

**NATIONALISM IN GHANA AFTER 1945: CAUSES, ACTORS, AND ITS IMPACT ON
GHANA'S DECOLONISATION DRIVE**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

The post- Second World War (WW II) period witnessed an increase in nationalist activities, and activism in Asia and Africa which resulted in the independence of most the colonies in these continents. The declaration of the Atlantic Charter in 1941 which spelt out the right to self-determination contributed immensely to this activism: the charter stated inter alia that it respects the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self -government restored to those who have been

forcefully deprived of them. Indigenous activists and writers in America after the Second World War also encountered ideas about global decolonization and engaged in a process of depicting Canada as a colonizing state, a historical narrative that had not been popularly accepted at that point..., what was later named 'Red Power' was a framework that interrogate the specificity settler-colonisation locality and Canadian government policy using globally circulating ideas about decolonization and anti-racism. Thus, the activism and nationalism during and after the WW II against all forms of colonialism was not only prevalent and ubiquitous in Africa and Asia, but also, it was a common phenomenon among the Indigenous people in America and Canada too.

The WW II created a global political, economic and social conditions in which both the European colonial masters, and the colonies in Africa in particular responded to those conditions to promote

their interest. United States of America (USA) and Russia also responded to the political situation of the world after the WW II which culminated in the Cold War. In effect, the post-WW II created global wind of change, and influenced the internal political, economic and social conditions in both the colonies and the Western Powers. However, there were varying degrees of radical response to the internal conditions of the African colonies under the grip of colonial rule of the European powers after the WW II. Ghana was the first black African country south of the Sahara to gain political independence. It is therefore imperative to interrogate the combining effects of post-WW II political, social, and economic conditions in Ghana, then called Gold Coast, and the Ghanaian Nationalist activities on the decolonization drive of Ghana. This essay examines the interplay of the Ghanaian Nationalists and the post-WW II internal Conditions in Gold Coast, and to a lesser extent post-WW II external factors and how they carved out Ghana's road to political independence.

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Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to my father Paddy Daniel, and my mother Esther Korkor.

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List of Abbreviations

AWAM-	Association of West African Merchants
BDEEP-	British Documents on the End of Empire Project
CPP-	Convention Peoples Party
CYO-	Committee for Youth Organisation
NLM-	National Liberation Movement
PRAAD-	Public Records and Archives Administration Department Ghana
UGCC-	United Gold Coast Convention
UN-	United Nations
USSR-	Union of Soviet Socialist State Republic
TUC-	Trade Union Congress
WW II-	Second World War

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 NATIONALISM IN GHANA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

After the Asante Kingdom was defeated in the Sagrenti War in 1874, Britain annexed the southern vassal states of Asante and constituted them into a Protectorate while they converted their forts and settlements on the coast into the British Crown Colony of the Gold Coast in July 1874.¹ Shortly after the Yaa Asantewaa War, in January 1902, Asante and the Northern territories were declared British crown colony and protectorate respectively by the British. In July 1921, the Trust Territory of Trana-Volta Togoland was annexed to the Gold Coast by the British. In effect, by 1921, the present -day Ghana in its present geographical size became a British colony.

It must be noted that the period of colonial rule in Ghana saw some form of nationalism against the British colonial rule before WW II. Nationalism at the period before WW II was geared towards the attainment of equity, opportunity, reforms, increase in political participation, and the nationalist used non-violent means such as recourse to legal means, diplomacy, constitutional means, protest, sending of delegation to the secretary of state of the colonies in Britain.² The Proto-nationalism, the nationalism in Ghana before the WW II, also vehemently protested legislations that were inimical to the interest of the Ghanaians, discrimination against Africans, and also demanded franchise for the indigenes.³ A Classical examples of the Proto-nationalism, nationalism before the WW II, are the Aborigines' Right Protection Society which fought against the land bill of 1897, and generally served as the official mouth piece of the people of Gold Coast prior to WW II, the National Congress of British West Africa which brought all the British colonies in West

¹ Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000). p 21.

² Prince Adjei Kuffour, *Concise Notes on African and Ghanaian History* (Accra: K4 Series, 2017). p. 515-516.

³ *ibid.*

Africa(Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Gambia) to demands for reforms and increased political participation.⁴ The Gold Coast Youth Conference was also formed to unite and reconcile the educated elites to fight for a common cause. Some of the prominent nationalist at this period were Joseph Casely Hayford, John Mensah Sabah, J. W Sey, J. P Brown, T. Hutton Mills, Dr. F.V. Nanka Bruce, etc.

The post-Second World War nationalism operated with a different aim, and its modus operandi were sharply different from the Proto-nationalism. Nationalism at this period was militant and radical. Nationalism changed drastically after World War II, and it was described as radical because nationalist activities no longer took the form of protest movements.⁵ Instead, it was largely militant, as nationalist adopted such radical methods as strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, etc. and press home their demands for political independence for the people of Gold Coast.⁶ The WW II brought revolutionary changes to Gold Coast, and consequently offered a great stimulus to nationalism and the movement towards political independence. Some of the revolutionary changes that WW II brought include the boycott of European goods, formation of political parties which demanded an end to colonial rule, the 1948 Riot, and the Positive Action, a mass civil disobedience and strike action by workers. This paper seeks to delve into the nature of the post-WW II nationalism in Gold Coast, the pivotal roles played by the actors(nationalists), the conditions prevailing in post-WW II Gold Coast which influenced the nationalist activities and the impact these nationalist activities had on the decolonization drive of Gold Coast.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first aspect will throw light on the research questions, the thesis statement, theoretical framework, the sources for the paper, and the definitions

⁴ Prince Adjei Kuffour, *Concise Notes on African and Ghanaian History* (Accra: K4 Series, 2017). p. 518-520.

⁵ *ibid*, p.530.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 530.

of key words and terminologies that will be used in this essay. The second section will place the thesis in historical context-literature review. The third section will explain the outline of the essay, and the final section will provide conclusion for this chapter.

1.1 Research Questions, Thesis Statement, Sources, and the Definitions of key Terminologies/Words.

This essay seeks to find answers to three major research questions. The first one is, ‘what were the major nationalist activities and the actors of those nationalist activities in Ghana after 1945?’ This essay discusses the organization, the pivotal role played by the actors, and the execution of the actual nationalist activities that took place after 1945. The second research question this paper seeks to find answers to is, ‘what social, economic, and political factors accounted for the nationalists’ activities in Ghana after the Second World War?’ This essay will thoroughly examine the post-WW II social, economic, and political conditions and the influence they had on nationalism in Ghana. The third research question is ‘how did the nationalist activities after the Second World War impact on the decolonization drive in Ghana?’ This question basically seeks to find the correlation between the post-WW II nationalism and the attainment of political independence in Ghana.

The essay is firmly premised on the thesis statement that the social, economic and political conditions in Gold Coast after the Second World War increased the tempo of nationalism in Gold Coast after 1945, and the Second World War acted as a catalyst for the decolonization of Ghana. Some of these conditions were repercussions of the WW II, and they included but were not limited to acute inflation, unemployment, inadequate housing facilities, the frustrations of the ex-servicemen due to their deplorable conditions, the broken myth surrounding the perceived superiority of the white man, a deficit in educational facilities, lack of Africanisation of the civil

service, the dissatisfaction of the colonial government approach to the swollen shoot disease that affected the cocoa industry, and the political disaffection created among the educated elites due to the weaknesses of the Burns Constitution of 1946. These social, economic, and political conditions became the momentum which propelled the nationalists to engaged in radical nationalism. Secondly, the essay argues that the 1948 Riot was the turning point of Ghana's decolonization drive that ultimately paved the way for Ghana's independence. The riot led to the arrest and detention of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) leaders which increased their political popularity and influence in Gold Coast. Also, the institution of a commission of enquiry into the disturbances (the Watson Commission) recommended a new constitution that would grant internal self-government for the Gold Coast. Furthermore, the 1948 Riot led to the creation of the Coussey Committee which drafted the 1951 Constitution of Gold Coast that paved the way for internal self-government, which prepared Gold Coast for independence. The exclusion of Kwame Nkrumah from the Coussey Committee led to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), the party that led Ghana to independence in 1957.

This essay will explore several primary sources as well as some few secondary sources. The primary sources such as reports of commissions of enquiry, letters of correspondence between the British colonial officers in Gold Coast and the British government in London, reports of parliamentary select committees, autobiographies of some political actors, and official British colonial government records on Gold Coast are explored. Other primary documents include the 1946, 1951, and 1954 constitutions of Ghana, the constitutions of some pre-independent Ghana political parties such as UGCC and CPP, newspapers of some political parties, and some memoirs of some eye witness of some pre-independent nationalist activities of Ghana. The reports of the Commission of Enquiry provide official and detailed information on the social, economic, and

political prevailing conditions in Ghana from the genesis of the WWII. They therefore provide a comprehensive information on issues which propelled the people of Gold Coast to engaged in radical nationalism. However, the information they provide are limited to the terms of reference for which these commissions of enquiries were set up, and as a result they are bereft of other important historical information pertaining to the themes of this essay. The same can be said of reports of official government committees. The autobiographies of some of the political actors too provide vivid and relevant information on the topic, but they have their own biases because people wrote them from their personal perspective and one needs to crosscheck the information they provide with other sources, and subject them to a critical analysis to get a credible information for a scholarly analysis of the essay. The colonial letters of correspondence, and the colonial government official documents give a chronological historical information on nationalism in the post-WW II Ghana, and the rationale behind the actions and inactions of the colonial officials, and the British government in the period under review, 1945-1957, however they also have the weaknesses of their information being limited to specific themes, and their content discussed the issues from the point of view of British colonial interest.

Furthermore, the pre-independent political parties' newspapers throw light on the political, economic and social atmosphere in Gold Coast, and give reasons why certain actions of Ghanaian nationalist were justifiable. The newspapers are also a good source for showing how nationalism was presented to the broader Ghanaian population. However, some of the facts the newspapers presented in some cases were embellished, distorted, and the discussions suffered oversimplifications of the issues, and their contents were geared towards whipping up emotional sentiments of Ghanaians at the time to rise and support nationalist's activities. The rest of the sources are secondary sources which comprise articles in reputable journals, and books written by

reputable historians. The journals were put through a meticulous scrutiny by the editors and the authors made an extensive use of primary sources in addition to other secondary sources. The secondary sources give in-depth analysis and interpretations of the post-World War II events which provide an essential insight into the nuances of factors that influenced nationalism after 1945 in Ghana. The pitfall in these secondary sources is that, they are subject to personal biases in the selections of themes, interpretations, and value judgments of the authors.

This essay will use some key terminologies and words that need contextual elucidation for a better appreciation and apprehension of the themes in this essay. The first term worth explaining is nationalism. Prof. Hans Kohn defined Nationalism as a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due the nation-state; a deep attachment to one's native soil, to local traditions and to established territorial authority has existed in varying strength throughout history.⁷ For the purpose of this essay, 'Nationalism' denotes the struggle of a people with a common identity to free themselves from foreign control and exploitation, in order to embark upon a programme which would ensure their social- economic and political advancement, and the control of their own destiny. 'Nationalist activities' in Gold Coast will therefore mean a concerted and calculated effort by the people of Gold Coast to achieve the goals of freeing themselves from British colonial rule and exploitation, in order to determine their own destiny to ensure the social-economic and political advancement of the people of Gold Coast. The 'Nationalists' were the people of Gold Coast who engaged in Nationalism in the period under review, 1945-1957.

Added to the above, the words 'Gold Coast' and 'Ghana' would be used interchangeably in this essay, for they represent the same people and the same geographical space. Gold Coast was

⁷ Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (New York: kreiger Publishing Company, 1965). p. 9.

the name used throughout the colonial era till it changed officially to Ghana on 6th March 1957, when the colonial rule ended. It must be emphasized that the history of Ghana is not divided into periods under pre-World War II and post-World War II, it is for the purposes of this essay that the radar and focus have been put on the post- WW II (1945) up to 1957. Another term that will be commonly used in this essay is ‘the educated elites.’ They represent the few people of Gold Coast before the end of colonial rule who had at least obtained a bachelor degree, and most of them were professionals such as lawyers, medical doctors, teachers, and civil servants. Most of these people were privileged to school in the western world such as Britain, and USA after they completed the various mission secondary schools, and some few colonial schools in Gold Coast. They became the leading members of nationalist activities in Gold Coast prior to independence. They were also called the ‘intelligentsia’. For the purposes of this essay, the ‘educated elites’ and the ‘intelligentsia’ will be used interchangeably. Another terminology that will permeate this essay is ‘the ex-servicemen’. ‘The ex-servicemen’ were the Ghanaian soldiers who returned to Ghana after they supported Britain and her allies to victory in the WW II. They became very much influential in the schemes of affairs of nationalism in Gold Coast and local politics prior to Ghana’s independence.

This essay will use the term ‘decolonisation’ to mean the action of changing the status of a group of people living in a specific, and well- defined geopolitical area from the direct political control of a more politically powerful nation to a politically autonomous country, recognized by the United Nations as a new nation-state. The term ‘racial discrimination’ will be advisedly used to mean the deliberate giving of advantage and opportunities to Europeans (British) in the areas of job acquisition, promotion, working conditions, and the use of social amenities to the detriment of the Africans (the people of Gold Coast) due to a perceived European superiority and a master-

servant relationship between the British and the Ghanaians at the period prior to Ghana's independence. 'Africanisation of the civil service' would be used in this essay to mean the policy of employing more Africans in the British colonial administrative machinery (the civil service) and promoting the deserving, and qualified ones to top positions just as their European counterpart. 'Independence' would be used in this paper to represent the freedom of a nation state from the yoke of colonial rule to manage its own affairs. Finally, political consciousness would be used to connote the growing awareness of the people of Gold Coast about governance related issues, and the creation of awakening spirit in the people to play an active role to dismantle colonial rule.

1.2 Historical Context of Post-World War II in Ghana- Literature Review

There are a number of scholarly works on nationalism in Ghana after the WW II by eminent historians and scholars. Such scholarly works span from the account of the nationalist activities, the role of the actors, and reasons that accounted for the nationalism. Adu Boahen posits that of all the states south of the Sahara, the first to emerge victorious [against colonial rule] on 6 March 1957 was Ghana. This historic achievement was primarily the work of two political parties that emerged in Ghana in the post-Second World War period; these were the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) and the Convention People's Party (CPP) formed in August 1947 and June 1949 respectively.⁸ Adu Boahen is of the view that the independence of Ghana was made possible by the formation of political parties. What he failed to appreciate is the decisive roles the WW II induced- post social, economic and political conditions, and the 1948 Riot played in Ghana's independence. Additionally, Adu Boahen attributed the broken myth surrounding the European superiority after the WW II, the declaration of the Atlantic Charter which espoused self-

⁸ Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000) p. 25

determination, which was later adopted by UN, the introduction of a new system of marketing in Ghana which caused a great deal of anger and frustration, the excessive exploitation of the mineral resources of Gold Coast without any attempt to industrialise Gold Coast, and the Burns Constitution which failed to satisfy the educated elites as the leading factors which accounted for nationalism after WW II.⁹ Bianco Murillo who extensively wrote about the consumer cultures in the twentieth century Ghana attributed the shortage of goods in post WW II Ghana and its resultant rise in nationalism to the curtailment of production of goods due to the debilitating effects the WW II on the economy of Britain, and the profiteering and extortionate trade practices of the Association of West African Merchants (AWAM).¹⁰ Although most of the scholars attributed the shortage and high cost of consumer goods to the market system that was put in place by the government, they tend to gloss over the curtailment of production of goods as a result of the disastrous consequences the WW II had on Europe in general, and Britain in particular as pointed out by Bianco.

Vincent Okyere grouped the factors that accounted for nationalism in Gold Coast after the WW II into external and internal factors.¹¹ He cited the proclamation of the Atlantic charter, the broken myth surrounding the White's superiority, the formation of Negro movements, USA and USSR stance against colonialism after the WW II, the independence of Asiatic states, and the inspiration from the non-aligned group of nations as the external factors that accounted for nationalism.¹² Okyere argues shortages of goods and price hikes, unemployment, failure to honour promises made to the ex-servicemen, the desire to see democratic ideals practised in Ghana were responsible for the internally-driven factors which caused nationalism in Ghana.¹³ Okyere

⁹ *ibid* 81-87.

¹⁰ Bianco Murillo, *Market Encounters: Consumer Cultures in the Twentieth century Ghana* (Athens-Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2017). p 2.

¹¹ Vincent Okyere, *Ghana: A Historical Survey* (Accra: VINOJAB Publications, 2000). p. 140-143

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid*, p. 143-144.

disagrees with Adu Boahen that excessive exploitation of minerals in Gold Coast was a cause of nationalism in Ghana after WW II. Both Okyere and Adu Boahen seems to have concentrated on the role of the main actors of nationalism, and the leaders of the political parties, rather than the monumental role played by the 1948 Riot in the attainment of political independence in Ghana. Rogers Gocking contends that that the poor handling of the swollen shoot disease that affected the cocoa industry by the colonial administration, shortage of consumer goods and demand-pull inflation, the dominance of retail trade by foreign firms, the discontent of the ex-servicemen, and the shortfalls of the Burns Constitution contributed to the post-WW II nationalism in Ghana.¹⁴ Rogers is of the view that the events after the 1948 Riot such as the institution of the commission of enquiry which found Nkrumah to have imbrued himself with communist ideologies, Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee, the formation of the Committee of Youth Organisation without the prior knowledge of the rest of the UGCC leaders, and Nkrumah's suspension from the UGCC led to the formation of Nkrumah's CPP.¹⁵ Rogers is of the opinion that Nkrumah was more radical towards the issue of self-government than the rest of the leading nationalist leaders when he rejected the proposed 1951 constitution, calling it 'Trojan gift horse that was bogus and fraudulent', and the subsequent declaration of Positive Action.¹⁶ Rogers however failed to establish the fact that the 1948 Riot accounted for the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP. The events that followed the 1948 Riot are most of the time not connected to riot by historians but are treated in isolation. This essay argues to address that lacuna of historians glossing over how the riot carved out the path of Ghana's decolonisation process.

¹⁴ Rogers S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005). p. 81-84.

¹⁵ *ibid* 90-92.

¹⁶ *ibid* 93.

Frederick Cooper points out that the shortage of consumer goods due to the increase in urban population by 55 percent between 1939 and 1947, and price gouging by European monopolistic firms resulted in economic hardship which served as a watershed for the post-WW II nationalism in Gold Coast.¹⁷ Cooper, who seems to view the causes of post- WW II nationalism from the economic perspective turned a blind eye to the curtailment of production of consumer goods in Europe due to the WW II negative impact on the European economy, but rather, he put his lens on population increase in the cities like Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi etc. as the cause of the dearth of consumer goods. Cooper even reechoed the colonial officials' stance on the causes of boycotts, riots, and demonstration as due to disorderly masses, unscrupulous demagogues, communist influence, and detribalized urban population.¹⁸ Glaringly, Cooper underrated the pivotal role played by WW II in influencing nationalism. If the period prior to WW II had witnessed a number of non-radical nationalism geared towards reforms, but the post- WW II era witnessed a radical, and militant nationalism geared towards decolonization of Gold Coast, then historians cannot underestimate the momentous role WW II played as a catalyst for nationalism in Gold Coast.

