Nayiri greatly

\textsuperscript{74}See CPP, Operation 104, Accra, 1954, p.16.

\textsuperscript{75}CPP fielded 25 candidates, the M.A.P 6 while there were 33 Independent candidates.

\textsuperscript{76}Austin (1964), p.228.

\textsuperscript{77}For example, S.D. Dombo, Yakubu Tali and J.A. Braimah were chiefs while Mumuni Bawumia was Secretary of the Mamprusi Native Authority and chief advisor to the Nayiri who between 1951-57 wielded much power in the North East.
influenced voters especially in areas where the institution was strong.\textsuperscript{78} The NPP also made use of the local balance of forces, divisions and ambitions. These advantages derived from an intimate knowledge of the local conditions in the different chiefdoms and districts. However, the two chiefdoms of Gonja and Dagbon, were split between the NPP and the CPP. The Yagbumwura for instance supported E.A. Mahama, a CPP candidate while J.A. Braimah, although nominally independent supported the NPP. In Dagbon J.H. Allassani, a CPP candidate was supported by some Dagomba chiefs yet, Yakubu Tali, the Tolon Na, a staunch NPP supporter was one of the principal advisors to the Ya Na. Perhaps, it was to win the favour of chiefs and distance himself from his anti-chiefship stand that Nkrumah said:

\begin{quote}
I want to make it plain that the policy of the Convention People’s Party ...is not against chieftaincy in this country...chieftaincy is the fabric upon which the institutions of this country rest...with the advent of democracy we feel, even then, that we cannot leave out our chiefs in the administration of the country.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

Given the rise of the NPP, it was essential that the CPP should go out and draw some chiefs to its side if the government was to have, if not a victory, at least a chance of honourable

\textsuperscript{78}In the Mamprusi Native Authority, the NPP was regarded as the "chiefs' party" and even the symbol of the party - the clenched fist - was regarded as that of the Nayiri. Ladouceur, \textit{op.cit.} p.119. It was therefore thought to be courting disaster if one voted against the NPP. The strong support the Nayiri gave to the NPP is shown by the fact that it won 9 out of the ten seats in the Mamprusi Native Authority area. It lost only in the Kusasi constituency where the people wanted to be "free" from the Nayiri's control.

\textsuperscript{79}Record of the Tenth Session of the N.T.C. held on 1 & 2 November, 1951.
defeat in the North. When Nkrumah visited the North in April 1954 he called on the Ya Na hoping to obtain his endorsement for the election. But the most that he could get from the King was a declaration of neutrality. This declaration was broadcast over the radio in Tamale and Yendi.\textsuperscript{80} Next, the CPP looked for candidates with aristocratic background or chiefly support. Thus in Dagbon south, faced by the Tolon Na (Independent candidate), the CPP exploited fears that an NPP victory would lead to the abolition of the separate Kumbumgu Council. In choosing its candidate, the CPP adopted S.D. Abdulai, the grandson of another Kumbumgu Na. As a result of these tactics, the Tolon Na won by an official majority of only ten.\textsuperscript{81} In Kassem-Nankanni and Tumu constituencies the CPP adopted as candidates L.R. Abavana and Imoru Egala who were the principal advisors to the Navropio and Tumukoro respectively.\textsuperscript{82} Thus in Dagbon as elsewhere in Ghana, the CPP tended to take on the colours of its surroundings and picked up supporters on the rebound from the opposition.\textsuperscript{83} But as in the south, the CPP faced the problem of internal division in some constituencies such as

\textsuperscript{80}Ghana Parliamentary Debates, 2nd series, Vol. 1, 10 December, 1969.

\textsuperscript{81}Staniland \textit{op cit.} p.141.

\textsuperscript{82}Although Imoru Egala stood as an independent candidate he was in reality a CPP candidate in disguise. This was meant to hide the fact that he was being sponsored by the Tumukoro.

\textsuperscript{83}See Austin (1964), p.231; Owusu \textit{op cit.} p.31; Dunn & Robertson, \textit{op cit.} pp. 314-52.
Gulkpego and Bolgatanga which led to its defeat.\textsuperscript{84}

The NPP won twelve and the CPP seven of the seats when the results of the 1954 elections were declared.\textsuperscript{85} Six independent candidates were successful, but in reality they were not independent candidates. They were either for the NPP or CPP. For example, Tolon Na, in whose house the NPP was founded contested the 1954 elections as an independent candidate mainly because as a divisional chief he felt that he would be courting the displeasure of the CPP supporters in his traditional area if he stood on a party ticket. J.A. Braimah, another staunch supporter of the NPP also stood as an independent candidate because he feared that the CPP would accuse him of leaving the government to form a party.

\textsuperscript{84}In the south eighty one party members put themselves up against the official candidates. Most of those who refused to stand down were dismissed from the party. See Nkrumah \textit{op cit.} p. 208. While in the North no party member stood against the official candidate, in the Gulkpego-Nanton constituency there was a running rivalry between R.S. Iddrisu, the Regional Chairmen of the Party and Ebenezer Adam, the Propaganda Secretary. This cost the party the constituency since Adam's supporters did not vote for Iddrisu who was the party candidate. In Bolgatanga too, the Central Committee of the party chose Jerome Anyema as the candidate instead of R.B Braimah the incumbent. Braimah stood as an independent candidate, won and joined the NPP. See Ladouceur \textit{op cit.} p. 120.