Francis Agbodeka is of the view that the old protest movements of the chiefs and the intelligentsia in Gold Coast prior to 1945 was transformed into powerful and dynamic mass movements by some external and internal influences after WW II.¹⁹ Agbodeka argues that the external influences included the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester (1945), which declared that self-determination must be achieved at all cost for Africans, the influence of West African

¹⁷ Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). p. 49-50.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Francis Agbodeka, *The Rise of The Nations States: A History of the West African Peoples 1800-1964* (London: Thomas Nelson Printers Limited, 1965). p. 133.

students Union in Britain, the democratic ideals which were inculcated into the ex-servicemen after WW II, and the educated elites demystification of the White superiority to the masses after WW II.²⁰ He attributed the internal influences to the failure of the 1946 Burns Constitution to confer full responsible self-government on Ghanaians, and the worse of all, the government passive attitude about widespread economic grievances over the cutting of diseased cocoa trees, the monopoly of foreign firms and the consequent high prices of commodities and the discontent of the ex-servicemen.²¹ The Burns Constitution gave the people of Gold Coast an African majority, which was a tremendous improvement over the 1925 Guggisberg constitution, so for the people of Gold Coast to protest against, is a clear indication that the WW II created a volatile political atmosphere for nationalist activities. Again, Agbodeka seems to have admitted that the economic grievances after the WW II was more decisive in fueling nationalistic activities as he referred to the economic grievances as the worst among the internal influences so far as the factors that precipitated nationalism are concern.²²

D.E.K. Amenumey contends that the fact that Nkrumah was relatively young, radical, and was prepared to use non-constitutional and even violent means to achieve self-government, and he could not work with the elderly, conservative and legal-minded members of the UGCC.²³ Amenumey, like other eminent historians such as Adu Boahen asserts that the differences in approach and attitude resulted in the strained relationship leading to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP.²⁴ The fact that Nkrumah worked with the UGCC leaders amicably before the 1948 riot, and the unfolding events after the 1948 Riot strained his relationship

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ D.E.K. Amanumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from the Pre-colonial Times to the Twentieth Century* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2008). p. 207.

²⁴ *ibid.*

with the UGCC leaders makes the stance of Amenumey far-fetched. Amenumey places emphasis on the use of the teeming youth by CPP and Nkrumah, and the CPP's penchant for radicalism and militancy gave it a competitive edge over the other political parties.²⁵ Just as the rest of the literature on post-WW II nationalism in Gold Coast, Adjei Kuffour cited the formation of political parties, the nationwide boycott of European goods spearheaded by Nii Kwabena Bonne III, the 1948 Riot, and the declaration of the Positive Action as the major nationalist activities.²⁶

1.3 Outline of the Essay

This essay is organised into five chapters. Chapter One basically touches on the research questions of the essay, the thesis statement, the definitions and the elucidation of key terms, and words in the essay. The Chapter One also explains the historical context of nationalism in Ghana after 1945, the literature review on post-WW II nationalism in Ghana, and the conclusion summarises the chapter. The Chapter Two puts a historical radar on the landmark nationalist activities in Ghana after 1945. Notable among them are the formation of political parties such as UGCC, CPP, and the National Liberation Movement (NLM), the nationwide boycott of European goods, the 1948 Riot, and the declaration of the Nkrumah-led Positive Action. This chapter examines the organisation of these activities, the motives behind these nationalist activities, and how the colonial government and officials responded to these nationalist activities. Chapter Three examines the social, economic and the political conditions after the WW II which influenced nationalistic activities. Some of the conditions which influenced nationalism at this period could be viewed as external and internal. Some of the factors that would be discussed in this chapter include but not limited to acute shortage of consumer goods and inflation, domination of the retail

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Prince Adjei Kuffour, *Concise Notes on African and Ghanaian History* (Accra: K4 Series, 2017). p. 543- 548.

trade by foreign firms, the discontent of the ex-servicemen, racial discrimination, failure of the Burns Constitution to satisfy the educated elites. Chapter Four discusses the how the 1948 Riot influenced the decolonization drive of Ghana. Areas such as the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders, the Watson Commission, the Coussey Committee and the 1951 Constitution, and the breaking away of Nkrumah to form his own party CPP. This chapter examines these sub-topics as a by-product of the 1948 Riot and how they carved the road to Ghana's independence. Chapter Five, the Conclusion of this essay will summarises the argument of this essay, and the essay in general.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided the background of the research and established the purpose of the research as the need to find answers to the reasons why nationalism became radical and geared towards political independence after the WW II, and the need to examine how the 1948 Riot influenced the decolonization drive of Ghana. The chapter also provided the research questions of this essay: what were the major nationalist activities and the actors of those nationalist activities in Ghana after 1945? what social, economic, and political factors accounted for nationalism in Ghana after 1945? How did the nationalist activities after the Second World War impact on the decolonization drive in Ghana? The chapter then stated the overarching argument, the thesis statement of the essay, the social, economic and political conditions in Gold Coast after the Second World War increased the tempo of nationalism in Gold Coast after 1945 and the Second World War acted as a catalyst for the decolonization of Ghana; and the 1948 Riot was the turning point of Ghana's decolonization drive that ultimately paved way for Ghana's independence. The chapter also indicated the theoretical frameworks of the essay, threw light on the historical context of nationalism in Ghana after 1945 (literature review), and finally the outline of this essay.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LANDMARK OF NATIONALIST EVENTS IN GOLD COAST, 1945-1957: ACTIVITIES ACTORS, AND COLONIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE.

This chapter examines the major nationalist activities after WW II in Gold Coast. It will specifically discuss the organisation of these activities, the main actors, the motives (aims) behind these nationalist activities, and how the colonial government and officials responded to these nationalist activities. The nationalist activities that are discussed here are the formation of political parties, the nationwide boycott of European goods in 1948, the 1948 Riot, and the declaration of Positive Action by CPP.

2.1 Formation of Political Parties

Before Ghana's independence on 6th March, 1957, a number of political parties were founded. This chapter will however discuss the three most prominent ones which influenced Ghana's political history prior to 1957. These three parties were the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), Convention People's Party (CPP), and the National Liberation Movement (NLM).

The UGCC. The first known political party that was founded in Ghana was United the Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). The UGCC absorbed some members of the Aborigine's Right Protection Society, a body which acted as the mouth piece of the people of Gold Coast since 1897, but became less effective in the 1940s.²⁷ The Gold Coast Youth Conference, a youth movement founded by the Dr. J.B. Danquah, the mainspring of UGCC, was also absorbed into the UGCC.²⁸ The National League of Gold Coast formed by Edward Akuffo Addo in 1941 was also absorbed into the

²⁷ CO 537/3559, no 2, 12 Dec 1947[United Gold Coast Convention]: Letter from K G Bradley to Mr. Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. Minutes by J K Thompson and Sir T Lloyd. Source: British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BEEP) Series B Volume 1 Part I. p. 44.

²⁸ *ibid.*

UGCC.²⁹ Thus, the UGCC was a merger of the leading educated elites in Gold Coast who realized the need to unite to wrestle political independence from the colonial government. The educated elites gave up on their personal and pre- WW II dormant nationalist organisations to form the UGCC to chart on a new path. The educated elites gave up on the old and dormant political organisations because they realized the post-WW II nationalism must be geared towards self- government, and not just constitutional reforms which was the primary aim of the pre-WW II nationalist organisations. After preliminary meetings attended only by the organisers of the movement, a number of public or semi-public meetings were held in Saltpond and Accra during the month of July with the principal object of attracting attention to the inaugural meeting which was held at Saltpond on the 4th of August 1947.³⁰ UGCC had the initial support base from large coastal towns and cities of Accra, Saltpond, Cape Coast, Sekondi and Kibi.³¹

It is important to note that the leading members of the UGCC were all members of the upper elite of lawyers, intellectuals and big businessmen.³² Foremost among them was George (or Pa, as he was affectionately known) Grant, who was elected chairman, and J.B. Danquah, the founder of the Youth Conference, who was elected Vice-Chairman, along with R.S. Blay, a Sekondi lawyer.³³ R.A. Awoonor Williams, another lawyer, was the Treasurer.³⁴ Other leading members were E.A. Akufo Addo, J.W de Graft Johnson, Obetsebi Lamptey and Kobina Kessie, all of whom were lawyers, E.A. W. Ofori Atta, a graduate teacher, and John Tsiboe, the proprietor

²⁹ A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000) p.87.

³⁰ CO 537/3559, no 2, 12 Dec 1947[United Gold Coast Convention]: Letter from K G Bradley to Mr. Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. Minutes by J K Thompson² and Sir T Lloyd. Source: British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BEEP) Series B Volume 1. p. 42.

³¹ *ibid* 44.

³² A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000). p.87.

³³ *ibid*

³⁴ *ibid*

of the Ashanti Pioneer.³⁵ Some of these key members were also closely connected with traditional rulers. Danquah and Ofori Atta were respectively brother and son of the powerful paramount chief, Nana Sir Ofori Atta I, while Akufo Addo was a son-in-law of the same chief.³⁶ Kwame Nkrumah was later invited (upon the recommendation of Arko Adjei) to be full-time secretary of the UGCC.³⁷

The first aim of the party, as set out in paragraph 4(i) of the draft constitution, was "to ensure that the control and direction of Government shall within the shortest possible time pass into the hands of the Natural Rulers and their people."³⁸ The second aim was "to ensure that persons elected to represent the people and their natural rulers in the present Legislative Council, or in any future Legislative Assembly and Senate, shall be so elected by reason of their competence and not otherwise".³⁹ The aims of the party gave an indication that it wanted an end of colonialism, and an immediate end of the chiefs constituting the African majority in the legislative assembly per the provisions of the Burns Constitution. In fact, one of the party's immediate aims was to wrest power from the chiefs, and in line with this, none of the chiefs was invited in the process of drafting the party's constitution.⁴⁰ When the chiefs were disturbed and alarmed by the activities of UGCC, the leadership of the party later appealed to the chiefs to withdraw their membership from the legislative assembly in favour of educated non-chiefs.⁴¹ Furthermore, in paragraph 4(8) of the draft constitution, one of the aims of the Convention was to seek collaboration with other Gold Coast

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶ *ibid*.

³⁷ Okyere Vincent, *Ghana: A Historical Survey* (Accra: Vinox Publications, 2000) p. 149.

³⁸ CO 537/3559, no 2, 12 Dec 1947[United Gold Coast Convention]: Letter from K G Bradley to Mr. Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. Minutes by J K Thompson² and Sir T Lloyd. Source: British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BEEP) Series B Volume 1, Part I. p. 42.

³⁹ *ibid*.

⁴⁰ *ibid*.

⁴¹ *ibid* 46

political institutions and parties and "with similar movements in West Africa for any purpose common to the peoples of West Africa."⁴² The leadership of UGCC had a motive to set in motion a decolonization drive that will not be only relevant in Gold Coast, but the whole of West Africa. It was not surprising they appointed Kwame Nkrumah, who from 1945 to 1947 was actively involved in Pan-African Conference and West African Congress activities in London.⁴³

The organization of UGCC was made effective upon the appointment of Nkrumah as the full-time secretary. The party had 13 branches before Nkrumah was appointed, but through the instrumentality of Nkrumah, an additional 500 branches were opened in southern Ghana alone, and numerous branches were established all over Gold Coast.⁴⁴ UGCC at this stage had a national outlook in its structure, organization and membership. Party cards were issued, dues were collected and in a short while as Nkrumah asserted in his *Autobiography*, funds were raised for the effective running of the party, and in addition, an official bank account was opened for the party.⁴⁵ The party held rallies in Accra, and other parts of the colony. The biggest one was on 20th February 1948 in the Palladium, Accra.⁴⁶ The leadership of UGCC capitalized on the 1948 Riot to telegraph the secretary of state of the colonies on 29th February 1948 and demanded inter alia a change of colonial government; and the installation of a new government to be headed by the UGCC leaders and the chiefs of Gold Coast.⁴⁷ The politically astute working committee members of UGCC exploited the turbulent political atmosphere in Ghana after the riot to their advantage. They created

⁴² *ibid* 44.

⁴³ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 52-55.

⁴⁴ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 73.

⁴⁵ *ibid* p. 74.

⁴⁶ *ibid* p. 75.

⁴⁷ CO 96/795/6, no 1 28 Feb 1948 [Accra riots]: inward telegram no 137 from Sir G Creasy to Mr Creech Jones reporting the outbreak of the Accra riots. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume 1, p. 66.

the impression that the chaotic political atmosphere in Gold Coast was as a result of the ineptitude of the colonial administration, and the need for the UGCC to form a government to maintain law and order was a necessity. With the exception of Nkrumah, the rest of the five working committee members were part of the 23 members of the Coussey Committee nominated by the colonial governor that drafted the 1951 Constitution.⁴⁸ Thus the UGCC members influenced the drafting of the 1951 constitution to a very large extent. The last nationalist activity that the UGCC took part in before its natural death was the participation in the 1951 election. Out of the 38 contested seats, the UGCC won only three.⁴⁹

The colonial government responded and reacted to the formation and activities in many ways. In a letter from the colonial office to Arthur Creech Jones, the secretary of state for the colonies, in December 1947, the colonial government described the working committee of UGCC as discredited politicians.⁵⁰ Even before the arrival of Nkrumah in Gold Coast and his subsequent appointment as the full-time general secretary of the UGCC, the colonial office saw him as a communist who would use the UGCC as a channel of communist infiltration.⁵¹ The colonial government was apprehensive about the possible consolidation of the nascent UGCC in the colony and suggested some factors that are likely to make the UGCC to blossom:

Some of the political conditions that might help to foster the strength of the new party would be (a) the continued inactivity of the other two parties, the Aborigines Rights Protection Society and the Gold Coast Youth Conference; (b) any failure by the central Government and local Government bodies to absorb into public service the political energies and enthusiasms of the young students who are now beginning to return in appreciable numbers from the United Kingdom and elsewhere; (c) any reluctance by the

⁴⁸ Okyere Vincent, Ghana: A Historical Survey (Accra: Vinox Publications, 2000) p.158.

⁴⁹ *ibid* p. 160.

⁵⁰ CO 537/3559, no 2, 12 Dec 1947[United Gold Coast Convention]: Letter from K G Bradley to Mr. Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. Minutes by J K Thompson² and Sir T Lloyd. Source: British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BEEP) Series B Volume 1. p. 46.

⁵¹ *ibid* 45.

chiefs to extend the membership of their Councils so that they became more widely representative of the whole community.⁵²

After the 1948 Riot, the colonial government accused the UGCC leadership for successfully disrupting normal government administration, and fostering an anti-racial atmosphere.⁵³ It was obvious that in the political calculations of the government, the riot was instigated by the UGCC leaders, and the continues free movement of the working committee would aggravate the situation and make the colony ungovernable. The government as a result, arrested and detained Dr. J.B. Danquah, Arko Adjei, William Ofori Atta, Edward Akuffo Addo, Kwame Nkrumah, and Obetsebi Lamptey; they were only released when the Watson Commission was constituted to probe into the causes of the riot.⁵⁴ Interestingly, the Watson Commission report found out the leaders of UGCC were active in exploiting the riot, but had no evidence to prove that they actually promoted and instigated the riot.⁵⁵ The reaction of the colonial government to the formation of UGCC smacks of apprehension and paranoid.

2.2 The Convention People's Party (CPP)

On the 12th of June, 1949, the Committee for Youth Organisation (CYO), a wing of the UGCC founded by Nkrumah, was metamorphosed into CPP.⁵⁶ It was launched on the same day before an audience of sixty thousand people in Accra.⁵⁷ This was followed by several attempts by some men of God and chiefs to amicably resolved the impasse between Nkrumah and the working

⁵² *ibid* 46.

⁵³ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948[Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order. Source: BDEEP Series B Volume 1, p. 68.

⁵⁴ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 80-83.

⁵⁵ PREM 8/924 19 July 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: minute by Mr. Creech Jones to Mr. Attlee. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume 1, p. 90.

⁵⁶ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 102-105.

⁵⁷ *ibid*

committee of UGCC, but ultimately it proved futile and Nkrumah had to resign from the UGCC.⁵⁸ CPP carried an intensive campaign throughout the length and breadth of the country and soon, with the tireless enthusiasm of young people, the sway of CPP was felt in every nook and cranny in Gold Coast. The competitive edge the CPP had over the UGCC was that it was able to attract the masses, including women, and the youth while the UGCC was dominated by professionals such as lawyers, teachers, and businessmen. The first Central Committee of the Party was composed of eight members: Kwame Nkrumah (chairman) Kojo Botsio (secretary), K. A. Gbedemah, N. A. Welbeck, Kwesi Plange, Kofi Baako, Krobo Edusei and two others Dzenkle Dzewu and Ashie Ikoe who later defected from CPP.⁵⁹

One unique feature of CPP which worked very well was the use of the print media for propaganda and education: *Accra Evening News*, the *Sekondi Morning Telegraph* and the *Cape Coast Daily Mail* did yeoman service in broadcasting the propaganda of the Party and in keeping alive the spirit of nationalism.⁶⁰ The colonial office acknowledged the organisational abilities of CPP in the conduct of the 1951 election in a letter to the office of the secretary of state of the colonies saying, “C.P.P.'s organisation eclipsed anything that any other Party or candidate could offer.”⁶¹ The CPP national wide rallies and publications in their newspapers was characterized by anti-imperialist speeches, and in most cases, Nkrumah successfully convinced the masses that the only panacea to the economic and social predicaments of Gold Coast was self- government.⁶² The CPP thus created the needed political awareness among Ghanaians for the need to end colonialism

⁵⁸ *ibid* p. 105-107.

⁵⁹ *ibid* 108.

⁶⁰ *ibid* 109.

⁶¹ CO 96/823/1, no 41 10 Feb 1951 [1951 elections]: letter from FA Evans to L H Gorsuch on the conduct of the rural and municipal election. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume 1, p. 288.

⁶² Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 103.

in order to have a hopeful future. The CPP participated in the three major elections leading to the independence of Ghana. In the 1951 February election, CPP won 34 out of the 38 contested seats.⁶³ In the 1954 general elections held on 15th June, CPP won 79 out of 104 seats, and in the 1956 general elections which was held on 12th and 17th July, the CPP won 71 seats out of the 104 seats.⁶⁴ The personality of Nkrumah, the organizational abilities of the CPP, and the party structures appealed to the electorates more than the rest of the political parties.

The motto of the CPP was ‘forward ever, backwards never’.⁶⁵ The aims of the CPP were (i) to fight relentlessly to achieve and maintain independence for the people of Gold Coast and their chiefs now; (ii) to serve as the vigorous conscious political vanguard for removing all forms of oppression and for the establishment of a democratic government; (iii) to secure and maintain the complete unity of the people of the Colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories and Trans-Volta/Togoland regions; (IV) to work with and in the interest of the Trade Union Movement, and other kindred organizations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the constitution and Standing Orders of the Party; and (v) to work for a speedy reconstruction of a better Gold Coast in which the people and their Chiefs shall have the right to live and govern themselves as free people.⁶⁶ Nkrumah being a smart politician packaged the CPP to look more attractive than his former party UGCC. For instance, the CPP used the slogan ‘independence now’ as against self-government within the shortest possible time used by the UGCC. Again, Nkrumah connected the CPP to the labour unions and the trade union movements. This gave the CPP a strong support base among the workers and the teeming youth.

⁶³ Okyere Vincent, *Ghana: A Historical Survey* (Accra: Vinox Publications, 2000). p. 160.

⁶⁴ *ibid* p. 161, 167.

⁶⁵ Kwame Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path* (London: International Publishers, 1972)

⁶⁶ *ibid*

The activities of CPP brought it on a collision course with the colonial government. On 15th December, 1949, Nkrumah published on the front page of *The Evening News* a stirring article headed ‘The Era of Positive Action Draws Nigh’.⁶⁷ The government took the offensive by instituting a series of prosecutions against the editors of the newspapers of the CPP, and several of the editors were sent to jail.⁶⁸ Nkrumah was also sent to court to defend a case of contempt which had been filed against him as a result of an article which appeared in the *Sekondi Morning Telegraph*, and a fine of three hundred pounds or four months' imprisonment was imposed on him.⁶⁹ Nkrumah downplayed the violations of established laws and regulations, but rather placed much emphasis on the way such trials attracted the teeming supporters to the courts which in the long run increased his political fortunes.⁷⁰ The rational choice theory was displayed at its best at this juncture. These cases of the colonial government taking the CPP newspaper editors, and Nkrumah to court increased the CPP's image, as the masses saw the party as more radical and ready to do anything to win independence for Gold Coast. When the CPP won a majority the seats in the 1951 elections, the CPP had a dyarchy with the colonial government, and Nkrumah was given the title ‘leader of government business.’⁷¹

2.3 The National Liberation Movement (NLM)

The NLM was formed in Kumasi on September 19, 1954 by Baffour Osei Akoto, the chief linguist to the Asantehene, with the active support of traditional rulers in Asante and Akyem

⁶⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 114.

⁶⁸ *ibid*

⁶⁹ *ibid* 115.

⁷⁰ *ibid* 114.