\textsuperscript{85}In terms of Parliamentary control, the NPP effectively commanded seventeen seats since the following Independent Candidates W.A. Amoro, J.A. Braimah, Yakubu Tali, C.K. Tedam declared for NPP Alhaji Osman of the M.A.P was a sympathiser of the NPP. Imoru Egala and Abukari Sumani who stood as independent candidates also joined the CPP. See Dennis Austin "The Elections in an African Rural Area" in \textit{Journal of the International African Institute} VOL. XXXI, January 1961, Number 1, pp.1-18; Austin (1964), pp. 201-249; and George Bennett "The Gold Coast General Election of 1954" in \textit{Parliamentary Affairs} VOL. VII, No.4, Autumn 1954 on how the campaign and elections were conducted in the country as a whole and some constituencies in the North in particular.
Besides, the Korsah Committee set up to investigate the bribery charge against him had not submitted its report. He therefore feared that the CPP would harass him if he stood on a party ticket. To satisfy national aspirations, Nkrumah made two Northerners - J.H. Allassani and Imoru Egala Cabinet Ministers while two others were made Ministerial Secretaries.\(^6\)

When the Legislative Assembly convened in late July 1954, the Northerners found themselves to be the largest opposition party. The Ghana Congress Party and the Moslem Association Party, its main allies won few seats.\(^7\) The NPP found itself in an unexpected and awkward situation for it had been formed to seek acceleration of development for the North and had hoped to play a neutral role between the government and the Opposition. But it now found itself as the leading opposition party. Through the Chief Regional Officer, the Governor advised the NPP leadership not to enter the Assembly as an opposition but play a neutral role by considering all issues objectively and not to oppose the government unnecessarily since Nkrumah was not likely to do much for the North.\(^8\) In line with the Westminster parliamentary system, the leader of the NPP was to be Leader of the Opposition. Nkrumah

\(^6\)J.H. Allassani was appointed Minister for Education while Imoru Egala was made Minister for Health. Ayeebo Asumda and L.R. Abavana were made Ministerial Secretaries for Works and Agriculture respectively.

\(^7\)Indeed, the Ghana Congress Party and the Moslem Association Party won a seat each. The Togo Congress Party and the many other sectional parties won few seats.

\(^8\)Ladouceur *op cit.* p.130.
refused to recognise the "members of the opposite side of the House as being an opposition in the true sense" since there was "no group among them which could form an alternate government." 89 He also made it clear that the government did not consider it desirable to recognise as official opposition a party organised along regional lines but was prepared to recognise them as "unofficial opposition - an unofficial body of critics of the government." 90 He was however prevailed upon by the Governor to recognise the leader of the NPP as Leader of the Opposition but warned:

If we tolerate the formation of political parties on regional, sectional or religious bases, we shall not only be heading for political chaos but, worse still, we shall be sowing the destruction of our national existence. Coming events cast their shadows before them, and the Government shall consider what steps should be taken to eradicate this emerging evil in our national life. 91

However, the assumption by the NPP as the official opposition which again formalised the differences between the North and the South, also bode well for the nation because they agreed to work within the national framework which was represented in the Legislative Assembly. From then onwards, members of the NPP no longer saw the North standing aloof from party politics and playing the neutral role they had originally fashioned for themselves. They now saw the Dependency as an integral part of the political process and perhaps this explains why they rejected the Governor’s advice

89 Nkrumah, op cit., p.177.
90 Ibid.
91 Legislative Debate, 11 August, 1954;
to play a neutral role in the Legislative Assembly. The NPP was now "settling in" in national politics and there were talks of changing the name to National People's Party when new developments occurred and changed the national political scene. This, as already noted was the formation of the NLM.

The Northern members of the Legislative Assembly, like their predecessors, pressed for the rapid development of the region. They called for the provision of social amenities like water, electricity, housing and education and developments like roads. For example, while making a contribution on educational development in the country, Mumuni Bawumia pointed out that only a few more schools had been established the North between 1951 and 1954 and yet educational funding for the area had been reduced by £46,960. Concluding his contribution he said:

I am appealing to the government to be serious with their educational development plan for the Northern Territories because we do not want, when we get self-government to look upon the people of the south in the same way as we look upon the imperialists and the white man.92

B.K. Adama was also appalled by the fact that while there was only one secondary school in the North the government was withdrawing its subsidy to the Extra-Mural Department of the University College of the Gold Coast whose school in Tamale was the only other avenue opened to Northerners anxious to acquire higher education.93

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93Legislative Assembly Debate, 1 April, 1956, p.318. The need for institutions of higher learning for the North was one of the major concerns of Northerners in the Assembly. See for example Legislative Assembly Debates for 25-2-54, 7-11-55, 9-11-55, 10-11-55 etc.
lack of incentives for agricultural development in the region was another area the Northerners did not stop reminding the government of. Tolon Na, disgusted by the lack of attention to agriculture reminded the government that the North could be "the granary of the country" and yet nothing was being done to improve upon agriculture in the area. Instead, according to him the government was "only concerned with the swollen shoot disease to the neglect of the "rusty leaves" and "New Castle disease" which rampaged the North."94 But what incensed Northern Parliamentarians most was the discrimination against the region when they were already unhappy about the failure to extend the railway to the North.95 Sumani Bukari pointed out that out of £3,768,450 voted for road construction throughout the country only 8% had been allocated to the North.96 Using Parliament as a forum Northerners also voiced

94Legislative Assembly Debates, 2 March, 1954, pp.43-44. Two days later, Asumda also pointed out that the North had great agricultural potentialities which if properly developed could feed the "whole country." Legislative Assembly Debates, 5 March, 1954, pp. 1340-1.