⁷¹ CO 96/813/5, no 12 27 Feb 1951 [Legislative Assembly and new ministers]: political intelligence notes by the Gold Coast Ministry of Defence and External Affairs on the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly and the new ministers. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume 1 Part I, p. 191-195.

Abuakwa, cocoa farmers and some disappointed CPP members.⁷² One of the things that inspired the formation of the NLM was the need to safeguard the position of chiefs in the constitution of independent Ghana.⁷³ The second reason concerns an Upper House, where the Chiefs could be represented and which might reflect Regional opinion and possibly include business interests.⁷⁴ The NLM expressed an Asante nationalism which was meant to safeguard Asante interest, and it was clearly manifested in their drive to protect chieftaincy in the constitution of independent Ghana. The colonial office described the constitutional tussle after the 1954 elections as a constitutional dispute between the Asantehene, backed by the NLM, and the Prime Minister, supported by the CPP.⁷⁵ Asante has revered their chiefs before, and even during the colonial rule. They seemed not to trust Kwame Nkrumah in post- independent Ghana to safeguard the interest of the Asantehene in particular and traditional authorities in general, hence the NLM with support of the Asantehene demanded a federal constitution. The Asantehene, Nana Sir Osei Tutu Agyemang Prempeh II even described Dr. Nkrumah as a ‘madman and once he had secured power in an independent Gold Coast a number of his more eminent opponents in Ashanti would have their throats cut.’⁷⁶ On the other hand, Nkrumah described the NLM as ‘a movement on the part of Asanteman council and those of Asante people who supported them to free themselves from the influence of democracy as represented by CPP’.⁷⁷ Thus, in the view of Nkrumah, NLM was a product of Asante’s aversion for democracy.

⁷²Okyere Vincent, *Ghana: A Historical Survey* (Accra: Vinox Publications, 2000). p.162.

⁷³ CO 554/805, no 22 22 March 1955 'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': memorandum by R J Vile on his visit to the Gold Coast (Mar 1955). Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II. p. 113.

⁷⁴ CO 554/805, no 22 22 March 1955 'Constitutional developments in the Gold Coast': memorandum by R J Vile on his visit to the Gold Coast (Mar 1955). Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II. p. 113.

⁷⁵ *ibid* 112.

⁷⁶ *ibid* 112.

⁷⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 218.

Furthermore, Nkrumah incurred the wrath of Ashanti when it was known that he proposed to call the new central hospital in Kumasi after himself, a proposal that gave great offence and was later dropped.⁷⁸ This could not have incurred the displeasure of the Ashantis if they had been content with CPP activities in Ashanti. The Asante were roused as a nation by the general feeling that they were being cheated by the CPP government. The feeling reached its height in 1953 when the Van Lare Commission, which reviewed the seats to be allocated to each region in the impending elections, increased the seats of the North from nineteen to twenty-six, that of the Colony from thirty-seven to forty-four, that of trans-Volta from eight to thirteen but that of Asante from nineteen to only twenty-one.⁷⁹ The whole Asante region, including the CPP and opposition leaders in the Legislative Assembly, protested this vehemently prior to the 1954 elections but to no avail.⁸⁰ Some of the Asante youth of the CPP were disturbed by growing dictatorial tendencies and the centralisation of power in the CPP.⁸¹ Their fears grew when the CPP national headquarters imposed candidates on the constituencies and then went on to expel eighty-one of those who refused to toe the party line, most of them Asante.⁸² These reasons made a larger section of Asante developed revulsion for the CPP; hence the formation of NLM.

The last motivation that made the Asante, and later supported the Akyem Abuakwa rally to form the NLM, was cocoa politics. The NLM was aimed primarily against the CPP government, it was inspired partly by the fixing of the price of cocoa at the same price of as last year [1954].⁸³

⁷⁸ CO 554/1162, no 9 22 Dec 1954 'Gold Coast review of events: July-Dec 1954': despatch no 20 from Sir C Arden Clarke to Mr. Lennox-Boyd. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II, p. 107.

⁷⁹ A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000) p. 99.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² *ibid.*

⁸³ CO 554/1162, no 9 22 Dec 1954 'Gold Coast review of events: July-Dec 1954': despatch no 20 from Sir C Arden Clarke to Mr. Lennox-Boyd. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II, p. 107.

The colonial office of Gold Coast which seems to tacitly buttress this decision described it as ‘courageous’, and justified it on the grounds that it kept down inflation, and raised the needed revenue for government ambitious development programme.⁸⁴ Nkrumah also justified the 10th August, 1954, Cocoa Duty and Development Funds (Amendment) Bill which fixed the price paid to the cocoa farmers at seventy-two shillings a load (sixty pounds) for four years as the surest means to raise revenue for the much-needed developmental projects for the mutual benefits of the people of Gold Coast.⁸⁵ What seems to have infuriated the people in the cocoa growing areas was that during the 1954 electioneering campaign, many of the CPP propaganda agents had promised the electorate and farmers that the government would increase the price of cocoa to £5 a load and that the new £5 currency note had been introduced to facilitate that payment.⁸⁶ When the Nkrumah-led government finally pegged the price per a load of cocoa at £3.12s, it was interpreted as a deliberate means to use incomes of cocoa growing areas, and resources in Asante to develop southern Ghana, where they had no cocoa.

The NLM demanded the following: fresh elections in spite of the 1954 elections; higher prices for cocoa; a bi-cameral legislature with the upper house made up of traditional rulers; a federation of the colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories, and Togoland; a new constitution; and a council of state.⁸⁷ Baffour Osei Akoto was the leader, Kusi Ampofo, general secretary, and E.Y. Baffoe, the national propaganda secretary.⁸⁸ The motto was *Amanyopa*-Good Governance, and it attracted some former CPP faithful’s in Asante like J.E. Appiah, R.R. Amponsah, and Victor

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁵ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 216-217.

⁸⁶ A. Adu Boahen, p. 100.

⁸⁷ Vincent Okyere, p. 165.

⁸⁸ *ibid* p. 164.

Owusu.⁸⁹ It held rallies, and it grouped a number of ancillary organisations in an attempt to rival those of the CPP: the Asante Farmers' Union, a new Congress of Free Trade Union, a paramilitary organization of 'Action Groupers' and a fanatic women's section led by tough Asante market traders.⁹⁰ In the mid-September 1955, NLM produced its own newspaper, *The Liberator* which was hard-hitting and abusive in its publications.⁹¹ The supporters of the NLM engaged in brutal violence with the CPP opponents in Kumasi, resulting in arson, physical deformities of victims, and death on both sides.⁹² The NLM and her allies finally presented a draft proposal for a federal constitution in August 1955, signed by Baffour Osei Akoto, S.D. Dombo, W.E.G. Sekyi, J.B. Danquah, and S.G. Antor.⁹³

The office of the secretary of state, upon several considerations, appointed Sir Frederick Bourne, a constitutional expert to settle the constitutional conundrum in Gold Coast.⁹⁴ The Bourne Commission completed its work on 17 December, 1955 with a recommendation that rejected federation as demanded by the NLM.⁹⁵ However, the colonial office succumbed to the NLM call for fresh elections, and consequently, fresh elections were held in July 1956.⁹⁶ NLM managed to win only 12 seats out of the 104 seats.⁹⁷ The NLM did not have a national outlook in terms of its organization, and as a result could not appeal to people outside Asante region. It was a re-

⁸⁹ *ibid* p. 164.

⁹⁰ *ibid* p. 164.

⁹¹ *ibid* p. 164.

⁹² Vincent Okyere, p. 165.

⁹³ DO 35/6170, no 60 [Aug 1955] 'Proposals for a federal constitution for an independent Gold Coast and Togoland': draft constitution issued by the NLM and its allies, Culled from BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II, p. 147-155.

⁹⁴ DO 35/6110, no 49A 23 Aug 1955

[Constitutional adviser]: letter from Sir G Laithwaite to Sir T Lloyd suggesting the names of Sir F Mudie and Sir F Bourne, Culled from BDEEP, Series B Volume I, Part II, p. 164.

⁹⁵ D.E.K Amanumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from the Pre-colonial Times to the Twentieth Century* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2008). p. 214.

⁹⁶ *ibid*.

⁹⁷ *ibid*

enactment of Asante nationalism manifesting in a political movement, and as a result, it was only influential in Asante.

2.4 The Nationwide Anti-Inflation Boycott of Foreign Goods in 1948

Nii Kwabena Bonne III, a chief of Osu Alata, a suburb of Accra successfully organised a nationwide boycott of European goods. The purpose of the campaign was to muster all possible support in the colony (Gold Coast) for an anti-inflation campaign, and to declare a boycott of European goods.⁹⁸ It must be emphasized that the Nii Kwabena Bonne III's intent and purpose for the organization of the boycott had no political consideration. *The Watson Commission Report on the 1948 Disturbances* findings have it that he was honestly anxious in the anti-inflation campaign which he instituted, to bring about a reduction in the prices of essential commodities in short supply for the public good.⁹⁹ Again, the colonial office observed that he did not succumb to the pressure of the active members of the UGCC to secure the continuance of the boycott to champion the political ambitions of the UGCC when the boycott was called off.¹⁰⁰ Some of the boycott committee members in other parts of the colony hoped to achieve a complete liberation of Gold Coast from economic serfdom.¹⁰¹

Nii Kwabena Bonne III collaborated with the traditional authorities in the organization of the boycott. He launched the anti-inflation campaign in Accra, in October 1947, with the Ga Native

⁹⁸ Milestones in the History of the Gold Coast: Autobiography of Nii Kwabena Bonne III. p. 64. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

⁹⁹ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 34. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

¹⁰⁰ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order. Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p. 65.

¹⁰¹ Milestones in the History of the Gold Coast: Autobiography of Nii Kwabena Bonne III. p. 71. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

Authority.¹⁰² He went on to seek the blessings and support of the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs on 20th December, 1947 in a meeting at Dodowa, and they gave him their approval with a vote of sixty-three.¹⁰³ Furthermore, the Asante Confederacy council of chiefs spearheaded by the Asantehene offered their support to the campaign when Nii Kwabena Bonne III got in touch with them.¹⁰⁴ The Asante Confederacy council even formed a committee to pursue the campaign and the boycott in the whole of Asante.¹⁰⁵ The success story of the boycott was partly due to the unflinching support the traditional authorities gave to the justifiable cause. The support of the chiefs also helped to convince their subjects to fully partake in the campaign and the boycott.

An Anti-inflation Committee was formed and chaired by Nii Kwabena Bonne III to devise ways and means of combating the incredible high cost of imported goods, and to tour the various state of the colony too seek the active cooperation of all and sundry.¹⁰⁶ The committee wrote a letter to the Accra Chambers of Commerce on 29th December, 1947 informing the chamber of the mandate given to the committee by the traditional authorities to boycott imported goods if prices were not reduced by 24th January, 1948.¹⁰⁷ The day for the commencement of the boycott was scheduled on Monday, 26th January which was duly enforced all over the colony. The campaign demanded the abolition of the import licenses to allow people to import freely from any part of the world especially USA.¹⁰⁸ Kwabena Bonne spent his own hard-earned money of £1000 in the organization of the boycott.¹⁰⁹ The Native Authorities enforced the boycott by imposing fines on those who

¹⁰² *ibid* 64-65.

¹⁰³ *ibid* 65.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid* 67.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid* 67.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid* 65.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid* 66.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid* 70-71.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid* 87.

repudiated the boycott, and in some cases, offenders were intimidated, a situation the Watson Commission Report described as illegal.¹¹⁰

Some of the European firms showed uncompromising attitudes. They mocked the boycott, and used despicable attempts like provocation, corruption, and physical intimidation for the purpose of defeating the boycott, but their attitude united the people and contributed to the success of the boycott.¹¹¹ Kwabena Bonne the organizer of the boycott was offered £10 000 as hush money, but he spurned it to keep the boycott alive.¹¹² This was a clear indication that the foreign firms would have continued to sell goods at extortionate price of 75 percent profit margin had it not been the timely intervention of Kwabena Bonne. The colonial government's first reaction to the boycott was that it was purely a trade dispute in which the government as such must remain neutral.¹¹³ This also shows the colonial government was not much concerned about the economic hardships of the people. The colonial government only intervened when the boycott brought trade to a virtual standstill.¹¹⁴

On 20th and 21st February, 1948, the government intervened. Mr. F. Leach, the colonial secretary held a meeting in his office together with the representatives of the chiefs, the chamber of commerce, the boycott committee, and the government.¹¹⁵ After several deliberations and negotiations, a compromised percentage of 50 percent was reached from the exploitative 75 percent profit margins of the foreign firms, especially on textiles, which was to be on trial for three

¹¹⁰ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 34. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana

¹¹¹ Nii Kwabena Bonne III 73.

¹¹² *ibid* 73-74.

¹¹³ *Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948.* p. 35. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

¹¹⁴ Nii Kwabena Bonne III, p. 75.

¹¹⁵ *ibid* 78-81.

months.¹¹⁶ The boycott was subsequently called off on 28th February 1948.¹¹⁷ The boycott succeeded to abolish conditional sales, dissolution of AWAM, and the elimination of black market and profiteering on goods like kerosene, sugar and milk.¹¹⁸ Most importantly, the boycott disabused the minds of the foreign trade community and the colonial government that the indigenous people of Gold Coast by reason of tribalization and mutual distrust, are unsuccessful to combine effectively for any single purpose.¹¹⁹

2.5 The 1948 Riot

Events and activities in Accra before 28th February 1948 created a volatile and an enabling environment for any slight provocation to spark off disturbances. On the 17th February there had been disturbances in Accra, arising out of the prosecution on a criminal charge of the Asere Mantse, a chief in one of the suburbs of Accra.¹²⁰ The police were on that occasion heavily preoccupied with crowds in the vicinity of the Law Courts so that unruly mobs were able to do much damage to property in the business centre of the town before they could be brought under control.¹²¹ A nationwide ant-inflation boycott of European goods was also in operation to ensure a downward adjustment of prices, so as to reduce the cost of living.¹²² On the 20th February a meeting was held by the Ex-Servicemen's Union, a minority organisation which was not affiliated

¹¹⁶ *ibid* 81.

¹¹⁷ *ibid* 82, 84.

¹¹⁸ *ibid* 81, 83.

¹¹⁹ *Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948*. p. 35.

¹²⁰ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order. Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p.64.

¹²¹ *ibid*.

¹²² Nii Kwabena Bonne III, p. 84-87.

with the Gold Coast Legion, and it was agreed that a petition would be presented to the colonial governor concerning their grievances.¹²³

On the 25th February, the Commissioner of Police saw Mr. Tamakloe, the General Secretary of the Ex-Servicemen's Union and, in explaining to him the constitutional channels for the presentation of petitions to the Governor, made it clear that the march on Government House would not be permitted. Mr. Tamakloe accepted the Commissioner's advice as to the method of presenting the petition and asked for permission to hold a parade of ex-servicemen on the 28th February, to proceed in an orderly fashion along a clearly defined route.¹²⁴ The Commissioner of Police issued the necessary permit for a parade along the route in question.¹²⁵ However, the procession of ex-servicemen arranged to take place at Accra on 28th February, 1948, rapidly deviated from the prescribed route, and those organising the procession took no steps to inform the assembly of the prescribed route and made no real attempts to prevent the deviation.¹²⁶ The organisers seem to have done that deliberately to have a confrontation with the colonial security in order to give the march a serious attention. The Watson Commission Report concluded that the procession was accompanied by a large body of evilly disposed persons organised in a loose way for the purpose of spreading false rumours urging the procession forward and making certain that it did not turn aside from its objective, namely, Christiansborg Castle.¹²⁷ I am of the opinion that the people who marched together with ex-servicemen were not evilly disposed as the commission

¹²³ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order. Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p.64.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

¹²⁶ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p.35.

¹²⁷ *ibid.*

report described them, but they were people who were frustrated by the economic hardships and hopelessness, and saw the removal of the colonial regime as the panacea to their predicaments.

After stones had been thrown by the mob - for the parade had by then lost its identity as a procession, and two police officers had received head wounds, the order to fire was given by Major Imray.¹²⁸ Shots were fired and one man was killed and one wounded, and the mob was then forced back.¹²⁹ Shortly before any shot was fired at Christiansborg, violence had begun in the town; large crowds gathered and began an apparently indiscriminate attack on stores; their object seemed to be principally to loot but there was a savage attack on a European Government officer and some damage was done to the cars of Europeans.¹³⁰ The crowds grew rapidly and looting was intensified until it became evident that the police unaided could not even contain them in that part of the town in which the concentration was greatest, let alone control them within that area.¹³¹ The situation in Accra on the 1st March was still uneasy in the morning but was brought under control during the day.¹³² The situation elsewhere began to deteriorate, however: there were demonstrations at Kumasi and Koforidua and some looting in Nsawam; Ex-servicemen from Accra moved into Koforidua and parties also appeared in Kibi and Suhum; Ex-Servicemen also demonstrated in Sekondi, they appeared to obtain directions from Accra.¹³³ The spread of the riot to other parts of the colony was a clear indication that the people of Gold Coast were disillusioned by the economic and political conditions after the WW II.

¹²⁸ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order. Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p.66.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

¹³¹ *ibid.*

¹³² *ibid.*

¹³³ *ibid* 67.

The riot resulted in the death of 29 people while 237 others sustained varying degrees of injuries, and property damage was estimated to be £2 million.¹³⁴ The colonial regime accused the UGCC of communist infiltration and instigating the people to engage in the riot for their political interest.¹³⁵ However, the commission which was set up to probe the causes of the riot exonerated the UGCC from accusations of instigating the people to engaged in the riot.¹³⁶ The Commission only acknowledged that the UGCC made political gains of the situation.¹³⁷

2.6 The Nkrumah-led Positive Action

The ‘Positive Action’ was one of the most important nationalist activities that took place in Gold Coast after 1945. Although it was a CPP-driven activity, this essay deemed it imperative to discuss it as a separate entity and not under the CPP as a political party. Nkrumah had the conviction that although the British Government and the British people (with the die-hard imperialists) acknowledged the legitimacy of Ghanaians’ demand for self-government, it was only by their own exertions that they would succeed.¹³⁸ Nkrumah explained Positive Action as:

the adoption of all legitimate and constitutional means by which we could attack force of imperialism in the country. The weapons were legitimate political agitation, newspaper and educational campaigns and, as a last resort, the constitutional application of strikes, boycotts and non-cooperation based on the principle of absolute nonviolence, as used by Gandhi in India.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 87.

¹³⁵ *ibid* 67.

¹³⁶ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 18

¹³⁷ *ibid*.

¹³⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 111.

¹³⁹ *ibid* p. 111- 112.

Nkrumah printed about 5000 copies of a pamphlet he titled *What I mean by Positive Action*, in which he explained exactly what constituted positive action, and these pamphlets were distributed to the party members to help spread the message of positive action.¹⁴⁰

The first reason given by the Nkrumah for the need for Positive Action was the fact that the Coussey Constitutional Committee had given abundant evidence by their dilatory and delaying tactics that the people of Gold Coast cannot completely rely on them to produce the Constitution the people of this country.¹⁴¹ Secondly, Nkrumah described the Coussey Committee report as unsatisfactory as a step towards constitutional reforms.¹⁴² He called together the Ghana People's Representative Assembly on 20th November. This mammoth gathering was the first of its kind and was attended by representatives from over fifty organisations.¹⁴³ The Assembly resolved ' that the Coussey report and His Majesty's Government's statement thereto are unacceptable to the country as a whole and declared that the people of the Gold Coast be granted immediate self-government, that is, full Dominion status within the Commonwealth of Nations based on the Statute of Westminster.¹⁴⁴ After a number of fruitless meetings with Mr. R.H. Saloway, the colonial secretary, Nkrumah on the 8th of January declared Positive Action in Accra, and proceeded to Cape Coast, Secondi, and Tarkwa, in the mining areas to do same.¹⁴⁵ Apart from the hospital workers, those employed on water conservancy and other public utilities, and the police, a general strike should begin from midnight. It was clear Nkrumah wanted to render government services practically impotent in order to coerce government to succumb to his demands.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid* 112.

¹⁴¹ 'The Dawn of Positive Action' in the 10th March Editorial of *The Evening News*, culled from Kwame Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path* (Panaf Books: London, 1972). p. 79.

¹⁴² Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography* p. 112-113.

¹⁴³ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography*, p. 113.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid*.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid* 117.

The colonial government responded quickly to the situation which averted a possible replication of another 1948 disturbances. The government declared a state of emergency throughout the country on the 11th of January, and a strict curfew on 17th January in the main towns which kept the towns quiet in the night.¹⁴⁶ Even before that action was taken, the colonial government observed that the strike was not general and even in Accra, Takoradi, and Kumasi, only a small proportion of organised labour obeyed it.¹⁴⁷ Nkrumah seems to have confirmed this. He realized upon return from the Western Region to Accra on 11th January that the strike action needed more aggression so he addressed another mammoth crowd in the Arena to give the strike a new life wire¹⁴⁸. *The Evening News*, the Cape Coast *Daily Mail* and the Sekondi *Morning Telegraph* had their offices ransacked, and closed by the police and they were all banned; their editors were arrested and charged for sedition, and that of Daily Mail, Kofi Baako jailed for contempt of court.¹⁴⁹ Most of the prominent members of the CPP were arrested including Kojo Botsio and Nkrumah. Nkrumah was arraigned before court where he was charged with inciting others to take part in an illegal strike under the terms of Positive Action and sedition in Accra, and Cape Coast respectively.¹⁵⁰ In all, Nkrumah was given three years jail sentence. These politically expedient actions of the government ended the Positive Action and restored law and order.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the four major nationalist events that occurred in Gold Coast after WW II, namely the formation of political parties, the Anti-inflation nationwide boycott of

¹⁴⁶ Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana* (Oxford University Press: London, 1964).p. 89.

¹⁴⁷ CO 537/5263, no 49 June 1950 'A survey of communism in Mrica': FO Research Dept memorandum; part two, regional survey- 'British West Mrica' [Extract] 222. Source: BEEDP, Series B Volume I, Part I. p.273.

¹⁴⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography*, p. 118.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid* 119.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid* 125.

European goods, the 1948 Riot, and the Nkrumah-led Positive Action. It examined the organization, the motives that propelled Ghanaians at that time to engaged in the aforementioned events, and the reactions and responses to the nationalist events by the colonial government. The three major political parties, UGCC, CPP, and NLM which were examined were all driven by a common purpose of achieving independence for Gold Coast, however, NLM was more or less an Asante nationalism in its character and outlook than a national party. These parties organised rallies, established branches, participated in general elections, and in some occasions their activities had a direct confrontation with the government. One unique thing about these political parties was the use of newspapers for propaganda and the dissemination of their ideas and aims. The leadership of these parties made political capital from some events in the colony in order to achieve their goals. The colonial government accused the party leaders on the basis of communist infiltrations, arrested and even jailed some of the leaders for the violations of the laws of Gold Coast.

The Anti-inflation boycott organised by Nii Kwabena Bonne III was geared towards a reduction of prices of goods by the foreign firms who sold their goods at exorbitant prices. The organizer established committees, cooperated with the chiefs, and succeeded in bringing the government, the chiefs, the foreign firms, and the boycott committee to the negotiation table. Prices of goods were reduced eventually and that ended the boycott. The 1948 Riot was sparked off by the protest march of the ex-servicemen which went haywire, and subsequent use of force to quell the protest by the colonial government. It resulted in the burning and looting of European shops in Accra, and other towns. By the time law and order was restored, there were many fatalities and casualties as well as destruction of properties.

The last nationalist activity this chapter discussed was the Nkrumah-led Positive Action. It made use of civil disobedience and strike action of workers. It was organised due to the dissatisfaction of the CPP of the work and the report of the Coussey Constitutional Committee. The government declared a state of emergency, imposed dusk to dawn curfew on the big towns, arrested some of the leaders of CPP including Nkrumah. Nkrumah and some others were later tried and jailed for various offences.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 THE SECOND WORLD WAR AS A CATALYST OF NATIONALISM: THE POST-SECOND WORLD WAR CONDITIONS THAT INFLUENCED NATIONALISM IN GOLD COAST.

This chapter discusses the factors which promoted nationalism in Gold Coast after WW II, and how WW II also acted as a catalyst in promoting nationalist activities. For the purpose of this chapter, the factors will be discussed under economic, social and political sections. It must be emphasized that a myriad of factors accounted for nationalism after WW II in Ghana, however, this chapter will limit its scope to lack of educational facilities, shortage of housing facilities in the cities, and the ‘broken myth’ surrounding the white man’s superiority after WW II, as the social factors. The economic factors examine the shortage and high prices of imported goods, and the swollen shoot disease which affected the cocoa industry. The political factors will discuss the discontent of the educated elites against the 1946 Burns Constitution of Gold Coast, and the grievances of the ex-servicemen.

3.1 Social Factors That Promoted Nationalism in Ghana after WW II

The first social factor worth discussing with regard to the causes of nationalism in Ghana after WW II is lack of educational facilities. *The Watson Commission Report on the 1948 Disturbances* stated categorically that the alleged slow development of educational facilities in spite of a growing demand, and the almost complete failure to provide any technical or vocational training in Gold Coast was one of the social causes of the 1948 Riot.¹⁵¹ The report further stated,

¹⁵¹ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 8. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

“It is, of course, true that the educational facilities are inadequate in relation to the number of children to be educated and we are told that the full development of universal primary education would take at least twenty years to achieve if finance and other factors are taken into consideration”.¹⁵² The commission report, as of 1948, also provided the following startling revelations:

There were 578 government and government-assisted primary and middle schools, and 2018 non-assisted schools. Government-assisted secondary schools were 10, and non-assisted schools were 13. The non-assisted schools were often ill-equipped, ill-housed, and staffed by untrained teachers. The total number of teachers in Teacher Training Colleges were 1266. The government had only one technical school. Higher education facilities in Gold Coast consisted of Intermediate courses in engineering, science, arts and commerce, centred in Achimota, with an enrollment of about 100 students.¹⁵³

This shambolic system of education was set against the backdrop of deep-rooted and widespread in education by the people of Gold Coast, especially the youth.¹⁵⁴ There was also a stimulation in demand for education due to the post- WW II economic boom in Gold Coast.¹⁵⁵ WW II-driven economic boom in terms of increase in the price of cocoa and other export commodities provided most people with the financial muscle to pay for quality education in Gold Coast. The government’s inability to provide educational facilities became a stimulus of nationalism. In 1945, the Elliot Commission which was charged to look into issues concerning education in British West Africa, recommended the establishment of a university in each of the British colonies to meet the needs of African teaching and investigation.¹⁵⁶ There was a clear indication from the above report that the need to establish a university college in Gold Coast was a necessity, but sadly enough, the

¹⁵² *ibid* 64.

¹⁵³ *ibid* 63.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid* 62.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid* 62.

¹⁵⁶ *Report of the Commission on Higher Education in West Africa, 1945*, p.55,125. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

colonial government did nothing about the recommendation three years after the report, and had no immediate plans to do so until the 1948 riot erupted. It is no doubt that the lukewarm attitude of the colonial government towards education infuriated the youth and the educated elites to take active part in nationalist activities. The youth vented their frustrations and anger against the government in the 1948 riot. The core of CPP was made up of the teeming youth, it was out of the committee for youth organization that the CPP was born.¹⁵⁷ The youth and many others who saw access to quality education as a tool for national and personal advancement considered the continuous existence of colonial rule as an impediment to their progress, and consequently took active part in nationalism to remove the impediment.

The next social factor that promoted post-WW II nationalism was the acute shortage of housing especially, in the cities. The post- WW II acute housing shortage in the cities not only made the colonial government unpopular, but it also made the masses develop a revulsion against the political regime. The Watson Commission gave a cogent reason why the acute housing problem in Gold Coast at the time of the 1948 riot was a contributing factor to the causes of the riot, and hence radical nationalism:

Nothing contributes more to social unrest than shortage of houses for the people. The Gold Coast in common with most parts of the inhabited globe suffers from this shortage, but with added factors making for greater discontent. Housing conditions in rural areas call for greater and concerted effort in their improvement. In the towns also there is great need for accelerated slum clearance. We were appalled by some of the areas in Accra which reflect the industrial revolution at its worst.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 102-105.

¹⁵⁸ The Watson Commission Report, p.8.

The commission report went on to recommend that, “the most urgent efforts must be made to increase the tempo of the building [that the government had planned to do] everywhere, and the matter should be regarded as a first priority.”¹⁵⁹

The above evidence shows the housing problem was not only confined to the towns and the cities, but the rural housing also needed a radical facelift as well. This was partly why the post-WW II activism did not only become a city affair as was in the case of pre-WW II nationalism, but it was also prevalent in the rural areas. Both urban and rural dwellers actively participated in the major nationalist activities such as the Anti-inflation boycott, and political party activities.

To add insult to injury, in the face of the acute dearth of housing facilities in the cities, racial discrimination influenced the distribution of the few existing well-built government housing facilities. Sir Alan Burns, upon his arrival in the Gold Coast in 1941, condemned the reprehensible practice of the compulsory segregation of African and European senior civil servants and the judicial workers such as judges on account of race, and he vowed to amend the law to end that practice.¹⁶⁰ This promise turned out to be only a lip-service. Seven years after the promise of Alan Burns, the Watson Commission report condemned the repugnant situation of Africans living in low standard houses as compared to the magnificent settlement of the Europeans.¹⁶¹ The clear case of racial discrimination in the distribution of the existing insufficient housing facilities, in addition to the untold hardship brought on the Ghanaians as a result of the acute shortage of houses propelled the Ghanaians to actively participate in nationalist activities to vent their anger and disaffection against the government.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid*

¹⁶⁰ CO 96/775/9, no 2 30 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: CO record of a discussion with Lord Moyne on the reforms proposed by Sir A Burns, culled from BDEEP, Series B, Volume 1. p. 2.

¹⁶¹ The Watson Commission Report, p.8.

The last social factor that also precipitated nationalism was the broken ‘myth’ surrounding the white man’s superiority. The colonial period in Gold Coast created a master-servant relationship between the British and the people of Gold Coast respectively. Africans in Gold Coast who held similar posts in the civil service with their European counterparts were given lower salaries, while the Europeans were given higher salaries.¹⁶² Most of the senior positions in the civil service were also exclusively reserved for the Europeans.¹⁶³ As pointed out earlier, in terms of housing, there was compulsory segregation on account of race as regards the use of housing facilities. The colonial government created European reservations purposely to house the European officials, while the Africans of similar positions lived in the slums.¹⁶⁴ The psychological effect of this deliberate master-servant administrative architecture was to make the Africans feel inferior. It developed a myth of European superiority among the people of Gold Coast. This explains why the pre-WW II nationalism lacked any momentum of radicalism to bring an end to political colonialism.

WW II changed the above status quo. The experiences of the ex-servicemen in WW II changed the narration. African and white soldiers fought together in Burma, Kenya, Ethiopia and Europe and in all these places they fought on the same terms and lived under the same conditions.¹⁶⁵ Some Africans such as the Ghanaian, Seth Anthony, rose to officer rank and were put in command of white men.¹⁶⁶ All this proved that white men and black men were one and the

¹⁶² CO 96/775/9, no 2 30 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: CO record of a discussion with Lord Moyne on the reforms proposed by Sir A Burns, Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 5.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ CO 96/775/9, no 1 22-24 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: minutes by Sir A Burns and O G R Williams on the reforms proposed by Burns before his departure for the Gold Coast, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 2.

¹⁶⁵ A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000). p. 84.

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*

same people, and the former were not superior beings.¹⁶⁷ Ndabaningi Sithole, a Zimbabwean writer, gave a scintillating description of this broken myth:

The girls of England and France and Italy who went out with African soldiers, did not help the preservation of the white myth. The African soldiers found themselves at the front line of war with one purpose in view; to kill every white soldier they could get hold of. African soldiers saw white soldiers wounded, dying and dead. The bullet had the same effect on black and white alike. After spending four years hunting white enemy soldiers, the African never again regarded them as gods.¹⁶⁸

As a result of the shattered prestige of the white man and the myth of his inherent superiority, the psychological barrier for the African was removed. This explains the upsurge of nationalism on the part of the ex-servicemen with boldness manifested in the 1948 Riot, the Positive Action, and political party activities prior to the independence of Ghana. Indeed, WW II acted as a vehicle for nationalism.

3.2 Economic Causes of Nationalism in Post-WW II Ghana

The most important economic factor that influenced the majority of the people to engage in nationalist activities during and after WW II was the shortage and high prices of imported goods in Gold Coast. Prices of goods skyrocketed which brought untold hardship to the people. *A Report on Wages and Standard of Living in Accra, 1945*, stated among other things that Ghanaian salary earners became worse off:

In the course of the wartime inflation of prices in this colony, the position of the various earning groups has changed inevitably- traders as a whole have become better off while fixed income groups have suffered a steady deterioration in their standard of living¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid*

¹⁶⁸ Ndabaningi Sithole, *African Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), as cited in A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000). p. 84.

¹⁶⁹ Miss P. Addy, *Report on Wages and Standard of Living in Accra, 1945*. p.12. Source: PRAAD Ghana.

While the traders were making huge profits, the local people were kicked out of the retail trade as a result of the government trading policies.¹⁷⁰ Apart from the wage -earning workers who were hard hit by the inflation, artisans were also not left out. One particular hard-hit group were drivers, many of them ex-servicemen who found it difficult to get petrol except at black market prices under an inefficient system of rationing.¹⁷¹ The mass of the people then started pointing accusing fingers at the government, and even became more incensed that whereas the British government was trying to alleviate the hardships of its nationals back at home through measures like price regulation and other controls, the Ghanaian was left at the mercy of profiteering foreign businessmen and their agents.¹⁷² The local people at this point were harbouring an indignation and looked for an opportune time to explode it out against the colonial regime. Consequently, they vented their anger out in nationalist activities such as the boycott of imported European goods, the 1948 riot, political party activities, and radical strike actions. *The Watson Commission Report on the Disturbances, 1948*, confirmed the shortage of imported goods and its subsequent price hikes as one of the economic causes of the riot, and the anti-inflation boycott of imported goods.¹⁷³

The local people blamed the colonial government for the economic woes of shortages of European goods and its associated inflation on the colonial government. This blame on the government was partially justifiable. Nii Kwabena Bonne III, the brain behind the nationwide anti-inflation boycott of European goods, asserted that the colonial government had some sort of ‘gentleman agreement’ with the foreign firms to continue to sell their goods at extortionate prices to the people of Gold Coast.¹⁷⁴ This assertion of Kwabena Bonne III was confirmed by the

¹⁷⁰ The Watson Commission Report, p.41.

¹⁷¹ Okyere Vincent, *Ghana: A Historical Survey* (Accra: Vinox Publications, 2000) p. 159

¹⁷² *ibid*

¹⁷³ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.8.

¹⁷⁴ *The Autobiography of Nii Kwabena Bonne III*, p.65.

government's initial stance on the anti-inflation boycott that it was "purely a trading dispute in which the government as such must remain neutral."¹⁷⁵ The Watson Commission Report blamed the government for its inaction in relation to the price hikes leading to the 1948 Riot.¹⁷⁶ It is therefore not far-fetched that the nationalist activities were directed at the colonial government. At the time of the boycott, S.A. Mensah of Winneba, a town in Gold Coast, encouraged the people to use the boycott to achieve economic liberation of the colony from economic serfdom.¹⁷⁷ Thus, the colonial government was seen as an emblem of economic exploitation, and the need to replace it with an indigenous-run self-government was considered as a desideratum of economic liberation by the people. This accounted for that nationwide nationalism devoid of class and economic status. However, it must be emphasized that the price hikes in this period cannot be entirely blamed on the activities of the foreign firms, AWAM, and the inaction of the government. Nii Kwabena Bonne III admitted in his *Autobiography* that in November 1941, the colonial government explained to the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs, when the war was at its height, that the cost of convoys and insurance coupled with an extreme shortage of supplies due to WW II made a high price for goods inevitable.¹⁷⁸ Certainly, the government's actions and inactions had no direct influence on the wartime inflation. The Watson Commission also established the fact that, the shortage of the imported goods and its attendant hardship was partly due to the demonstrable curtailment of the production of goods and supplies of goods as a result of the global economic downturn emanating from WW II.¹⁷⁹ For instance, in 1937 and 1946, the percentage fall of the supply of rice, canned meat, and canned fish was 98%, 93%, and 95% respectively.¹⁸⁰ This clearly

¹⁷⁵ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.35.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷⁷ *The Autobiography of Nii Kwabena Bonne III*, p.71.

¹⁷⁸ *The Autobiography of Nii Kwabena Bonne III*, p. 63.

¹⁷⁹ *The Watson Commission Report*, p. 37.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid*

shows a gargantuan fall in the supplies of these much-sought after goods due to WW II. While WW II drastically reduced the supply of these goods, it also resulted in putting more money in the pockets of the people of Gold Coast. Money incomes and wages also rose rapidly during the War years, due to such factors as Allied military expenditure and increased receipts for Gold Coast export.¹⁸¹ This inevitably created the situation where more money was chasing fewer goods, thereby causing a demand-pull inflation. It is evidently indubitable that WW II principally accounted for the shortage of imported goods and the galloping inflation which partly accounted for the nationwide radical nationalism after WW II. Thus, WW II acted as a catalyst of nationalism in this context.

The next economic factor that played a pivotal role in post-WW II nationalism was the swollen shoot disease which affected the cocoa industry from the 1930s to the 1940s and the unsatisfactory approach of the colonial government in salvaging the situation. Throughout the colonial days, the cultivation of cocoa remained in the hands of individual local farmers who owed their wealth largely to this 'golden pod', which has been the backbone of the country's economy. *The Watson Commission Report* confirmed and even threw more light on the contribution of the cocoa industry to the economy of Gold Coast in the late 1940s:

The prosperity today of the Gold Coast depends on Cocoa. The menace to that prosperity is " Swollen Shoot". Upon cocoa, so far as yet seen, depend the plans for a better country-better education, better medical attention, better housing and all those things which spell social improvement and which the

¹⁸¹ *ibid*

people long for. In the five pre-war years, the export of cocoa brought into the Gold Coast about £5,300,000 a year. This represented about 98 per cent of the value of its agricultural exports and not less than 63 per cent by value of the total exports.¹⁸²

The fact that the cocoa industry contributed about 63% to the export value of the economy, and the cocoa farms were solely owned by the local farmers lends credence to the fact that whatever affected the cocoa industry would impact on the lives of majority of the people. The output of cocoa production, however, shown a marked decline from the peak of 300,000 tons in 1936/37, to a post-war figure [1946/47] averaging about 200,000 tons (representing purchases from the farmer).¹⁸³ The drastic fall in production was a corollary of the swollen shoot disease which affected 50 million cocoa trees out of the total number of 400 million cocoa trees after the disease was first detected in 1936.¹⁸⁴ Competent authorities estimated that the present rate of spread is about 15 million trees a year and that, if unchecked, the cocoa industry will practically disappeared in 20 years.¹⁸⁵

This dire situation needed a quick and a practical response from the government to salvage the cocoa industry, the backbone of the economy. However, the government response was a knee-jerk reaction. The government ordered the cutting out of the affected trees, and by December, 1947, about 2.5 million trees were cut out without any compensation.¹⁸⁶ Although the cutting out of the affected trees was the best option since the disease had no cure, and the cutting out would prevent further spread, the cutting out was fraught with several lapses.¹⁸⁷ The farmers were not

¹⁸² *The Watson Commission Report*, p. 48

¹⁸³ *ibid*

¹⁸⁴ *ibid*

¹⁸⁵ *ibid*

¹⁸⁶ *ibid* 49.