95Speaking about the extension of the railway to the North Asumda said "We want to know if the government are going to do it in 1956 we would like to hear it. If the government are going to do it in 1960 we would like to be told and if the government are going to do it in "1900" we would be pleased to hear about it." Legislative Assembly Debates, 4 March, 1954, p.1294. Indeed, in 1956 C.K. Tedam tabled a motion about it and although it was carried through nothing was done about it. See Parliamentary Debates, 16 November, 1956, pp. 318-23.

96Sumani Bukari, Legislative Assembly Debates, 31 March, 1955. The examples of discrimination are so numerous that only a few will be cited. For example out of £1,500,000 allocated for the extension of the electricity throughout the country the North was given only £59,500 when Kumasi township had £281,500. See Legislative Assembly Debates 10 February, 1954.
their disquiet about the rate at which self-government was approaching when the region lacked behind the rest of the country. On constitutional development Tolon Na expressed the fears of the North thus:

We are glad to hear that negotiations are going on between the Government and Her Majesty’s Government. We hope that the government will not disregard the views and wishes of the Northern Territories in their final determination. People in the mandate cry for the removal of the artificial boundary. Time factor is the only difference between the north and the South in their demand for self-government. The south has monopolised all the top posts in all departments. Northerners regard themselves servants not partners in development. But as long as the Northern Territories does not benefit from the Africanisation scheme, it will remain suspicious and non-co-operative.97

But the North did not have to wait long. She had a partner in the National Liberation Movement.

9.3. THE 1956 GENERAL ELECTIONS AND ITS AFTERMATH.

After the CPP had won the elections of 1954, there were talks about tabling a motion in the Legislative Assembly asking for independence day to be fixed. But dissatisfaction among Asantes and ex-CPP supporters over the price of cocoa led to the formation of the National Liberation Movement.98 The formation of the NLM was greeted with relief by the NPP and an alliance was arranged between

97Legislative Assembly Debates, 2 March, 1954, p.10.

98For the formation, objectives, organisation and funding of the NLM, Austin see (1964), pp.267-276; Boahen (1975), pp. 182-194; Kimble op cit. pp. 723-8; Apter, p.68. The CPP as would be expected, nicknamed the NLM (Nananom (chiefs) led us to Madness" after its abbreviation NLM.
the two parties.99 Basically, the NLM stood for a federal constitution for the Gold Coast as the only way to prevent what it regarded as the creeping dictatorship of Nkrumah. Federation, it believed would allow each region to conduct its own affairs with minimum interference from the Central government. Much as the NPP agreed with the NLM on the need to safeguard local interests, it feared that in a federal system that was truly decentralised, the North would be worse off since it did not have enough resources to sustain a regional administration let alone a development programme.100 It also dawned on the leadership of the NPP that there would be no "transitional period" sufficient enough for the North to "catch up" with the South prior to independence. They now favoured a system which would give the North much regional autonomy as a compromise between federation and centralism. While the NPP leadership agreed to an alliance with the NLM they still wanted to maintain an independent identity because of the difficulties the North would encounter in a fully federal state. The NPP however obtained some concessions from the NLM. In the Proposals for a Federal Constitution for an Independent Gold Coast and Togoland published on behalf of the NPP, NLM and other political

99But this was to affect the NPP as two of its members in the Legislative Assembly William Amoro and Robert Braimah used it as an excuse to cross the carpet.

100In a debate about the appointment of Lay Magistrates to sit on Local Courts, Northerners argued that the North did not have many educated people to be appointed as Lay Magistrates. Krobo Edusei, Chief Government Whip, pointed out to the Northerners that if they did not have many educated people, how were going to run a federal system they were clamouring for. See Parliamentary Debates, 11 November, 1955.
associations opposed to the CPP, it was stated that revenue was to be divided between the centre and the regions on the basis of derivation and needs. The document gave this example:

Applying, for example, the principles of derivation and population in the division of revenue for cocoa only, the Colony shall be entitled to thirty five per cent, Ashanti and the Northern Territories twenty seven and a half per cent each, and Togoland ten per cent.¹⁰¹

The Togoland Congress, a nominal ally of the NPP was opposed to the CPP because it wanted a unification of French and British Togoland into one country. On this crucial issue, the NPP was in agreement with the CPP.¹⁰² To settle the Togoland issue the United Nations decided to hold a plebiscite in the British Trust Territory to determine whether the population preferred integration with an independent Gold Coast or separation.¹⁰³ Since both the CPP and NPP were for integration the government provided vehicles for the plebiscite campaign - vehicles which the NPP did not return and

¹⁰¹NLM, et al., Proposals for a Federal Constitution for an Independent Gold Coast and Togoland, Kumasi, 1955. The Proposals were published in the name of the NLM, NPP, the Togoland Congress, the Ghana Congress Party, the Moslem Association Party and the Anlo Youth Organisation. Most of these Parties were opposed to the CPP because of sectional interests. The Togoland Congress for example, wanted the reunification of the former German Territory in which Ewes would dominate but did not think of other ethnic groups like the Kusasi, Dagomba and Krachi who also wanted to remain within a united Gold Coast so as not to be divided with their kindred in the Gold Coast "proper".