¹⁸⁷ *ibid* 49.

properly educated on the nature of the disease, and the need to cut out the affected ones; some of the labourers received bribes and spared some farms; the false rumour of the British plan to destroy Ghana's cocoa industry before they leave the colony; the system where labourers were paid by the number of affected trees they cut out led to indiscriminate cutting out of both healthy and diseased trees; and the cutting out was done without any meaningful compensation to the farmers, they were given £12 per acre.¹⁸⁸ Added to the above, the government was more interested in increasing food production and the production of vegetable oils, and consequently, the government overconcentrated on WW II-related issues and little was done to combat the disease.¹⁸⁹ The colonial government admitted that the Watson Commission criticisms against the colonial administration on the cutting out of the cocoa trees were probably fair, and that the cutting out campaign had been badly handled.¹⁹⁰

Both the political elites and the local farmers took advantage of the situation to engaged in nationalism to end colonialism. The colonial authority was perceived as directly responsible for the woes of the cocoa industry. Dr. J.B Danquah pointed it out to the Watson Commission, "it was scientifically sound to carry the mass eradication of the affected cocoa trees, but it was politically inexpedient."¹⁹¹ The farmers also opposed the cutting out campaign because WW II resulted in astronomical increase in the price of cocoa, and the cutting out meant loss of huge revenue to the farmers. In 1946, the world price for cocoa was £49.8 per ton (farm gate price £27 per ton), and in 1947, it was increased to £155 per ton (farm gate price £51.3 per ton).¹⁹² By 1948, it reached £238

¹⁸⁸ *ibid* 49 and 50.

¹⁸⁹ Rogers S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005). p 81.

¹⁹⁰ CO 96/796/5, no 39 28 June 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: note of CO departmental meeting to consider the report, with particular reference to the economic sections, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p. 83.

¹⁹¹ The Watson Commission Report, p.49

¹⁹² Chronological Table of Principal Events, BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p. xxvi

per ton, while the farm gate price was £74.7 per ton.¹⁹³ Thus, WW II made the government to lose focus on the cocoa menace, and it also increased the price of the cocoa for any rational economic farmer to resist the cutting out policy which in the short-run will affect his cocoa production output. Indeed, an important correlation existed between nationalist politics and rural unrest in Ghana's cocoa districts in the years preceding self- rule.¹⁹⁴ The major interest groups in this economic and political configuration were rural farmers and traditional chiefs along with urban politicians, whose collective reaction to colonial administrative measures on swollen shoot control of the cocoa tree disease generated a major political crisis in Ghana that eventually paved the way for Ghana's political independence.¹⁹⁵ This was another reason why the cocoa growing areas in Gold Coast actively took part in nationalist activities such as the 1948 Riot, and political party activities in collaboration with the urban-based political elites.

3.3 Political Factors that Promoted Nationalism in Post-WW II Gold Coast

The discontent of the educated elites against the 1946 Burns Constitution was one of the factors that promoted nationalism after WW II. Sir Alan Burns was the British colonial governor of Gold Coast from 1941 to 1947. He promulgated the 1946 Constitution of Ghana as a response to the growing demands for a radical constitution from the educated elites. However, the Burns Constitution of 1946 did not meet the expectations of the educated elites. The educated elites saw the Burns Constitution as a constitution designed to give more powers to the chiefs and was therefore a deliberate attempt to stifle their political aspirations. Thus, the intelligentsia became

¹⁹³ *ibid*

¹⁹⁴ Francis K. Danquah, 'Rural Discontent and Decolonization in Ghana, 1945-1951' in *Agricultural History*, Winter, 1994, Vol. 68, No. 1 (Winter, 1994), pp. 2.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid*

frustrated. “The Legislative Council consist of a President appointed by the Governor or, if no such appointment has been made, of the Governor himself as President; six ex-officio members, who are those who serve on the Executive Council with the exception of the the director of medical services; eighteen elected members of whom nine represent the colony and are elected by the Joint Provincial Council, four represent Ashanti and are elected by the Ashanti confederacy Council, and five represent the municipalities of Accra (two) Cape Coast, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi (one each); and six members nominated by the Governor.”¹⁹⁶ What this provision in the constitution meant was that, the chiefs will have a majority representation of thirteen members in the Legislative Council, while the educated elites will only have five members. Furthermore, the constitution states that “If the Governor considers that it is expedient in the interest of public order, public faith, or good government that any Bill should be introduced, or any motion proposed and if the Council fails to pass such Bill or motion, the Governor may by declaration order that such Bill Or motion shall have effect.”¹⁹⁷ This in effect also meant that the governor had the power to decree any law he deemed it fit without going to the Legislative Council.

The fact that thirteen of the eighteen Ghanaian seats [in the legislative assembly] were to be filled by the traditional rulers meant a virtual return to the period of so-called ‘indirect rule’ and the supremacy of chiefs or traditional rulers in national affairs, much to the disgust and disappointment of the intelligentsia, the ex-servicemen and the youth. The constitution, thus, became an impediment to the much- desired political participation of the educated elites. All of these groups subsequently turned against the chiefs as well as the colonial authorities. The

¹⁹⁶ *The 1946 Constitution of Gold Coast*, culled from the Appendix 16 of the *Watson Commission Report*, p.101.

¹⁹⁷ *The 1946 Constitution of Gold Coast*, culled from the Appendix 16 of the *Watson Commission Report*, p.101.

constitution also failed to give political franchise to all the colony, it limited it to the four municipalities of Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Kumasi. In effect, the teeming youth in Gold Coast after WW II had no say in the political administration of the colony. The *Burns Constitution of 1946* infuriated the educated elites who were epitomized by the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), a political party that was formed in 1947, and its leaders like J. B. Danquah, Kwame Nkrumah, Ofori Attah, and Arko Adjei. These leaders were looking forward to seeing a radical political change in the Gold Coast after WW II, but the Burns Constitution failed woefully to give such a radical change, and this created an enabling environment for radical nationalism.

The Watson Commission unearthed several weaknesses of the Burns Constitution which contributed to the 1948 Riot:

An examination of the constitution will show that the concession of an African elected majority in the Legislature, in the absence of any real political power, provided no outlet for a people eagerly emerging into political consciousness. On the other hand, it provided a powerful stimulant for intelligent discontent. The real and effective political government remained in the hands of the Executive Council. Composed of ex officio and nominated members it was the instrument of power. The Legislature was largely a Chamber of debate... The 1946 Constitution did nothing to decentralise the machinery of government... We have found an intense suspicion that the Chiefs are being used by the Government as an instrument for the delay if not suppression of the political aspirations of the people.¹⁹⁸

Considering the fact that the 1946 Constitution was an improvement over the 1925 constitution, but it was rejected by the educated elites meant that certain external factors played a role. The declaration of the Atlantic Charter in 1941 at the time of WW II, which espoused self-determination raised the hopes of the educated elites for a radical constitution which would

¹⁹⁸ *The Watson Commission Report*. p. 23-24.

guarantee self-government.¹⁹⁹ Clement Atlee in his address to the West African Students' Union in 1941, said, " We in the Labour Party have always demanded that the freedom which we claim for ourselves shall be extended to all...I look for an ever increasing measure of self-government and political freedom in Africa."²⁰⁰ Atlee extended the tenants in the declaration of the Atlantic Charter to the Africans too. These might had boldened the nationalist of whom some were part of the West African Students' Union to ask for a more radical constitution at the time Atlee became a prime minister. *The Watson Commission Report* further stated, "large numbers [of Ghanaians in the post-war era] had their horizons widened and their political consciousness stimulated by service in the Forces abroad and close contacts with other peoples, in that background the 1946 Constitution was outmoded at birth."²⁰¹

These are clear indications that WW II, did not only influence nationalism in the social and economic circles, but politically, it was a driving force behind radical nationalism. In the midst of these external political consciousness of self-determination coupled with the shortfalls of the 1946 constitution, the 1946 Constitution became a stimulus for political activism and nationalism.

Finally, the grievances of the ex-servicemen against the colonial government played a significant role in the radical nationalism in post-WW II Gold Coast. The ex-servicemen in the Gold Coast were the demobilised soldiers who participated in the WW II on the side of the British. They formed a vibrant association known as the Gold Coast Ex-Servicemen's Union, and their secretary was Mr. Tamakloe.²⁰² The demobilised ex-servicemen were about 65,000 in Gold Coast

¹⁹⁹ CO 96/775/9, no 1 22-24 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: minutes by Sir A Burns and O G R Williams¹ on the reforms proposed by Burns before his departure for the Gold Coast, Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 2.

²⁰⁰ BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. lxxii.

²⁰¹ The Watson Commission Report, p. 10.

²⁰² *ibid* 89.

after WW II.²⁰³ They had several grievances against the colonial government for the following reasons. The Watson Commission concluded that the failure to fulfil perceived job promises to the ex-service as one of their grievances.²⁰⁴ However, it saw the job promises as a figment of imagination: the ex-service men expectation of job promises might have be born out of misapprehension about their prospects of demobilization since the ‘Release and Resettlement’, a booklet which spelt out the terms and conditions of demobilization never gave any assurance of employment to the ex-servicemen upon their return to Gold Coast.²⁰⁵ The commission report further cited insufficiency of disablement pension rate as against an ever rising high cost of living, and the failure on the part of the government to provide grants to men too old to enter government service and to men anxious to start their business on their own account as was done in the United Kingdom as one of the grievances of the ex-service men leading to the riot.²⁰⁶

In addition to the above grievances, the ex-servicemen wanted a provision to be made by the government to exempt them from payment of all state levies for a period of five years.²⁰⁷ This request was made due to their sacrifice they made for the breaking of the yoke of Nazism imposition on the British and her allies. The government probably rejected this request to avoid making the ex-servicemen ‘first class citizens’ that ought to be treated differently. They also said Army training in vocational work is not treated as adequate for Civilian or Government employment of the same kind upon demobilization.²⁰⁸ More so, they also lamented bitterly that upon being demobilised and entering the Government service full credit is not given on the

²⁰³ Adu Boahen. p. 84.

²⁰⁴ The Watson Commission Report, p.21

²⁰⁵ *ibid*

²⁰⁶ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.21

²⁰⁷ *ibid*

²⁰⁸ *ibid*

establishment for the period of service in the Army.²⁰⁹ The rest of their grievances were the lack of representation of the ex-servicemen in the Legislative Council; the fact that some of their men were improperly blacklisted by the Resettlement Department and so penalised when looking for work; that Africanisation of the Royal West African Frontier Force was not being effectively maintained, and more African Officers should be granted Regular Commissions in the Army and non-commissioned officers should be encouraged to take the King's Commission; and that while serving in the Army racial differences persisted in such matters as food, clothing and pay²¹⁰.

Being that as it may, the colonial government was not in a position to address the multiplicity of the grievances of the ex-servicemen. Between 1939 and 1945, due to the exigencies of WW II, Gold Coast supported the British with an amount of £361,696.²¹¹ This might have drained the Gold Coast coffers to continue to spend money on WW II related issues. Also, the colonial government was faced with pressure to expand social infrastructure. The government had on the agenda to execute (i) the Volta Scheme; (ii) Extension to Takoradi Harbour; (iii) a major experimental scheme in mechanised agriculture in the South on the lines of Damongo in the North; (iv) Extension of railways; of roads; of electricity, and water supply; building houses, hospitals; (v) Completion of University College on the new site, and of the Regional Technical College at Kumasi, and (vi) Establishment of major enterprises: sawmills, cement work, brick works, and canning works.²¹² The colonial office was motivated to see to the execution of these projects at the expense of satisfying the numerous grievances of the ex-servicemen to prove to the world that democracy is an effective and superior alternative to Communism in that it does not only allow

²⁰⁹ *ibid* 22.

²¹⁰ *ibid* 22, 23.

²¹¹ Adu Boahen, p. 81.

²¹² CO 96/826/3, no IOB 16 Apr 1951 'The economic position of the Gold Coast': memorandum submitted by Sir R Acland to Mr Griffiths. Memorandum by the CO, Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 308.

people to think their own thoughts and grow their own way, but also has power to solve immediate material problems.²¹³ Britain, a leading proponent of democracy and adherent of democracy was influenced by the Cold War, a bye-product of WW II, in matters relating to the decision making in Gold Coast.

The ex-servicemen, having the prestige surrounding the myth of white man's superiority shattered in their minds as a result of their participation in WW II, joined forces with the educated elites to actively participate in radical nationalism. For instance, prior to the 1948 Riot, the ex-servicemen held Ex-servicemen Rally on 18th February, 1948, in Palladium Cinema at Accra, with some leading members of the UGCC working committee chaired by Dr. J.B. Danquah.²¹⁴ On 27th February, a day before the 1948 Riot, in another mass meeting, the ex-servicemen were exhorted by the UGCC leaders to parade at the old Polo Ground at 1 p.m. on the following day, when they would be given further instructions.²¹⁵ Nkrumah was reticent on the tacit role the working committee played in collaboration with the ex-servicemen leading to the 1948 Riot when he discussed the riot in his *Autobiography*.²¹⁶ He probably wanted to create an impression that the arrest and detention of the UGCC working committee members was wrong, and was only meant to intimidate the UGCC leadership. The ex-servicemen march on 28th February resulted in the immediate trigger of the 1948 Riot, which became the turning point in Ghana's decolonization drive. Some of the ex-servicemen participated in the Positive Action, and they clashed with the colonial police which resulted in the death of two of the policemen.²¹⁷

²¹³ CO 96/826/3, no 10B 16 Apr 1951 'The economic position of the Gold Coast': memorandum submitted by Sir R Acland to Mr. Griffiths. Memorandum by the CO, Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 307.

²¹⁴ The Watson Commission Report, p. 87.

²¹⁵ *ibid*

²¹⁶ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p. 75-81.

²¹⁷ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.121.

Clearly, WW II created over 65 000 ex-servicemen in Gold Coast after the war. Their discontent with the government put them in a disposition to collaborate with the rest of people especially the educated elites to eventually end political colonialism in Ghana. It is therefore not far-fetched to say WW II acted as a catalyst to promote nationalism in Gold Coast. Without WW II, the 1948 Riot would not have happened let alone the Watson Commission and subsequent drafting of the 1951 elections.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on some factors that promoted nationalism in Ghana after WW II, and how WW II acted as a catalyst in promoting nationalism. These factors were discussed on the themes of social, economic and political. Under the social factors, lack of educational facilities was discussed. It inspired the youth who saw education as a means to add economic value to themselves to engaged in nationalism and activism against the colonial regime, whom the people of Gold Coast deemed as an obstacle to their educational progress. This was because WW II-driven economic boom gave the people the good financial standing to pay for quality and higher education, hence the failure of the government to provide the needed educational facilities made the people to deem colonialism as agent of economic stagnation. This chapter also demonstrated how the acute shortage of housing facilities, coupled with racial discrimination in the allocation of the existing government housing facilities angered the people to demand and end of colonial rule in the form of nationalist activities. Also, this chapter elucidated how the ex-servicemen participation in WW II shattered the psychological myth surrounding the superiority of the white man, hence, it led to an increase in radical nationalism in post-WW II in Ghana.

This chapter examined the economic factors that promoted nationalism in Ghana after WW II from the perspective of shortage of imported goods and inflation, and the unsatisfactory

government policy to deal with the swollen shoot disease which affected the cocoa industry. The chapter laid emphasis on the reasons for the shortage of the imported goods, and its subsequent inflation, and how it conspired with other factors to increase the tempo of nationalism. Also, this chapter expounded the reasons why the government policy to deal with the swollen shoot disease was met with anger and opposition, and additionally, the role WW II played in making the government ineffective in dealing with the disease. The chapter also gave reasons why WW II made farmers to reject the cutting out of affected tress policy.

The political section discussed the defects of the Burns Constitution which in effect, denied the educated elites the much-desired political participation. It also discussed the political atmosphere WW II created which made the nationalists to reject the Burns Constitution, and actively engaged in nationalism to end colonialism. The chapter also discussed the grievances of the ex-servicemen who participated in WW II and how their grievances disposed them to collaborate with the educated elites to fuel nationalism in Ghana.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE 1948 RIOT: THE TURNING POINT OF GHANA'S DECOLONISATION DRIVE

Chapter four throws light on how the 1948 Riot influenced Ghana's independence. It will discuss how the impact of the riot carved the path for Ghana's decolonization. This will be discussed in three main thematic sections. Firstly, the riot created an upsurge in the political consciousness and political temperature of Gold Coast. Under this theme, death, casualties and destruction of properties, the making of political capital from the riot by the UGCC leaders, the use of emergency powers and the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders by the colonial administration, and the Watson Commission Report that brought to light the lukewarm attitude of the government in solving the problems facing Gold Coast, will be examined. The next impact of the riot which paved the way for Ghana's decolonization was the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP, the party that eventually won independence for Ghana. This aspect will delve into how the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders widened the gap between the other working committee members, and Nkrumah. Also, the Watson Commission probe which established Nkrumah as a pro-communist politician, and Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee will be examined under this section. Finally, this chapter will elaborate on how the 1948 Riot birthed the 1951 Constitution which became the road to Ghana's independence. Under this theme, this section will discuss how the riot changed Britain's slow approach in granting Gold Coast a radical constitution, and how the 1951 Constitution prepared Gold Coast political elites to take over the management of Gold Coast.

4.1 Upsurge in Political Consciousness and Temperature

The 1948 Riot created an upsurge in political consciousness, and temperature in Gold Coast. Political consciousness in this context connotes the growing awareness of the people of Gold Coast about governance related issues, and the creation of awakening spirit in the people to play an active role to dismantle colonial rule. In the first place, the riot resulted in the destruction of life and properties, and varying degrees of casualties, which was unprecedented in the annals of Gold Coast since British colonialism officially began in 1874. There were some forms of resistance against colonial rule, but none were bloody, and catastrophic as was the case of the riot. For instance, the 1937 cocoa boycott and hold-ups which led to the setting up of the Nowell Commission was not bloody.²¹⁸ Again, the Nii Kwabena Bonne-led Anti-inflation campaign was devoid of violence and bloodshed. However, in the case of the 1948 Riot, it resulted in the death of 29 people, while 237 others sustained varying degrees of injuries, and property damage was estimated to be £2 million.²¹⁹ The death, casualties, and destruction of properties were not confined to Accra, or only one city, but it was prevalent in many cities and towns such as Kumasi and its environs, Kibi, Akuse, Suhum, Nsawam and Sekondi-Takoradi.²²⁰ This situation made all and sundry aware of the political condition in Gold Coast, and how the colonial government was using the security agencies to brutally maintained law and order. It made the people of Gold Coast curious and more interested the political issues. This was manifested in the way the youth, the chiefs, the educated elites and even farmers were involved in political party activities, strike actions such as the positive action, after the riot. For example, on the 12th of June, 1949, Nkrumah launched

²¹⁸ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.10.

²¹⁹ *ibid* 87.

²²⁰ *ibid* 10-14.

his new founded CPP before an audience of sixty thousand people in Accra.²²¹ This was as a result of the upsurge of political consciousness which was attributable to the 1948 Riot.

Furthermore, another way by which the riot increased political consciousness in Gold Coast was the fact that, the UGCC leaders seized the opportunity to make political capital from the riot. The *Watson Commission Report* contended that, “ but we are constrained to observe that the only persons likely to reap any political advantage of the total breakdown of the machinery of government, [as a result of the 1948 Riot] so far as we have been able to discover were the members of the Convention [UGCC].”²²² The secretary of state, Creech Jones in his letter to the Prime Minister, Clement Atlee on July 19th, 1948, also stated that the Watson Commission found that the Gold Coast Convention were active in exploiting the disturbances, although there is no direct evidence that they actually promoted them.²²³ Indeed, the Commission was right in their assessment of the situation. The UGCC did everything it could to take political advantage of the situation. Having made their own appreciation of the situation, the United Gold Coast Convention telegraphed on the 29th February to the Secretary of State. They stated, among other things:

Unless colonial government is changed and a new government of the people and chiefs installed at the centre immediately, conduct of masses now completely out of control with strikes threaten [sic] in police quarters and rank and file of police indifferent to orders of officers will continue and result in worse violence and irresponsible acts by uncontrolled people. The working committee of the United Gold Coast Convention are prepared and ready to take interim Government.²²⁴

²²¹ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.102-105.

²²² *The Watson Commission Report*, p. 18.

²²³ PREM 8/924 19 July 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: minute by Mr. Creech Jones to Mr. Attlee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.90.

²²⁴ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.66.

Although the riot disrupted law and order, the UGCC created an impression in their telegraphy to the secretary of state that the government is incompetent in handling the situation, and it will only take the working committee of the UGCC to calm the storms if they were allowed to form an interim government. The Convention and the newspapers supporting it have been at pains to paint the situation as being out of hand and the Convention as the only people capable of restoring it.²²⁵ As the UGCC engaged in activities to fish from the troubled political waters created by the riot in collaboration of the local newspapers in their bid to reap political advantage of the situation, it helped to increase the political consciousness in Gold Coast.

When the government used the declaration of state of emergency, newspaper censorship, and the security to contained the situation, the UGCC varied its tactics by placing emphasis on the violence of the Government's methods.²²⁶ The government further accused the UGCC of inflaming race feelings, and using ex-servicemen as tools, and as good cover for violent action, and stimulation of the rougher types of the population against the government.²²⁷ This acts of the UGCC in no means a measure, increased the political temperature and consciousness of Gold Coast. The colonial office admitted after the 1948 Riot that in the Gold Coast, the political consciousness of the native has developed more rapidly than in the rest of British West Africa and political power lies nearer to the hands of African leaders.²²⁸ Consequently, politics, which was hitherto the business of the traditional rulers and the educated elites came to encompass the Trade Union Congress (TUC), farmers, ex-servicemen, students, and both urban and rural dwellers after the riot. The 1948 Riot became the turning point for Ghana's decolonization as it provided

²²⁵ *ibid* 67.

²²⁶ *ibid*

²²⁷ *ibid*

²²⁸ CO 537/5263, no 49 June 1950 'A survey of communism in Mrica': FO Research Dept memorandum; part two, regional survey- 'British West Mrica', culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.273.

the needed obtrusive political consciousness, and unquenchable political temperature needed for self-government.

Another way the riot increased the political temperature and the political consciousness in Gold Coast was the use of the emergency powers and the arrest and detention of the working committee members of the UGCC by the colonial government. When the riot erupted on 28th February, the existing Defence of the Gold Coast and Ashanti Ordinance, Cap. 49 was used for the imposition and enforcement of a curfew in various centres.²²⁹ In seeking fully to restore a regime of law and order, the Government's ultimate objective was to create conditions under which Government and the people can work together for the redress of genuine grievances and the swift development of the country for the benefit of its people.²³⁰ The government deemed it as a matter of necessity to ensure that all factors which might militate against the maintenance of law and order are eradicated or at least immunized.²³¹ As a matter of urgency, on the 2nd March, the Governor was advised that he might properly apply the U.K. Emergency Powers Order in Council, 1939, Part 11 of which confers far more extensive powers than the local Ordinance.²³² The Governor applied this Order in Council with effect from the 3rd March.²³³ He subsequently, on the 4th March, promulgated subsidiary legislation [Regulation 29] to cover: (a) the censorship of the press; (b) the spreading of disaffection by other means; and (c) the control of movement by

²²⁹ CO 96/795/6, no 84 5 Mar 1948 [Gold coast riots]: memorandum by R Scott on the Gold Coast government's view of the causes of the riots and the steps to be taken to restore law and order, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.68.

²³⁰ *ibid* 67.

²³¹ *ibid* 67.

²³² *ibid* 68.

²³³ *ibid* 68.

road, rail, etc. and certain other supplementary matters.²³⁴ An order prohibiting any publication of newspapers, posters or pamphlets without permission was imposed on Gold Coast.²³⁵

Gold Coast at this time had a number of vibrant newspapers such as *the Gold Coast Methodist Times*, *the Sekondi Morning Telegraph*, and the Cape Coast Daily Mail. The Watson Commission seemed to have sanctioned the press censorship because it admitted that immediately after the riot, the press tone and content were calculated to inflame the populace, to keep alive public tension and to provoke further mischief.²³⁶ *The Watson Commission Report* described Gold Coast as “a country where mass education was eagerly sought”.²³⁷ The press censorship by the government under Regulation 29 made the whole colony, especially the educated ones to feel the heat of the use of the colonial emergency powers. It went a long way to attract people’s attention to the political discourse in Gold Coast, and hence the upsurge in political consciousness. Again, the use of the emergency powers to control the movement of people by road and rail was the first of its kind. But the security situation at that time necessitated the use of the emergency powers for the government to stomp her authority in the colony to restore law and order. It certainly increased the political tension, and made many people to follow issues on national politics as to when such measures would be suspended, thereby increasing the political consciousness in Gold Coast.

The arrest and detention of the six working committee members of the UGCC also precipitated an upsurge in political consciousness and political temperature. On 13th March

²³⁴ *ibid*

²³⁵ CO 96/795/7, no 132 12 Mar 1948

[Gold Coast riots]: outward circular intelligence telegram no 116 from FO to HM diplomatic posts on press censorship in the Gold Coast, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.69.

²³⁶The Watson Commission Report, p.32.

²³⁷ *ibid*33

Governor of Gold Coast made an order, under powers available to him, to restrict the movements of six persons to an appointed area, a measure which was considered preventive and not punitive.²³⁸ It was designed to prevent the six men from endangering public safety until the causes of the present disturbances can be investigated by the impartial commission before which the six men will be allowed to appear.²³⁹ In the judgment of the government, the leaders of the UGCC had become a conduit for communist infiltration, and there was the need to apprehend, and incarcerate them to maintain law and order. This stance of the government, as it had been established earlier, had been proven to be blown out of proportion by the Watson Commission. The Commission also bemoaned the arrest and detention of the leaders, saying it, “deprived His Majesty's Judges in the Gold Coast, of jurisdiction to entertain an application by a subject, detained otherwise than pursuant to a warrant issuing out of a Court of competent jurisdiction, the assumption of such a power was excessive to the occasion and we unresistingly condemn it.”²⁴⁰

However, the arrest and detention, created and upsurge in political consciousness. In the first place, no charges were proffered against the UGCC leaders. This certainly created an impression in the minds of the well-meaning people of Gold Coast that it was a calculated attempt to intimidate the leaders of the only political party who wanted to rescue the people from the shackles of colonialism. Even back in London, the arrest and detention of the leaders created a political spectacle. In a letter from the secretary of state, Creech Jones to Sir Gerald Creasy, the Gold Coast governor, he pointed out that there were “propaganda here[in Britain] from the extreme left directed against all government efforts and policy in the Gold Coast and reviling the

²³⁸ CO 96/795/7, no 132 19 Mar 1948 [Gold Coast riots]: outward circular intelligence telegram no 121 from FO to HM diplomatic posts on the detention of political activists, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.69.

The Watson Commission Report, p.72.

²³⁹ *ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.16.

Colonial Office, and there is also some uneasiness about the denial to the six men restrained of the right of access to the Court for Habeas Corpus.”²⁴¹ If even in London, there was a growing propaganda and uneasiness in the political atmosphere as a result of the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders, it was certain that the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders increased the political consciousness and political temperature in Gold Coast. When the six UGCC leaders were first sent to Kumasi, they had to be relocated to various places in Northern Ghana after three days when a security intelligence was gathered that some of the youth led by the fearless Krobo Edusei had planned to attack and release them from prisons.²⁴²

Furthermore, the arrest of the six leaders, and their movements to many parts of the country helped to spread the information and the news of the political happenings in Accra to most places in Gold Coast. Nkrumah remarked in his *Autobiography* that:

The news of our plight and of our journey northwards had already reached Tamale by the time we arrived, and crowds of people had assembled to see us. But it was a sad crowd and both men and women were weeping. It seemed almost as if we were on our last journey to the scaffold. Beyond anything else, however, the very sight of us must have aroused sympathy for, owing to excessive dust on the road, we were completely covered by a film of dirt, so much so that it was impossible to distinguish one from the other of us.²⁴³

Eventually, the six leaders became famous all over Gold Coast and were regarded as national heroes, hence the name ‘The Big Six’.²⁴⁴ It is therefore an incontrovertible fact that the arrest of the six UGCC leaders resulted in the upsurge of political consciousness in Gold Coast which prepared the people psychologically to embrace the reality of self-rule after the 1948 Riot.

²⁴¹ CO 96/795/7, no 162 25 Mar 1948 [Gold Coast riots]: letter from Mr. Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on political detainees, the appointment of the Watson Commission and the postponement of the Legislative Council, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.69.

The Watson Commission Report, p.73.

²⁴² The Autobiography of Nkrumah, p.83

²⁴³ *ibid*

²⁴⁴ *ibid* 78.

Finally, the work and activities of the Watson Commission contributed to the upsurge in the political consciousness of Gold Coast after the riot. The commission in the first place opened its door to people from all walks of life in Gold Coast in their bid to probe the causes of the riot. The commission received and examined in all no less than 187 memoranda from individuals and organisations throughout the Gold Coast dealing with a great diversity of subjects from different parts of the colony.²⁴⁵ The commission also interviewed government officials, security officers, some members of the UGCC, farmers, traditional rulers, some ex-servicemen, and traders in every nook and cranny in Gold Coast.²⁴⁶ The interview of these people from diverse backgrounds and the sending of the memoranda to the commission created awareness of the political activities in Gold Coast which culminated in preparing the minds of Ghanaians to embrace and participate the struggle for independence. Again, the commission helped to unearth the colonial government inefficiencies and lackadaisical approach in solving the political, social and economic problems of the Gold Coast. For instance, as it was indicated in Chapter Three, lack of educational facilities, acute shortage of houses in the cities coupled with racial discrimination, inflation, and lack of political participation on the part of the educated elites were serious issues that contributed to the disturbances.

Due to the fact that the commission sitting was a public hearing, and a complete daily transcript of the proceedings was supplied to the Press even before the commission came out with its report, many people of Gold Coast became aware of the lapses of the colonial government which partly accounted for the woes and the hardship in Gold Coast.²⁴⁷ This did not only result in an upsurge of political consciousness, but it also made it a necessity among the people to fight and

²⁴⁵ *The Watson Commission of Report*, p. 5

²⁴⁶ *ibid* 79-80.

²⁴⁷ *ibid* 19

end colonial rule in order to extricate themselves from such predicaments. In March, 1949, the colonial government in a letter to the colonial office in London expressed hope that the move to improve the organization of sport in the Gold Coast would help to divert political excitement into other channels.²⁴⁸ This corroborates the fact that the riot caused an upsurge of political consciousness and political temperature in Gold Coast.

4.2 The Breaking Away of Nkrumah from the UGCC

One earth-shocking impact of the riot was the fact that it precipitated the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP, his own political which eventually won independence for Ghana. In the first place, the post-1948 Riot arrest and detention of the six working committee members of the UGCC widened the gap between Nkrumah on one side, and the rest of the members on the other side. It must be emphasized that prior to the riot, Nkrumah had an excellent-working relation with the rest of the working committee members. For instance, J.B. Danquah went round most part of the country as part of the familiarization tour to introduce Nkrumah to the people as the new general secretary of the UGCC. A case in point was when Danquah drove Nkrumah to Kwahu Mpraeso and introduced him to the people amidst paying glowing tributes to Nkrumah.²⁴⁹ Nkrumah himself intimated in his *Autobiography* that he and the rest of the working committee members decided on the colours of the UGCC without difficulty when they settled on red, white and gold.²⁵⁰ Nkrumah together with the rest of the working committee members organised rallies, and even sent a telegraph to the colonial secretary of state's devoid of any acrimony among them.

²⁴⁸ CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949

[Political developments]: Despatch from R Scott to Mr. Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government. Minutes by E G G Hanrott, L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.42.

²⁴⁹ Dabi-Dankwa N.O. Seth, *Ghana's Ten Years (1947-1957) Struggle for Independence As a Catalyst for Events in the Next Five Decades- Ending 2009* (Accra: Assemblies of God Literature Center Limited, 2009). p. 2.

²⁵⁰ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.3.

Later after independence, Nkrumah remarked in his *Autobiography* that he initially concluded when he was invited by the UGCC leaders that, “it was quite useless to associate myself with a movement backed almost entirely by reactionaries, middle-class lawyers and merchants, for his revolutionary background and ideas would make it impossible for him to work with them.”²⁵¹ Clearly, this was an *ex post facto* rationalization of the impasse between him and the UGCC leaders, for he worked with them amicably prior to the 1948 Riot.

The cordial working relationship between Nkrumah, and the rest of the five working committee became fraught with discord after their arrest. When the six working committee members were apprehended and incarcerated together in Kumasi, anytime they discussed issues relating to the UGCC, Nkrumah became painfully aware that they were losing interest in him because whenever they entered into a discussion, the five of them would always make a point of supporting the opposite point of view to his, and nothing he proposed was acceptable to them.²⁵² Nkrumah even claimed that the rest of the UGCC leaders blamed him for their arrest and detention, and showed signs of regret for inviting him for taking the position of the general secretary of UGCC.²⁵³ The post-1948 discord between Nkrumah and the rest of the UGCC leaders once again reared its ugly head on the issue of the formation of the National College, now Ghana National College in Cape Coast. When the ‘big six’ were capriciously arrested and detained without trial by the government, some students in the secondary schools demonstrated for their release, and these students were later dismissed by their various secondary schools.²⁵⁴ Nkrumah upon release from his solitary confinement founded the Ghana College to prepare the students for their final

²⁵¹ *ibid* 62.

²⁵² *Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p. 82.

²⁵³ *ibid*

²⁵⁴ *ibid* 89

examination upon the passionate appeal by the students and their parents.²⁵⁵ This resulted in another imbroglio between Nkrumah and the UGCC leaders. The UGCC leaders opined that Nkrumah took a unilateral decision, and that the formation of the college was a repudiation of the Education Department Regulations of Gold Coast.²⁵⁶ Nkrumah on his part expressed utter shock and dismay and insisted that the UGCC leaders were duly informed about the founding of the college; and also argued that the formation of the college would inure to the benefit of the UGCC.²⁵⁷ But it was clear that though Nkrumah might have informed the working committee about the idea of founding a school to help the students who became victims of circumstances, he did not get their blessings and the green light to do so. For Nkrumah to have founded the school without the approbation of the working committee was tantamount to Nkrumah taking unilateral decision to increase his political fortunes, only to put the neck of the UGCC on the block. Thus, the arrest of the ‘big six’ and its concomitant students’ demonstration which led to the formation of the Ghana College further widened the gap between Nkrumah and the rest of the working committee members.

This development of antagonistic relationship of people whom their remarkable team work produced a synergy for nationalism prior to the riot sold a seed of session. Nkrumah might have nurtured the ambition of forming his own party as a result of the growing acrimonious relationship between him and the rest of the UGCC members. Eventually, he took advantage when the opportunity presented itself to break away from the UGCC.

In addition, the post-1948 riot setting up of the Watson Commission probe into the causes of the 1948 Riot contributed to the breaking away of Nkrumah to form his CPP. In the first place,

²⁵⁵ *ibid* 89

²⁵⁶ *ibid* 89

²⁵⁷ *ibid* 89

the Watson Commission probe and its report established that Nkrumah had Communist affiliations and as a result had become imbued with a Communist ideology which only political expediency has blurred.²⁵⁸ There was found among Mr. Nkrumah's papers a document purporting to be the constitution of a secret organisation called " The Circle "; and members of this body were required to swear personal loyalty to Mr. Nkrumah with disquieting threats in the event of infidelity.²⁵⁹ The Committee report made the working committee members of the UGCC to be more suspicious of Nkrumah as a communist. Also, prior to the commission's probe, when the 'big six' were being arrested, Nkrumah was arrested with an unsigned Communist Party card that he had been given in London.²⁶⁰ When the UGCC leaders later detected that Nkrumah used the word comrade, which was a popular word used by the communists, in some of his letters of correspondence to the outside world, it was concluded that comrade was synonymous to communism.²⁶¹ Owing to the fact that the rest of the working committee members were anti-communist, the commission report further widened the gap between Nkrumah and the rest of UGCC leaders leading to the breaking away of Nkrumah to form his own party. Thus, the 1948 Riot became the fulcrum of brewing misunderstanding and mutual mistrust between Nkrumah and the rest of the working committee members.

Added to the above, the 1948 Riot created a platform for Nkrumah to developed the feeling of betrayal by the working committee members of the UGCC leading to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC. When Nkrumah officially took office as the general secretary of the UGCC in January 1948, he was instructed to draw a programme for the UGCC so as to execute

²⁵⁸ *The Watson Commission Report*, p.17

²⁵⁹ *ibid*

²⁶⁰ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.79.
of Nkrumah²⁶¹ *The Autobiography* h, p. 88-89.

the plans and the aims of the party. On 20th January 1948, Nkrumah presented the programme which he drew to the working committee of the UGCC, and it was unanimously accepted in principle.²⁶² Among the plan of action of the programme were the formation of a shadow government; consolidation of existing branches and formation of new ones; the convening of a Constitutional Assembly of the Gold Coast people to draw up the Constitution for Self-Government or National Independence; and organised demonstration, boycott and strike as weapons to support the UGCC pressure for Self-government.²⁶³

Surprisingly, the working committee members especially the rest of the five that were arrested with Nkrumah denied any knowledge of such programme before the Watson Commission.²⁶⁴ Nkrumah in his Autobiography expressed the feeling of betrayal in the following words:

The most interesting thing was that, with the exception of one man, Mr. S. E. Ackah, every member of the Executive committee of the United Gold Coast Convention completely disowned the recommendations that I had put before them in connection with the organisation of the U.G.C.C. Several of them, upon being cross-examined, did admit that I had submitted these recommendations to the Executive but added that they had never associated themselves with it. The general idea that they were trying to put over was that I was merely an employee of the Convention and that as such they could not be entirely responsible for all my actions. And so, I was left holding the baby.²⁶⁵

However, Nkrumah was vindicated by the Watson Commission. *The Watson Commission Report* established that it was naive on the part of the working committee members to say they were not aware of the working programme of the UGCC drawn by Nkrumah which was in circulation, and that at all material times, the political convictions of Nkrumah were known to

²⁶² *ibid* 71.

²⁶³ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.72

²⁶⁴ *ibid* 72.

²⁶⁵ *ibid* 85.

them.²⁶⁶ The working committee members were disingenuous on this issue for the sake of political expediency, they did not want to associate themselves with Nkrumah's plan which was deemed as communist inclined by the colonial government. They wanted to maintain their political and personal reputation and image intact. This was at the time the Cold War was gaining grounds and they knew the political implications of being tagged with communist proclivities. On the contrary, the attempt by the working committee members to protect their image in the eyes of the British Colonial Office as anti-communist turned out to be an exercise in futility. In the colonial office response to the report of the Watson Commission sent to Clement Atlee, the prime minister, Creech Jones, the secretary of the state at the time, hinted that the Secretary of the UGCC had contacts with the Communist Party which was known to the other members of the UGCC executive.²⁶⁷ This by no means a measure dented their image as being influenced with communist persuasions. Meanwhile, the preposterous denial of having gotten nothing to do with Nkrumah's programme and recommendations by the working committee members, and the perception Nkrumah had that he was being regarded as a mere employee of the UGCC rather than being an indispensable eminent member sparked-off the need to have his own party. This was one of the remote reasons that made Nkrumah to break away from the UGCC.

Finally, Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee also played a decisive role in his breaking away from the UGCC. As I indicated earlier, the 1948 Riot led to the setting of the Watson Commission to probe the causes of the riot. The Commission recommended the promulgation of a new constitution for the Gold Coast. Consequently, the colonial government appointed a forty member all African committee headed by Justice Henley Coussey which later

²⁶⁶ *The Watson Commission Report*, p. 17, 19.

²⁶⁷ PREM 8/924 19 July 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: minute by Mr. Creech Jones to Mr Attlee, culled from from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 90.

became known as the Coussey Committee to draft a new constitution for Gold Coast.²⁶⁸ The forty-member committee included six working committee members of the UGCC: B.D. Addai, Edward Akuffo Addo, J.B. Danquah, G.A. Grant, Cobina Kessie, and E.O. Obetsibi Lamptey.²⁶⁹

The general secretary of the UGCC, Nkrumah was conspicuously missing in the Coussey Committee. This was a matter of course. The colonial government would not risk to include him in a committee to draft a new constitution because of the *Watson Commission Report* which indicted him as someone who had Communist affiliations and had become imbued with a Communist ideology which only political expediency has blurred.²⁷⁰ The Cold War politics which had gathered momentum by 1949 definitely made Britain to tread cautiously in dealing with Nkrumah as a pro-communist nationalist, and it would have been politically suicidal on their part to include him in the committee. Also, the colonial government concluded that it was Nkrumah's ability to exploit a situation, and not because of any faculty for constructive political thinking, that Mr. Nkrumah was most dangerous to the peaceful progress of Gold Coast.²⁷¹ For these reasons, Nkrumah was not appointed to be a member of the Coussey Committee.