¹⁰²The NPP supported a unification of British Mandated Togoland with the rest of the Gold Coast because the artificial boundary had divided some ethnic groups in the North such Kusasi, Bimoba, Konkomba, Nawuri, Nchumuru while the whole of Nanun was in the Mandated Territory.

¹⁰³For details on the question of the future of the Mandated Territories see Amenumey (1989), pp. 240-278.
made use of during the 1956 election. Ladouceur has pointed out that in the context of co-operation between the CPP and the NPP on the Togo issue, the CPP suggested that the two parties should merge but the suggestion was turned down by the NPP.\textsuperscript{104} In the plebiscite held in May 1956, a majority of the people voted for integration with the Gold Coast because of the overwhelming support it had from the Northern section.\textsuperscript{105}

In the face of the impasse between the CPP and the NLM the British government decided to call an election in 1956 to decide which of them had the support of the majority in the country.\textsuperscript{106} The NPP was now firmly allied with the NLM and other several assorted parties in an anti-CPP coalition. The NPP leadership believed that the alliance would win the election and be called upon to form a government, and they were prepared to participate in such a government.\textsuperscript{107} The NPP agreed that Busia, not Dombo, should lead the alliance with Dombo as his deputy. Despite its greater

\textsuperscript{104}Ladouceur \textit{op cit.} p.134.

\textsuperscript{105}In the overall results, 58 per cent voted for integration and 42 per cent for separation. In the Northern section 79 per cent voted for integration while 55 per cent in the Ewe dominated Southern section voted against integration. The Togoland Congress carried the following areas where there were dissatisfied minorities: Bunkprugu (main Bimoba area), Yunyoo and Sunson (inhabited mainly by Konkombas), Chereponi (mainly Chokosi) and Alfai (inhabited mostly by Nawuri and Nchumuru).

\textsuperscript{106}The period before the election saw some of the worst disturbances between supporters of the N.L.M. and CPP. in the history of the Gold Coast. It was characterised by arson, assassination and murder. See Austin (1964), pp. 267-74; Boahen (1975), pp. 186-7.

\textsuperscript{107}For the type of calculation which believed that the CPP could be defeated, see Austin (1964), pp.317-9.
resources, the NLM offered the NPP little assistance except printing party cards. The alliance with the NLM meant that the NPP made a number of concessions. For instance, they were now prepared to accept that independence would come in the near future and there was little they could do to prevent it. The leadership felt the North would be given more funds for development under NLM than the CPP. The NPP hoped to win twenty of the twenty six seats allocated for the North. The CPP realised that it had to pay more attention to local factors in conducting its campaign in the North. Also knowing that chiefship was still an important factor in the area the CPP wooed some chiefs by making them paramount chiefs. In addition, it put its house in order by settling intra-party rivalries, for example, the rivalry between R.S Iddrisu and Ebenezer Adam. It also took greater care in selecting its candidates. Like 1954, the CPP contested all the twenty six Northern seats while the NPP, its main rival presented twenty three candidates. The NPP won fifteen while the CPP obtained eleven seats. Although the NPP was the strongest party in the North, in real terms the election represented a defeat for it since the

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108 The NLM for instance had the full support of the Asanteman Council including the Asantehene. Of course, the NPP also possessed a number of Land Rovers it "inherited" from the government during the plebiscite over the future of British Togo.

109 Unlike 1954, the NLM won 13 out of the 21 seats in Asante but in all, the CPP won 71 out of the 104 seats in the Assembly and formed the government. Also, unlike 1954 where there were thirty three independent candidates in the North out of which 6 were returned to Parliament, there were ten independent candidates but none of them won a seat. R.S. Iddrisu of the CPP won the Gulkpego-Nanton constituency from Alhaji Osman of the M.A.P.
CPP had increased its strength in the region and besides, it lost the post of Leader of Opposition. It can, therefore, be said that the elections did not solve any of the Northerners' problems but only confirmed their predicament as independence drew nearer. It was this desperation as we have seen, which compelled the N.T.C. to send a delegation with two others from Asante and the Togoland Congress to London in August 1956. The main objective of the Northern delegation was to secure concessions for the North in the event of independence and to press for accelerated development in the form of a grant from the British government. The meeting of the delegations with John Hare, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs on 10th September 1956 did not produce any results; neither was that of a day later with A.T. Lennox-Boyd, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Rather, in a dispatch to the Governor of the Gold Coast which was made public, the Secretary of State for the Colonies announced that the date for independence for the Gold Coast would be 6 March 1957.