His exclusion from the Coussey Committee meant that he had more time for the party business. While from May 1949 the six members of the working committee mentioned above were busy working to draft a new constitution, Nkrumah ceased the opportunity to cunningly work towards forming his own party. In a letter from the colonial government to Creech Jones, on the political developments in Gold Coast, the colonial administration at that time observed that:

²⁶⁸ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.87

²⁶⁹ Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). p. 80-81.

²⁷⁰ *Watson Commission Report*, p. 17.

²⁷¹ CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949 [Political developments]: despatch from R Scott to Mr. Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government. 1 Minutes by E G G Hanrott, 2 L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 122.

Nkrumah's most adroit moves has indeed been his unscrupulous use of facilities afforded by the Convention [the UGCC] party machine and of such of the party's tenets as are not incompatible with his own. In so doing, Mr. Nkrumah has been able not only to exploit to the full the "good will" and organisation of the Convention, but also to blur that party's never very precise programme to an extent which has caused great embarrassment to its more respectable members. As a result, he has diverted to his own projects a modest but comfortable income in donations from Convention supporters.²⁷²

Nkrumah himself corroborated this stance of the colonial government about him when he let the cat out of the bag in his *Autobiography*:

Ever since the first indication of the divergence of views between myself and the members of the UGCC during our detention together, I knew that sooner or later a final split would have to come. I was determined, therefore, to organize things in such a way that when this break came, I would have the full support of the masses behind me.²⁷³

Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee provided him the utmost opportunity to execute his grand plan. Nkrumah's main energies were, indeed, directed towards the political education of youthful literates from the stage of upper elementary education onwards, and the various Youth Associations, clubs and study groups, formed by his Lieutenants or under his stimulus became the main organisations that supported him.²⁷⁴ It was this youth that Nkrumah later used to form the Committee for Youth Organisation (CYO) which was later metamorphosed into the CPP.²⁷⁵ Once again, Nkrumah formed the CYO at the blind side of the working committee members whom most of them were actively involved in the Coussey Committee's work.²⁷⁶ The

²⁷² *ibid* 121

²⁷³ *Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.96.

²⁷⁴ CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949 [Political developments]: despatch from R Scott to Mr. Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government. 1 Minutes by E G G Hanrott, 2 L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 122.

²⁷⁵ *Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p. 97-105.

²⁷⁶ *ibid* 97

action of Nkrumah at this time could be aptly describe as political opportunism at its best. He used the UGCC as a springboard to launch his own political movement, a blow and a shock which the UGCC never recovered.

It is important to note that, the formation of CPP was very significant. It ended the political monopoly the UGCC would have enjoyed prior to independence, and paved way for multiparty pluralism in Ghana. The CPP was effectively organised to include the youth, the labour unions, and people from all walks of life. It won the 1951, 1954, and the 1956 elections and led Ghana to her independence. It is therefore not far fetched to say that the 1948 Riot led to the formation of the CPP which ultimately won independence for Ghana.

4.3 How the 1948 Riot Brought a Radical Constitutional Change Which Gave Gold Coast a Self-Government

The first significant impact the riot had on Gold Coast constitutional reforms leading to Ghana's independence was that the riot changed Britain's slow attitude in granting Gold Coast a radical constitution that would result in Gold Coast gaining self-government. Although the spirit of self-determination was the principle behind the declaration of the Atlantic Charter in 1941 at the time of the war, Britain was just not prepared to grant political independence to Gold Coast and most British colonies after the war. Weinstein Churchill, the prime minister of Britain after WW II emphatically declared that, "I did not become the Prime Minister of His Majesty's Government in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."²⁷⁷ This political mindset influenced British attitude towards Gold Coast after WW II. In fact, Gold Coast was seen by the British as a peaceful and well-behaved colony, which by logical extension would love to

²⁷⁷ *Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p. 103.

remain under the British colonial rule.²⁷⁸ The British had an erroneous impression that Gold Coast preferred to be under the British colonial rule to having political independence.

Even in the few years prior to the promulgation of the 1946 Constitution, Sir Alan Burns, the governor of Gold Coast under whose watch the 1946 constitution came into fruition had to convince the colonial office in London to accept the reforms the 1946 Constitution was bringing forth. The colonial office had a big reservation about a constitution that will give African unofficial majority in the central legislative assembly let alone a constitution that will give self-government:

There is a strong case against unofficial majorities in the central Legislatures in West Africa. All our Colonial experience- and we have a good deal of it - is, to my mind, against the idea. It is not a question of opposing political progress: but of opposing a type of constitution which can in itself be thoroughly bad and the enemy of progress. Unofficial majorities in central Legislatures mean power without responsibility. They encourage the evolution of native politicians who can impede Government and play to the gallery in the safe assurance that they can never be called upon to form an alternative Government and that their obstructive tactics will not bring the administration to an end so long as they can force the Government to exercise its overriding powers. They encourage petty criticism at the expense of constructive ideas and are the worst form of educating native peoples in the management of their own affairs.²⁷⁹

This position was vehemently supported by the secretary of state. He argued that, “it would not be wise to introduce an unofficial majority into the Gold Coast Legislature.”²⁸⁰ It was in the light of this development that Alan Burns had to employ every means possible to convince the colonial office to accept the African unofficial majority in the Legislative Council. He was of the view that, “it would be useless to attempt to formulate any alternative proposals for modifying the present

²⁷⁸ *ibid* 67-68.

²⁷⁹ CO 96/770/4 12-15 Jan 1943 [Legislative Council]: minutes by Sir A Dawe, Sir G Gater and Mr. Stanley on the arguments against the adoption of an unofficial majority in the Gold Coast Legislative Council, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 22.

²⁸⁰ *ibid*.

constitution unless the Secretary of State was prepared to concede an unofficial elected African majority for the Central Legislature.”²⁸¹

There was an intransigent and lackadaisical attitude on the part of the British to grant Gold Coast a constitution that would bring about self-government. Even a post-WW II constitution reforms that gave Gold Coast an unofficial majority in the Legislative Assembly was done with monstrous skepticism. However, the 1948 Riot changed the adamant posturing of Britain towards granting Gold Coast a radical constitution which would ensure self-government. The *Watson Commission Report* recommended a new constitution for Gold Coast. The Commission which was set up to probe into the causes of the riot and to make recommendation for reforms, concluded and recommended that, “We are satisfied that in the conditions existing to-day in the Gold Coast [after the riot] a substantial measure of constitutional reform is necessary to meet the legitimate aspirations of the indigenous population.”²⁸² The commission described the much-touted 1946 Constitution of Gold Coast as “outmoded at birth.”²⁸³ Nkrumah in his *Autobiography* contended that the implication of the Watson Commission recommendations was that there must be a new constitution for the Africans to taste political power.²⁸⁴ Consequently, the colonial government appointed all Africans Committee (the Coussey Committee) to draft a new constitution for Gold Coast.

The colonial office admittedly remarked that, “The appointment of the Committee [the Coussey Committee] was a logical corollary of accepting, with qualifications, the report of the

²⁸¹ CO 96/782/1, no 8 23 May 1944 [Gold Coast constitution]: CO note of conclusions reached at a meeting between Mr. Stanley and Sir A Burns, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 33.

²⁸² The Watson Commission Report, p. 22.

²⁸³ *ibid* 24.

²⁸⁴ *Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p. 85

Watson Commission.”²⁸⁵ Also, in summarizing the views of the colonial office departments in relation to the recommendations of the Watson Commission, the colonial office conceded that the 1948 Riot gave it no option than to yield to a radical constitutional reform:

The proposals regarding the Executive Council are much the most important. I am quite convinced that we must bring Africans on to the executive straight away. Probably it would have been better to start these off as Members wholly responsible to the Governor, but having regard to the course of events in the Gold Coast and to these published recommendations I doubt whether we can in fact resist the undoubted demand which there will be for African ministers. I believe that the proper course is to accept this recommendation [the Watson Commission constitutional reforms recommendations].²⁸⁶

Undoubtedly, the 1948 Riot became the turning point of Ghana’s decolonisation drive. It precipitated the promulgation of a more radical constitution which granted Gold Coast an internal self-government, which has eluded the people of Gold Coast prior to the riot. The riot indeed compelled the British colonial administration to disabuse her mind of the notion that Gold Coast was content with the British colonial rule, and as a result it did not need a radical constitution to attain self-government. The riot abruptly ended the adamant and intransigent attitude of the British colonial office in giving Gold Coast a self-government-driven constitution.

Finally, the 1948 Riot led to the promulgation of the 1951 Constitution which prepared Gold Coast political elites to take over political administration of Gold Coast. As indicated early on, the riot led to the setting up of the Watson Commission which recommended a more radical constitution, leading to the setting up of the Coussey Committee which drafted the 1951 Constitution. The Watson Commission after a careful examination of the Gold Coast political

²⁸⁵ CO 537/4635 9-29 June 1949 [Coussey Committee]: minutes by E G G Hanrott, L H Gorsuch, A B Cohen, Sir T Lloyd and Mr Creech Jones on the anticipated recommendations of the Committee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 141.

²⁸⁶ CO 96/796/5, no 43 29 June 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: minute by A B Cohen summarising the views of the CO departments, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 86.

situation recommended what ought to be done in terms of the road map to the self-government of Gold Coast:

In so far as our proposals are acceptable, we recommend them as the basis of constitutional reform for a probationary period of ten years. At the end of that period the whole matter would be reviewed in the light of the experience gained. We do not believe that an atmosphere of stability would be created by any shorter period of trial.²⁸⁷

Thus, the commission had no doubt Gold Coast needed a constitution that would guarantee self-government, however, it believed a probationary period of ten years would prepare the educated elites to gain experience for the post-independent political administration of Gold Coast. The Colonial office did not depart from the principle of ensuring the Africans acquire rich political experience for a period before ultimately granting Gold Coast a political independence as recommended by the Watson Commission. The colonial administration in a dispatch to the secretary of states, Creech Jones, at the time the Coussey Committee had commenced its sitting intimated that, “it appears to confirm that we are right in pressing forward with our plans for gradual political advance on the three-fold line of local government reform, regionalization and African executive responsibility at the centre; and that this line is likely to strengthen the position of responsible Africans.”²⁸⁸

This was in response to what the colonial administration called “emotional ferment, which Nkrumah is so adept at exploiting.”²⁸⁹ The emotional ferment of Nkrumah was in reference to Nkrumah with support of the teeming youth designated as Ghana Youth Group and Accra Students Union, which drafted a constitution on Christmas Day to be introduced effectively in Gold Coast

²⁸⁷ *Watson Commission Report*, p.24

²⁸⁸ CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949

[Political developments]: despatch from R Scott to Mr Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government. 1 Minutes by E G G Hanrott, 2 L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 126.

²⁸⁹ *ibid.*

in 1949, and the date Nkrumah fixed for the achievement of self-government was 1st April after the original date in October 1948 did not materialize.²⁹⁰ The Colonial office was emphatic that it was in support of the colonial administration's position to take the needed action to dispel the impression created by almost daily articles in the local press to the effect that the report of the Coussey Committee would result in complete self-government within the current year[1949].²⁹¹

The Coussey Committee Report, made the following recommendation regarding the executive council:

The Report recommends an Executive Council consisting of the Governor as Chairman; three ex-officio members; a Leader of the Legislative Assembly elected by the Assembly; and seven members drawn from the Assembly (five of whom would be Ministers with portfolio and two Ministers I without portfolio). These seven would be appointed by the Governor in consultation with the Leader and would be required to resign collectively on a vote of no confidence in the Leader by two-thirds of the Assembly. The Executive Council under the Committee's recommendation would be collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly and not responsible -to the Governor, but the Governor would retain reserve powers.²⁹²

Some slight changes were made to these recommendations by the colonial office. The Executive Council was made to continue to be advisory to the Governor, rather than responsible to the House of Assembly, for so long as the ultimate responsibility for the administration of the Colony rested with the Governor, and secondly, in the absence of a Party system, the colonial office did not regard it as practicable for the Leader of the House of Assembly to be elected by that House and it was proposed that the Leader should be selected by the Executive Council.²⁹³ The colonial office was also emphatic that the constitution would not provide full

²⁹⁰ *ibid* 122.

²⁹¹ CO 537/4638, no 8 24 May 1949 ____ [Political situation]: letter from Mr. Creech Jones to T R O Mangin on the agitation for self-government; proposal that HMG should issue a statement, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 134- 136.

²⁹² PREM 8/924, PM (49)46 4 Oct 1949 [Coussey Report]: minute by Mr. Creech Jones to Mr. Attlee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 201.

²⁹³ PREM 8/924, CM 58(49)3 13 Oct 1949 'Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet conclusions on the recommendations of the Coussey Committee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 208.

self-government, but it gave some undertaking that the constitution would be reviewed after a specified period of years.²⁹⁴

Nkrumah called the *Coussey Committee Report* on Constitutional reforms (the 1951 Constitution) as ‘Trojan gift horse that was bogus and fraudulent’.²⁹⁵ He also described it as unsatisfactory. Subsequently, Nkrumah declared ‘positive action’, and the government responded by declaring state of emergency, arresting Nkrumah and some of the CPP leaders. Nkrumah was arrested on 21 January 1950 and subsequently sentenced, on three separate counts, to a total of three years imprisonment.²⁹⁶ Interestingly, the CPP won a landslide victory in the 1951 general elections, under the very constitution Nkrumah described as ‘fraudulent and bogus.’ On the grounds of political expediency, Nkrumah was released from prisons by the colonial administration. This was because the colonial office posited that, “Nkrumah should be released for broad reasons of policy, on the ground that, now that a democratic constitution is about to come into force in the Gold Coast, it is undesirable that the leader of the main political party should remain in prison, since it is on the co-operation of that party with Government that the successful working of the constitution will to a considerable extent depend.”²⁹⁷

It is worthy to note that the declaration of the ‘positive action’ was inconsequential to the dictate and the implementation of the 1951 constitution. Upon the Nkrumah induced-strike, and boycott and labour unrest, the election came off as scheduled, and the provisions in the 1951 Constitution was never amended. The so called ‘Self-Government Now’ mantra of the CPP was only a political gimmick that was used to woo the electorates. In effect, the road to political independence which

²⁹⁴ *ibid.*

²⁹⁵ Rogers S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005). p. 81-84

²⁹⁶ CO 96/819/4, no 11 31 Jan 1950 [General strike]: letter from Mr. Creech Jones to Sir V Tewson1 on the general strike arising from the CPP campaign of 'Positive Action, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 240.

²⁹⁷ CO 96/819/4, no 50 23 Dec 1950 [Nkrumah]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the question of releasing Mr. Nkrumah from prison, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 281.

was set in motion by the 1948 Riot went on unabated. The declaration of the positive action only ensured the personal and political aggrandisement of Nkrumah to the detriment of maintaining law and order in Gold Coast. It also succeeded in portraying the members of the UGCC to the electorates as not in hurry to fight for the liberation of the people of Gold Coast. The positive action was a ‘political stratagem’ orchestrated by Nkrumah and the CPP to make them appear as the messiah needed to end imperialism in Gold Coast, when they know very well that the constitutional reforms triggered by the 1948 Riot could not be set aside. It came as no surprise when Nkrumah was later criticised by his own back benchers and members of his party outside the Legislature for his considerable share in the so far successful working of a constitution which previously, he had described as bogus and impossible.²⁹⁸

As it was the aim and plan of the colonial government, and the spirit of the 1951 Constitution to make the African nationalist to gain experience in political administration before independence, Nkrumah and seven others were appointed as ministers, but responsible to the governor. Nkrumah was appointed as Leader of Government Business (was later given the title prime minister in 1952), while others like Casely Hayford, J.A. Gbedemah, Kojo Botsio, Hutton Mills, Ansah Koi, Asafo Agyei, and J.A. Braimah were appointed to be in charge of some ministries.²⁹⁹ In 1952, upon a request made by Nkrumah to the colonial office, some changes were made to the 1951 Constitution:

- (a) The title of Leader of Government Business should be changed to Prime Minister. (b) The Prime Minister would be chosen by the Governor in his discretion but submitted to the Legislature for its approval. (c) The Executive Council should have the alternative title of

²⁹⁸ CO 537/7181 23 May-11 June 1951 [Constitutional reform]: minutes by Sir T Lloyd, L H Gorsuch and AB Cohen on Mr. Nkrumah's probable requests during his forthcoming visit to London, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 326.

²⁹⁹ CO 96/813/5, no 12 27 Feb 1951 [Legislative Assembly and new ministers]: political intelligence notes by the Gold Coast Ministry of Defence and External Affairs on the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly and the new Ministers, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 290.

the Cabinet. (d) The Prime Minister should rank, in Cabinet, next in order of precedence after the Governor (or Officer administering the Government) and would preside in Cabinet in his absence. (e) The Governor would act after consultation with the Prime Minister, not in his sole discretion, in nominating for the Legislature's approval the African Ministers and in assigning to them responsibility for Departments.³⁰⁰

The rationale behind these changes from the colonial office perspective was to provide a chance of delaying further constitutional changes in order to allow time for the African Ministers to gain a further sense of responsibility and knowledge of government, and time perhaps for an opposition party to develop.³⁰¹ These changes were made possible because of the British commitment to ensure periodic constitutional evolution of Gold Coast.³⁰² It is obvious that the change of the colonial office mindset towards Gold Coast constitutional development due to the 1948 Riot was at play here. The aim was to ensure gradual constitutional reforms to enable the Africans gain rich experience in political governance before the ultimate political independence was granted.

After the above changes in the 1951 Constitution, a new constitution came into force in 1954. This was as a result of discussions between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and Gold Coast Ministers on constitutional reforms, and proposals were formulated by the Gold Coast Government after consultation with the Chiefs and people of the Gold Coast.³⁰³ The proposals were examined and discussed between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Gold Coast.³⁰⁴ Britain at this time was more than prepared to put in place a constitution for the full Self-Government in Gold Coast.³⁰⁵ This was after Nkrumah on 10th July, 1953, moved a motion on

³⁰⁰ PREM 11/1367, C(52)28 9 Feb 1952 'Amendment of the Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet memorandum by Mr. Lyttelton, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 372.

³⁰¹ *ibid* 373.

³⁰² PREM 8/924, CM 58(49)3 13 Oct 1949 'Gold Coast constitution': Cabinet conclusions on the recommendations of the Coussey Committee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 208.

³⁰³ CO 554/255, no 65 12 June 1953 [Constitutional reform]: letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes on the Gold Coast White Paper on constitutional reform. Enclosure: draft of White Paper, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part II, p. 43.

³⁰⁴ *ibid*.

³⁰⁵ *ibid* 44.

constitutional reform, independence motion, which became popularly known as ‘The Motion of Destiny’.³⁰⁶ The 1954 Constitution came into force, and election was conducted. Nkrumah-led CPP won massively and CPP government was formed.³⁰⁷ I must hasten to add that, the changes made to the 1951 Constitution, and the promulgation of the 1954 Constitution did not come about as a result of radical and violent nationalist agitations, such as strikes, boycott, and vandalism which sometimes result in jeopardizing life and properties, but it was a peaceful and meaningful engagement between the African leaders in government and the colonial office. This development was a corollary of the road map to Ghana’s independence adopted by the British after the 1948 Riot.

Ghana would have gained her independence immediately after the 1954 general elections had it not been the delay of the process as a result of the formation of the NLM. The process of Ghana’s independence was halted as a result of the unresolved differences between the NLM supported by some members of the opposition, and Nkrumah. In his message to the Asanteman Council, conveyed in his telegram No.756 of the 31st December 1955, the Secretary of State informed them that failure on the part of the Gold Coast peoples to resolve harmoniously their differences of opinion must inevitably retard their progress towards self-government.³⁰⁸ The colonial office decided to have a compromise and ended up organizing another general election in 1956. Nkrumah and his CPP won massively, and Ghana officially became independent on 6th March, 1957.

³⁰⁶ Autobiography of Nkrumah, p. 189.

³⁰⁷ CO 554/1162, no 2 16 July 1954 'Elections in the Gold Coast - June 1954': letter from Sir C Arden Clarke to Sir T Lloyd on the election results and the new Cabinet, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part II, p. 90-93.