The Northern leadership in the N.T.C. began to panic. It believed that independence would be granted to the Gold Coast with no concessions or guarantees made at all to the North. At the meeting of the N.T.C. in September 1956, a resolution was passed calling on the British Government:

To make an outright grant of money for the development of the North to lessen the disparity now existing between the North and the South, so that the people of the North can stand as equals with the people of the South in a

\[\text{\tiny 110Ladouceur op cit. p.158.}\]
A month later, the council approved, this time, with the support of the CPP members of the council, a Memorandum on Constitutional Safeguards prepared by the Standing Committee. The safeguards called for 1) A Northern regional Assembly embodied in the Constitution with powers to legislate on local government and native courts, to control regional development funds, to assist in planning and co-ordinating all development schemes, and to consider draft bills on a wide range of topics; 2) special annual development grants to be controlled by the Northern Regional Assembly, in addition to the normal development funds; 3) a Northern Regional House of Chiefs to settle local constitutional issues and to act as the guardian of customary law; 4) repeal of the Lands and Native Rights (Northern Territories) Ordinance and transfer of the lands to the State Council; 5) constitutional amendments to require a two-thirds majority in each Regional Assembly and House of Chiefs, and in the National Parliament, plus a referendum; 6) appointment of regional representatives on statutory boards by the Regional Assembly; 7) special provision for Northerners to be appointed to senior posts in the government as soon as qualified Northerners become available; 8) a declaration of fundamental rights included in the Constitution and 9) a decentralisation of the police force.\footnote{\textsc{N.T.C.}, 26 Session, 25th-28th September, 1956, p.47.} \footnote{\textsc{N.T.C.}, Twenty-Seventh Session, 19-20 October, 1956, pp. 24-27: "The Proposed Constitutional Safeguards for the Northern Territories."}
Equipped with the memorandum an N.T.C. delegation led by Yakubu Tali, the Tolon Na attended a constitutional conference called by the government between 30 October and 2 November, 1956. As would be expected, the conference did not produce an over-all agreement because while the opposition called for a federal form of government, the nationalist government wanted a unitary state. The government therefore rejected all the demands of the opposition including the proposals of the N.T.C. which called for the devolution of certain functions to the regions. These were the granting of legislative powers to the Regional Assemblies, the procedures for amending the constitution and the decentralisation of the police force. Nkrumah’s government however agreed to give consideration for a special development fund for the Northern Territories.\(^{113}\) Shortly afterwards, the government published its Revised Constitutional Proposals for Gold Coast Independence. There was increasing tension in the North and the N.T.C. approved a resolution calling for the Northern Territories to remain a Protectorate after independence unless the government agreed to its proposals for a federation. The meeting was a stormy one and included a walk out by CPP members in protest against NPP domination about constitutional talks.\(^{114}\)

In the face of the impasse between the government and opposition, Lennox-Boyd, Secretary of State for Colonies paid a


\(^{114}\)See Minutes of the Twenty-Eight Meeting, N.T.C. held on 14 December, 1956.
week's visit to the Gold Coast. He met Northern leaders in Tamale at which they expressed their apprehensions about an independent Ghana. But when they were called upon to declare their opposition to independence they could not. The Secretary of State for Colonies then told them that there was nothing he could do to delay independence. He again told Northern leaders that independence would mean a de facto abrogation of the treaties since the British Government could not maintain a special relation with a part of an independent country. Realising that it had the support of a majority of the people of the Gold Coast, and in order not to delay independence unduly, the government made a few constitutional concessions. The most important of them which was incorporated into the Ghana (Constitutional) Order-in-Council was that two-thirds of the members of the Regional Assembly should give their consent before the constitution could be amended. The government had won the day and Northern opposition which was epitomised in the N.T.C. capitulated. On 6 March 1957, the British flag was lowered in Tamale and the flag of the newly independent Ghana was hoisted.

Two things stand out with regards to politics in the Northern Territories between 1951 and 1956. The first is that Northerners became more convinced of the relative socio-economic backwardness of the region and the need to bring it into parity with the south before independence, Second, it is clear that some elite joined the CPP to derive personal benefits or advance the interests of a particular area. It is also clear that as time went on, the elite of the North realised that they had little bargaining power and
even smaller incentive to capitalise on their contingent and rather tenuous identity. They thus began to trade cooperation for concessions. Economic and social deprivation is therefore the key factor in understanding the politics of the Northern Territories between 1951 and 1956.
CONCLUSION.

It would be a tragedy to accept to jump all at once from the ground to the top. We have to start from the bottom and climb step by step.¹

The main foci of early British interest in what is now Northern Ghana were Salaga, an important trading centre, and the caravan routes which converged on it. After Germany declared a protectorate over Togoland in 1884, the Gold Coast Colony was "sandwiched" between the possessions of two active colonial rivals—the Germans to the east and north-east and the French to the west and north. To avoid the isolation of coastal possessions from the trade routes of the interior British merchants operating along the coast pressured their government to advance into the interior. After the occupation of Kumasi in 1896, a post was established at Kintampo, regarded as the northern limit of British interest. This was the first step in the attempt to ensure the safety of the roads and to promote trade between the coast and the interior. This forward movement into the interior, which begun with the advance from Kumasi in November 1896 to Gambaga, and subsequently to Wa and Bouna, persisted until the definition of the northern and western international boundaries of the Northern Territories in 1899. Ultimately therefore, the occupation of the North and to an extent, even the formation of the Protectorate stemmed from the British

¹J.H. Allassani, Sixth Session, N.T.C., 18th-21st July, 1950. 370
clash with the French and Germans.

Apart from Samory and Babatu, the British did not encounter much resistance from Africans. There were intermittent revolts by the Frafra but they were all subdued by 1911. In 1900 the British marched into Dagbon prepared for a full-scale military operation but were not opposed as all the influential chiefs had congregated at Yendi to select a new Ya Na. To rule the newly acquired territory, in 1898, Northcott advocated the establishment of a military administration urging that all officers employed there should be capable of executing military command. The basis for his recommendation was the necessity of providing each officer with:

an armed detachment of sufficient strength to insure his personal safety in any probable contingency, to support the dignity of his position, and to make him to quell any minor disturbance with exemplary promptitude.\(^2\)

The need for internal security apart, it was also desirable to provide against any possible difficulties that might arise in the adjustment of boundaries with the French and Germans. The presence of Samory, a tactician of great repute and his sofás to the west of the Protectorate, also required a strong force in case he invaded British territory.

The need to re-organise the territory in the face of these problems became urgent. Also, the period preceding the advent of British rule had witnessed the dislocation and exhaustion of both human and natural resources of the country by the depredation of slave raiders, notably Samory and Babatu. Life was therefore

\(^2\)Africa (West) No. 564, Enclosure 1 in No. 143, p. 253 in Iliasu Papers.
uncertain, the people were suspicious of all strangers. The depressed conditions discouraged both trade and agriculture. Consequently, the most pressing consideration was the adoption of simple measures to restore peace and confidence. Even before the convention with France was concluded in 1898, the Northern Territories were divided into three districts for the convenience of the military command centred on, and named after Gambaga, Wa and Kintampo.¹ The territorial organisation of the Protectorate went through several phases between 1902 and 1932. Until 1921, it consisted of three provinces sub-divided into ten districts and subdistricts. Between 1921 and 1932, there were two provinces comprising at different times eight or ten districts.² The difficulties of transportation and communication, enhanced by the distances separating the widely scattered sub-district stations from the headquarters in Gambaga, made the centralisation of authority and the effective and efficient co-ordination of administration impossible. The constitution of the Dependency into districts and sub-districts achieved the essential measure of decentralisation by establishing a chain of command and authority.

With an area of almost forty thousand square miles and with a skeletal staff, Lt. Col. Northcott realised the expediency of supporting and creating chiefs as an aid to the administration. This policy attained its highest expression between 1906 and 1912

¹Africa (West), No. 564, Enclosure 1 in No. 43, Iliasu Papers.
²Orders No. 8 and 9 of 15 October, 1925; Correspondence File. ADM.56/1/274; NAG, Accra.
when paramount chiefs were appointed to innumerable small entities designated as "native states" with rather obscure boundaries. The process of restoring and enhancing the power of chiefs, particularly among the people to whom chieftaincy was either a novelty or had fallen into disuse, was painfully slow. However, the 1899 circular prescribed that:

especial care was to be taken to foster the authority of the native chiefs and to avoid wounding the religious susceptibilities of the inhabitants. No chief or head priest was to be flogged without previous reference to the Officer Commanding the district.⁵

Supporting chiefly power became the cardinal policy of British officials throughout our period.

After consolidating their rule the British began to take steps to isolate the Dependency from the Gold Coast Colony and Asante. The Order in Council which established the Protectorate provided for an administration formally distinct from those of Asante and of the Gold Coast Colony.⁶ Northcott suggested that an annual tax should be collected in the area "before the pernicious doctrine of individual irresponsibility filters through from the coast." ⁷ He again advocated the introduction of a separate coinage in the Protectorate. Although Northcott's untimely death in South Africa in 1899 prevented him from implementing his scheme, his successors did. According to Kimble until the late 1940s the chief

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⁵Instructions to officers in charge of the Districts: Re Administration of the Northern Territories. ADM.56/1/35; NAG, Accra.


⁷Kimble op cit. p. 554.
characteristic of British policy was "a deliberate attempt to isolate the Northern Territories from the twentieth century."^8

The British wanted to preserve the North from what they regarded as disruptive outside influences. This was manifested most in the fostering of traditional values and institutions under indirect rule. Indirect rule, it was claimed, would permit the gradual acquisition of skills necessary for the traditional rulers to exercise greater degrees of political authority, while remaining firmly rooted in traditional political institutions and practices. Indirect rule was effective in keeping Northerners outside the main currents of politics in the Gold Coast until at least the 1950s when they were pushed abruptly and in some cases protestingly into the world of political parties, election manifestos and parliamentary procedure. Another isolationist policy was the approach to missions and European education. The exclusion of missionaries from the North with the exception of the White Fathers, slowed social development. One of the main effects of this was that the Northern Territories became the labour pool for the country. Not much effort was made either to link the North with the rest of the country or improve the road net work in the Protectorate. The few good roads connected colonial administrative centres. Resources allocated to these roads called "political roads" was considerable. No efforts were made to develop the North. The Dependency served only to relieve the labour shortage in Asante and the Colony and to provide manpower for the army and the police.

^8Kimble op cit. p. 554.
In the eyes of the administration, the provision of manpower was the North's only contribution to the overall development of the Gold Coast.9

British colonial officials feared Southerners becoming vectors for progressive ideas and organisers of "agitation", hence references were made to the "simple" or "local Northerners." Thus Governor Thornburn commented that Northerners were "much more easy to deal with than their compatriots on the coast. They willingly make the most excellent roads, culverts and rest houses for small "dashes".10 But it was participation in national politics that the isolation was most prominent. Southerners had been appointed to the Legislative Council since 1850 but it was only in 1951 that Northerners were represented in the legislature. Although some progress was made to involve the people in government at the local level in the 1930s, no steps were taken to proceed further with the political development, nor were any attempts made to integrate the Dependency with Asante and the Colony. The official view remained that political consciousness had not yet reached the point where "public opinion" had emerged, as suggested by Lord Hailey's observation in 1944 that "in the Northern Territories no demand for

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9Indeed, a report in 1923 asserted that "the principal asset of the Dependency is the amount manpower it sends down as labourers and also as recruits it supplies to the Northern Territories Constabulary and West African Frontier Forces." Annual Report of the Northern Territories for 1922/23, p. 18.

10Governor Thornburn to Lord Harcourt, Despatch No. 380 of 6 June, 1912; Account No. 1380, Case 74/1915; NAG, Accra.
participation in the Legislative Council so far has appeared."\(^{11}\)
In fact one wonders how such a desire could have emerged when a
wall had been built between the North and the South. Even after the
Second World War, the administration felt that the time was not yet
ripe for any greater degree of formal integration between the North
and South: in any event, there was no formal mechanism by which
representatives of the North could be selected to participate in
the Legislative Council. The only move towards the integration of
the North with the rest of the Gold Coast was the appointment of
the Chief Commissioner to the Executive Council in 1934. But this
was more apparent than real since he could not take part in the
Legislative Council. The North was still firmly in the grip of
administrators with a strong belief in indirect rule both as a
method of administration and the necessity of isolating the North
from "untoward influences" especially those from the south. Until
1951, the North remained according to Apter, "the step-child of
central Gold Coast politics."\(^{12}\) In spite of this, changes took
place.

Changes occurred at the two inter-related areas of chieftaincy
and local government. It has already been pointed out that lack of
personnel and parsimony of the administrators made them to appoint
chiefs among the stateless people. These parvenu chiefs became very
loyal and "progressive" in the eyes of the administrators. For


\(^{12}\)Apter *op cit.* p.138.
example, the Jirapa Na and the Sademanab were the first chiefs in the North to receive medals for meritorious work.\textsuperscript{13} Most chiefs in areas where that institution was a British creation were said to have ruled their people justly. They were also said to have led them to build schools, clinics and sink wells. The relative peace in their areas then, and even now, is a testimony of their ability to adjust to modern trends.\textsuperscript{14}

Administration at the local government level also underwent a change. Before indirect rule became the official policy in 1930, chiefs had been marginalised by the administrators. The chiefs presided over only minor cases, did not have any regular source of income neither did they have a voice in development to be introduced in their areas. Indirect rule was introduced in the North partly as a result of the administrative problems which confronted the government in the Gold Coast Colony and Asante. The "direct rule" pursued in those two areas with varying intensity and supported by the rapidly expanding educational system had produced a disenchanted and political conscious class of literates. This class resisted the belated attempts to buttress the position of chiefs who, alienated from their people by government support were

\textsuperscript{13}Gandaa, the Jirapa Na was awarded a medal in 1926. See Annual Report of the Northern Territories for April 1926 to March 1927, p.12. Azantilo, chief of the Builsas for instance, was said to have sat at the feet of the school headmaster to learn to read and write. The young Sandenab, Azantilo, learned good English and has since been president of the Upper Regional House of chiefs.

\textsuperscript{14}Indeed, none of the areas where chieftaincy is a British creation has seen the disruptive chieftaincy disputes and the ethnic conflicts which have been a major phenomenon in the North since independence.
sandwiched between the two. It was to avoid a repetition of these "mistakes" that education was controlled in the North and chiefs were involved in the administration at the local level. With the establishment of Native Authorities in 1930, particularly, with the enactment of the Native Tribunal and Treasury Ordinances, chiefs' courts were regularised and chiefs could try all cases except criminal ones. In addition, they were involved in the collection of taxes and through the Estimates Committees, they and their people had a voice in determining which project to undertake and where to site it. The net result of this was that while chiefs had lost most of their powers in Asante and the Colony their powers were strengthened in the Protectorate.15

After the Second World War, colonial officials realised that the policy of treating Northerners as children to be protected against themselves could not hold for long. The first cautious step as already pointed out in bringing the dependency into the modern world of politics was the formation of the N.T.C. in 1946. Beginning as a chiefs' council the N.T.C soon became a forum where Northern concerns and fears were articulated. By 1953, the Council had been transformed from a chiefs' council into a consultative body where politicians could learn the arts of their trade.16

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16By 1953, there were only six chiefs out of the total membership of twenty two.
Chiefs gave way to the new elite without a fight because they felt
the new leaders could ensure that chieftaincy retained a position
of dignity and privilege in the life of the North. And by and
large, they were not disappointed since the new leaders went along
with this policy. It was only with the rise of the CPP in the North
in 1954 that chiefs began to have doubts about the wisdom of the
new change and to question the new development since their own
position was being assailed. But by then it was too late to hold
back the forces of change; significant power had already slipped
from their hands.

Also, by 1950, the colonial administration had taken a clear
decision to integrate the Northern Territories into the rest of the
country. The policy of isolating the North which had been
consistently pursued for half a century under both "direct" and
indirect rule administrative structures, was swept aside within two
years. The impetus for this radical change in policy came, not from
the internal evolution of the North itself, but rather from
external events in the south. These events were the 1948 riots
which propelled the Gold Coast towards self-government. They also
compelled colonial administrators in the North to realise that the
hope of pursuing an "enlightened" colonial policy for the area by
isolating the region was no longer tenable. As a first step towards
the implementation of the new policy, it was necessary for the
North to participate in colony-wide political institutions and more
significantly, to play a role, however minor, in the establishment
of these institutions. The only institution which colonial
officials could depend on was the N.T.C hence Northern members of
the Coussey Committee were selected from it. The rapid pace of
change in the south and the policy of unification of the North and
South brought into focus the anachronistic nature of the system of
local administration in the Dependency. Conceived at the time when
the theory of indirect rule called for the restoration and
reinforcing the authority of chiefs as the natural rulers of the
people and when the territory’s administrators shielded the region
from possibly disturbing external influence, the old Native
Administrative system crowned by the N.T.C., as a consultative
council of chiefs could no longer cope with the new problems that
had arisen. The Coussey Committee recognised this and recommended
the replacement of the Native Authority by a system of local
government in which the common person would play a role. The
operation of the Native Authority system had been such as to allow
the traditional elements to consolidate and expand their positions
of authority, and it would be difficult to dislodge them
completely. Also many of those who emerged were either chiefs
themselves or the sons of chiefs and were deeply committed to the
preservation of the institution of chieftaincy, partly, out of
self-interest, but more importantly because they recognised the
considerable influence chiefs still wielded over their communities
and the stability and continuity which chiefship embodied. Northern
members of the Coussey Committee pressed for concessions for their
area. The Committee recommended the formation of local government
bodies, distinct from state or traditional councils which would be
left to deal with traditional matters only. The concessions which Northerners obtained - traditional authorities electing a third of the members of the district councilors - significantly affected the effects of the new system.

But it was in the political sphere that the greatest changes occurred in the Northern Territories. Because of the policy of isolation, a major feature of development which became problematic during the colonial period was that of an uneven rate of economic, social and political development in different parts of the Gold Coast. Political advancement was thus in a sense to be thrust upon an unprepared Northern Territories at an ever increasing rate in the years after the Second World War. Beginning with the establishment of the N.T.C., British officials gradually opened the North to a series of innovations which they had previously barred from the area. The first of these was the participation of Northerners in the Legislative Assembly. Northerners entered the Legislative Assembly in 1951 with the hope of playing a neutral role to obtain development for the region at a faster rate through their collected efforts. They kept up a steady barrage of questions and resolutions designed to highlight the poor conditions and neglect of the region and to impress upon the government their desire for rapid development. According to Frimpong, they "kept pressing the button." But a crack soon appeared in their ranks. Some of them such as A. Afoko, Ayeebo Asumda, Ayarna Imoru and R.B. Braimah from areas where chieftaincy was a novelty began to

Frimpong *op cit.* p.10.
identify themselves with the CPP. They believed that the best way the region could develop was to join the CPP and not to oppose its agenda for internal self-government. They also believed that the British were already committed to granting the Gold Coast self-government in spite of the North's protestations. They pointed out that the North's population was only a fourth of the country's and it was unthinkable to expect the British to forsake the interest of the majority who wanted independence for the sake of the minority. Lastly, they believed that the British had already set a precedent in India by ignoring similar protests and it was therefore wise to join the majority to enable the North to get its share of development. This crack was also reflected in the deliberations of the N.T.C. But it was the extension of the franchise to the North in 1954 and the formation of the NPP which made the differences irreconcilable. While the NPP and its supporters did not oppose self-government per se, they believed that economic development should precede the march for independence. These differences were not solved when the 1954 elections were held and the NPP found itself as the main opposition with S.D. Dombo, its president as leader of opposition. Like their fellow Northerners who joined the CPP, NPP members no longer saw the North as playing a neutral role in the Assembly but rather as an integral part of the national political process. The North was now fully involved in national politics and the national government and political parties became involved in local affairs.

Realising that they could not stem the tide of independence
for the Gold Coast and with no concrete development to show for their efforts, the Northern leadership now favoured a system which would give them much regional autonomy. They again began to fall on the treaties Northern rulers signed with Britain in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, the Tolon Na asked for assurances from the British government that it would not annul the treaties of protection until Northerners themselves indicated the desire to be relinquished of the status of protected persons. He declared:

I do not wish to recount the story of Ashanti exploitation of this country but thanks to the British those days are now over. And can it not be said we have worked very amicably together?\(^{18}\)

Northerners continued to argue that since development had not been speeded up to warrant joining the rest of the country and since Britain had not abrogated the treaties they should be left to go at their own pace. These demands of Northerners put the colonial officials in the North in an ambiguous and often conflicting situation: they had to implement the official policy of integration and movement toward self-government, while recognising the backwardness of the North and its lack of preparation for self-government. But there was nothing they and leaders of the NPP could do to delay independence. Britain too was not prepared to grant independence to a part of the country and still maintain a colonial relation with another. On 6 March, 1957 the British flag was hauled down and the red, yellow, green with the black lode star of independent Ghana was hoisted in Tamale. Northerners had lost their

\(^{18}\)N.T.C., Sixth Session, 18th-21st July, 1950.
Throughout this study it is clear that British policy towards the Northern Territories was characterised by paternalism, neglect and isolation combined with the exploitation of its manpower. In spite of this changes continued to take place in the region and Northerners continued to play an active role in the political and educational development of the country. These changes reached fruition in 1979, when Dr. Hilla Liman, a Northerner was elected President of Ghana and finally, when in 1992 the University of Development Studies was established in Tamale, R.B. Bening another Northerner, became the Acting Vice-Chancellor.
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