³⁰⁸ CO 554/888, no 10 21 July 1955 [Independence bill]: open letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir C Arden Clarke on the timing of the bill and Mr. Lennox-Boyd's message to the NLM leaders, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part II, p. 137.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter basically underscored the decisive role the 1948 Riot played as the turning point of Ghana's decolonisation drive. The chapter discussed this theme under three thematic areas: the upsurge of political consciousness and the political temperature in Gold Coast, the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP, and the 1948 Riot-induced radical constitutional reforms which led to the independence of Ghana. With regard to the upsurge of political consciousness and political temperature, the chapter examined the death, casualties and destruction of properties as a result of the riot which was unprecedented and helped to increase the political consciousness, and political temperature in Gold Coast. Again, political consciousness saw a massive upsurge due to the UGCC leaders making of political capital from the riot. They blamed the riot on the ineptitude of the government, and called for an all- African government to take over the administration of Gold Coast. Added to the above, this chapter threw light on the use of emergency powers and the arrest and detention of the UGCC leaders by the colonial administration as one of the ways the riot caused the upsurge of the political consciousness. It also discussed how the Watson Commission Report brought to light the lukewarm attitude of the government in solving the problems faced by Gold Coast resulted in the upsurge of political consciousness.

In discussing the how the riot led to the breakaway of Nkrumah from the UGCC, how the arrest and detention widened the gap between Nkrumah and the rest of the working committee members of the UGCC was expounded. Also, this chapter extensively explained that the Watson Commission establishing the fact that Nkrumah was a pro-communist due to his association with the communist party in Britain contributed to Nkrumah breaking away from the UGCC. More so, this chapter established that the 1948 Riot created a platform for Nkrumah to developed the feeling

of betrayal against the working committee members of the UGCC leading to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC. The chapter finally demonstrated that Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee precipitated his breaking away from the UGCC. Emphasis was equally laid on the fact that the formation of CPP provided Ghana a dynamic political party which won independence for Ghana.

Added to the above, the chapter expounded how the riot changed British lackadaisical and lukewarm attitude towards the issue of Gold Coast self-government drive. Last but not least, this chapter examined thoroughly how the 1948 Riot led to the promulgation of radical constitutions which prepared, and won independence for Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSION

The period after WW II saw an upsurge in nationalism in Africa, Asia, and Indigenous nationalism in North America. This paper examined the peculiarity of Ghana's post-WW II nationalism leading to her decolonization, and independence. The most historically conspicuous nationalist events that occurred after WW II were the formation of political parties, the nationwide boycott of European goods in 1948, the 1948 Riot, and the declaration of Positive Action by the Nkrumah-led CPP. Notable among the political parties that shaped the political discourse after WW II were the UGCC, the CPP, and the NLM. The UGCC was a merger of the leading educated elites in Gold Coast who realized the need to unite to wrestle political independence from the colonial government. The educated elites gave up on their personal and pre- WW II dormant nationalist organizations to form the UGCC to chart on a new path.³⁰⁹ However, the UGCC'S constitutional and the gradual approach towards the issue of independence did not appeal to the masses. Consequently, the UGCC could not win independence for Ghana.

In a sharp contrast to the UGCC, the radical ideology of the CPP, the 'independence now' slogan coupled with the organizational abilities, and charismatic leadership of Nkrumah captivated the masses to vote massively for the CPP in all the elections.³¹⁰ The activities of CPP brought it on a collision course with the colonial government. However, the CPP won independence for Ghana. The NLM expressed an Asante nationalism which was meant to safeguard Asante interest, and it

³⁰⁹ CO 537/3559, no 2, 12 Dec 1947[United Gold Coast Convention]: Letter from K G Bradley to Mr. Creech Jones on the foundation of the UGCC. Minutes by J K Thompson and Sir T Lloyd. Source: British Documents on the End of Empire Project (BEEP) Series B Volume 1 Part I. p. 44.

³¹⁰ CO 96/823/1, no 41 10 Feb 1951 [1951 elections]: letter from FA Evans to L H Gorsuch on the conduct of the rural and municipal election. Source: BDEEP, Series B Volume 1, p. 288.

was clearly manifested in their drive to protect chieftaincy in the constitution of independent Ghana. The NLM vehemently opposed Nkrumah because they were apprehensive that Nkrumah would be an autocratic president in independent Ghana, hence their call for a federal constitution. The NLM failed because of its parochial political interest. These three political parties organised rallies, political campaign and participated in elections. The political parties took advantage of the political, economic and social conditions in Gold Coast after WW II to eventually win independence for Ghana.

The Nii Kwabena Bonne III-led nationwide anti-inflationary campaign mustered all possible support in the colony (Gold Coast) from the chiefs, and the people to declare a boycott of European goods. The rationale behind the boycott was not political, but it was driven by a burning desire to end the economic exploitation of the people by the European firms.³¹¹ The boycott disabused the minds of the foreign trade community and the colonial government that the indigenous people of Gold Coast by reason of tribalization and mutual distrust, are unsuccessful to combine effectively for any single purpose.³¹²

The 1948 Riot was the mother of the post-WW II nationalism in Gold Coast. It was sparked-off by the government brutal reaction to the marching of the ex-servicemen, when the latter violated the prior approved routes for the march. The riot spread to most part of the colony amidst destruction of life and properties. The declaration of the Positive Action was in reaction to the perceived non-satisfactory approach by the colonial government on the matter of self-government of the 1948 Riot by the CPP. Nkrumah employed the weapons of legitimate political agitation, newspaper and educational campaigns and, as a last resort, the constitutional application of strikes,

³¹¹ Report on the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948. p. 34. Source: Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Ghana.

³¹² *ibid* 35.

boycotts and non-cooperation based on the principle of absolute nonviolence, as used by Gandhi in India.³¹³ The positive action resulted in loss of lives, political tension, the arrest and detention of some leaders of the CPP.

The post-WW II nationalist activities in Gold Coast did not happen in a vacuum, they were promoted by economic, social and political factors that were connected to WW II. WW II, thus acted as a catalyst in promoting nationalist activities in the case of Gold Coast. Socially, the lack of educational facilities in Gold Coast was one of the factors that promoted nationalism after WW II. The teeming youth had developed a keen interest in education and the lack of educational facilities frustrated them. There was a stimulation in demand for education due to the post- WW II economic boom in Gold Coast. WW II-driven economic boom in terms of increase in the price of cocoa and other export commodities provided most people with the financial muscle to pay for quality education in Gold Coast.³¹⁴ The government's inability to provide the needed educational facilities became a stimulus of nationalism in the midst of increase in demand for education as a result of WW II- driven economic boom. Another social factor which promoted nationalism after WW II was the acute shortage of housing facilities in Gold Coast. The post- WW II acute housing shortage in the cities not only made the colonial government unpopular, but it also made the masses develop a revulsion against the political regime.³¹⁵ The acute dearth of housing facilities was aggravated by racial consideration in the distribution of the few government facilities.³¹⁶ The next WW II related social factor that influenced nationalism after the war was the 'broken myth' surrounding the white man's superiority. African soldiers fought under the same conditions with

³¹³ Kwame Nkrumah, *The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London: Edinburg Thomas Nelson And Sons Ltd., 1957). p. 111-112.

³¹⁴ *Watson Commission Report*, p. 62.

³¹⁵ *ibid* 8.

³¹⁶ CO 96/775/9, no 2 30 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: CO record of a discussion with Lord Moyne on the reforms proposed by Sir A Burns, culled from BDEEP, Series B, Volume 1. p. 2.

the white soldiers, and some like Seth Anthony, rose to officer rank and were put in the command of white men.³¹⁷ The African soldiers experience in WW II shattered the prestige of the white man and the myth of his inherent superiority which had been the psychological barrier to radical nationalism prior to WW II. This explains the upsurge of nationalism on the part of the ex-servicemen with boldness manifested in the 1948 Riot, the Positive Action, and political party activities prior to the independence of Ghana. Indeed, WW II acted as a vehicle for nationalism in Gold Coast.

The most prominent post-WW II economic factor that promoted nationalism was the high rate of inflation of imported goods as a result of the shortage of imported goods and its inevitable economic hardship. The shortage of the imported goods was due to the devastating impact of WW II on the economies of Europe which drastically curtailed the production of goods.³¹⁸ At the time, money incomes and wages also rose rapidly during the War years, due to such factors as Allied military expenditure and increased receipts for Gold Coast export.³¹⁹ This WW II-driven price hike brought untold hardship to the people, hence their massive participation in nationalist activities such as the Nii Kwabena Bonne-led boycott of European goods, and the 1948 Riot, in which the participation was devoid of class, and social status.

Furthermore, the swollen shoot disease which affected the cocoa industry from the 1930s to the 1940s and the unsatisfactory approach of the colonial government in salvaging the situation promoted nationalism after WW II. Cocoa has been the mainstay of the Gold Coast economy (63 percent of its export value in the 1940s and the 50s was from cocoa), and the industry was solely

³¹⁷ A. Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000). p. 84.

³¹⁸ The Watson Commission Report, p. 37

³¹⁹ *ibid*

owned by the Africans.³²⁰ The colonial government policy of cutting out of the affected trees without proper education of the farmers, and their failure to pay a meaningful compensation to the affected farmers made the government unpopular. The government inordinate cutting out of the affected trees which was coupled with corruption and discrimination, and the wild rumour that the British deliberately wanted to destroy the Gold Coast cocoa industry before they leave Ghana incensed Ghanaians. In the midst of this indignation towards the government, the government was more interested in increasing food production and the production of vegetable oils, and consequently, the government overconcentrated on WW II-related issues and little was done to combat the disease.³²¹ Most Although the cutting out of the affected trees was the most scientifically efficient way to deal with the swollen shoot disease, the farmers opposed the cutting out campaign because WW II brought astronomical increase in the price of cocoa, and the cutting out meant loss of huge revenue to the farmers.³²² Thus, WW II made the government's approach to the problem to be seen by the people as an ad hoc and inept knee-jerk reaction. This partly accounted for the wide spread nationalism in Gold Coast after WW II.

Politically, the discontent of the educated elites against the 1946 Burns Constitution was one of the factors that promoted nationalism after WW II. Although the constitution provided for an African majority in the Legislative Assembly, it allocated more of the seats to the educated elites.³²³ The educated elites therefore saw the Burns Constitution as a constitution designed to give more powers to the chiefs, and it was therefore a deliberate attempt to stifle their political aspirations. In spite of the fact that 1946 Constitution was an improvement over the 1925

³²⁰ *ibid* 48

³²¹ Rogers S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005). p 81.

³²² Chronological Table of Principal Events, BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part I, p. xxvi

³²³ The 1946 Constitution of Gold Coast, culled from the Appendix 16 of the Watson Commission Report, p.101.

Constitution, the declaration of the Atlantic Charter in 1941 at the time of WW II, which espoused self-determination raised the hopes of the educated elites for a radical constitution which would guarantee self-government.³²⁴ Thus, WW II created a source of inspiration for the educated elites to ask for a more radical constitution for self-government, hence their active participation in radical nationalism such as the formation of political parties.

Again, the WW II acted as a catalyst in promoting nationalism because the grievances of the ex-servicemen against the colonial government played a significant role in the radical nationalism in post-WW II Gold Coast. The 65 000 demobilised ex-servicemen lamented over the failure of the government to fulfil her promise of providing them jobs, giving them tax exception, insufficiency of disablement pension rate as against an ever rising high cost of living, and the failure on the part of the government to provide grants to men too old to enter government service and to men anxious to start their business on their own account as was done in the United Kingdom.³²⁵ These grievances propelled the ex-servicemen to engage in the 1948 Riot, political party activities, the Anti-inflation boycott of European goods, and the Positive Action.

Had it not been the emergence of WW II, the above social, economic, and political factors would not have been created to serve as the driving force behind the militant nationalism in Ghana leading to the of Ghana independence. In effect, WW II metamorphosed nationalism which was in paralysis before 1945 into a militant and radical nationalism which eventually dismantle colonialism in Gold Coast.

³²⁴ CO 96/775/9, no 1 22-24 Sept 1941 [Burns's reforms]: minutes by Sir A Burns and O G R Williams1 on the reforms proposed by Burns before his departure for the Gold Coast, Culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 2.

³²⁵ The Watson Commission Report, p.21

The 1948 Riot was the turning point for Ghana's decolonisation drive. It was the event that swiftly precipitated Ghana's political independence. In the first place, the riot created an upsurge in the political consciousness and political temperature of Gold Coast. One of the ways the riot helped to create an upsurge in political consciousness was that the nationwide unprecedented loss of lives, casualties and destruction of properties.³²⁶ This situation made all and sundry aware of the political condition in Gold Coast, and how the colonial government was using the security agencies to brutally maintained law and order. Consequently, the people of Gold Coast became curious and more interested the political issues especially in political party activities after the riot, which indubitably hasten Gold Coast decolonization process. Furthermore, another way by which the riot increased political consciousness in Gold Coast was the fact that, the UGCC leaders seized the opportunity to make political capital from the riot.³²⁷ The UGCC engaged in activities to fish from the troubled political waters created by the riot in collaboration of the local newspapers in their bid to reap political advantage of the situation which helped to increase the political consciousness in Gold Coast.

Added to the above, another way the riot increased the political temperature and the political consciousness in Gold Coast was the use of the emergency powers and the arrest and detention of the working committee members of the UGCC by the colonial government. The state of emergency made many people to follow issues on national politics as to when such measures would be suspended, and this increased the political consciousness in Gold Coast. Similarly, because no charges were proffered against the UGCC leaders who were arrested and detained, it certainly created an impression in the minds of the well-meaning people of Gold Coast that it was

³²⁶ *ibid* 10.

³²⁷ *ibid* 18.

a calculated attempt by the government to intimidate the leaders of the only political party that wanted to rescue the people from the shackles of colonialism, hence an upsurge in the political temperature. The upsurge of political temperature created an enabling atmosphere for the rapid decolonization process. More so, the arrest of the six leaders, and their movements to many parts of the country helped to spread the information and the news of the political happenings in Accra to most places in Gold Coast.³²⁸

Finally, the work and activities of the Watson Commission contributed to the upsurge in the political consciousness of Gold Coast after the riot. The commission in the first place opened its door to people from all walks of life in Gold Coast in their bid to probe the causes of the riot which made many people aware of the political developments in Gold Coast.³²⁹ Again, the commission helped to unearth the colonial government's inefficiencies and lackadaisical approach in solving the political, social and economic problems of the Gold Coast which made many people to be more interested in Gold Coast political affairs. The 1948 Riot became the turning point for Ghana's decolonization as it provided the needed political consciousness, and unquenchable political temperature needed for self-government. The colonial office admitted after the 1948 Riot that in the Gold Coast, the political consciousness of the native has developed more rapidly than in the rest of British West Africa and political power lies nearer to the hands of African leaders.³³⁰

The next significant way the 1948 Riot became the turning point of Ghana's decolonization drive was that it led to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form his own political party, the CPP, the political party that won independence for Ghana. In the first place, the post-

³²⁸ *The Autobiography of Nkrumah*, p.83.

³²⁹ *Watson Commission Report*, p. 5.

³³⁰ CO 537/5263, no 49 June 1950 'A survey of communism in Mrica': FO Research Dept memorandum; part two, regional survey- 'British West Mrica', culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p.273.

1948 Riot arrest and detention of the six working committee members of the UGCC widened the gap between Nkrumah on one side, and the rest of the members on the other side.³³¹ The riot led to the formation of Ghana National College by Nkrumah which further strained the relationship between Nkrumah and the rest of the UGCC leaders.³³² These developments partly accounted for the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC. Another way the riot brought about the formation of the CPP was that the post-1948 riot setting up of the Watson Commission to probe the causes of the 1948 Riot contributed to the breaking away of Nkrumah to form his CPP. The Watson Commission probe and its report established that Nkrumah had Communist affiliations and as a result had become imbued with a Communist ideology which only political expediency has blurred.³³³ This situation made it difficult for the UGCC leaders who were anti-communist, and wanted to protect their image before the British to continue to work with Nkrumah in the global political context of the Cold War. Thus, the 1948 Riot became the fulcrum of brewing misunderstanding and mutual mistrust between Nkrumah and the rest of the working committee members.

Added to the above, the 1948 Riot created a platform for Nkrumah to developed the feeling of betrayal by the working committee members of the UGCC leading to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC. The blatant denial of the programme of action Nkrumah drew for the UGCC by the rest of the working committee members before the Watson Commission made Nkrumah to feel betrayed, and hence partly accounted for his formation of the CPP.³³⁴ Finally, Nkrumah's exclusion from the Coussey Committee which was established to draft a new

³³¹ Autobiography of Nkrumah, p. 82.

³³² *ibid* 89

³³³ The Watson Commission Report, p.17

³³⁴ The Watson Commission Report, p. 17, 19.

constitution for the Gold Coast led to the breaking away of Nkrumah from the UGCC to form the CPP. While the rest of the UGCC members were engrossed with drafting a new constitution, Nkrumah used that period and UGCC's platform to lay the foundation of CPP by unilaterally forming the CYO, and a newspaper to his political advantage.³³⁵ The formation of the CPP, a by-product of the 1948 Riot, blessed Ghana with a well-organised, youth-driven and a dynamic political party which won independence for Ghana.

The most prominent way the 1948 Riot served as a turning point in Ghana's decolonization drive was that, the riot set in motion a blowing wind of a radical constitutional change which gave Gold Coast self-government. The first significant impact the riot had on Gold Coast constitutional reforms leading to Ghana's independence was that the riot changed Britain's slow attitude in granting Gold Coast a radical constitution that would result in Gold Coast gaining self-government. Prior to the riot, the British were not prepared to promulgate a constitution that would grant Gold Coast self-government.³³⁶ The riot made it a matter of necessity for the Watson Commission to recommend a constitution that would meet the aspirations of the people, and ensure self-government for the people of Gold Coast.³³⁷ The colonial government admittedly established the fact that the setting up of the Coussey Committee for the drafting of the 1951 Constitution was

³³⁵ Autobiography of Nkrumah, p.96

³³⁶ CO 96/770/4 12-15 Jan 1943 [Legislative Council]: minutes by Sir A Dawe, Sir G Gater and Mr. Stanley on the arguments against the adoption of an unofficial majority in the Gold Coast Legislative Council, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 22.

³³⁷ The Watson Commission Report, p. 22, 24.

a corollary of the Watson Commission's recommendations.³³⁸ The colonial office conceded that the 1948 Riot gave it no option than to yield to a radical constitutional reform.³³⁹

Finally, the 1948 Riot led to the promulgation of the 1951 Constitution which prepared Gold Coast political elites to take over political administration of Gold Coast. The Watson Commission after a careful examination of the Gold Coast political situation recommended constitutional reform for a probationary period of ten years period to enable the African elites to gain experience in terms of the road map to the self-government of Gold Coast.³⁴⁰ The Colonial office did not depart from the principle of ensuring the Africans acquire rich political experience for a period before ultimately granting Gold Coast a political independence as recommended by the Watson Commission.³⁴¹ In spite of the CPP-led positive action against the 1951 Constitution and self-government now, it did not change the plan for that reasonable probationary period to prepare Ghanaians for self-government after the riot.³⁴² The CPP formed government with the governor, and Nkrumah was made leader of government business, after the 1951 election, and some CPP party officers were appointed as ministers. A new constitution was promulgated in 1954, which became the basis for the 1954 and 1956 elections which ultimately led to Ghana's independence on 6th March, 1957. The 1948 Riot influenced and hasten Ghana's decolonization

³³⁸ CO 537/4635 9-29 June 1949 [Coussey Committee]: minutes by E G G Hanrott, L H Gorsuch, A B Cohen, Sir T Lloyd and Mr. Creech Jones on the anticipated recommendations of the Committee, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 141.

³³⁹ CO 96/796/5, no 43 29 June 1948 [Watson Commission Report]: minute by A B Cohen summarising the views of the CO departments, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 86.

³⁴⁰ Watson Commission Report, p.24

³⁴¹ CO 537/4638, no 1 10 Mar 1949 [Political developments]: despatch from R Scott to Mr Creech Jones on the agitation for self-government. 1 Minutes by E G G Hanrott, 2 L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 126

³⁴² CO 96/819/4, no 50 23 Dec 1950 [Nkrumah]: letter from A B Cohen to Sir C Arden-Clarke on the question of releasing Mr. Nkrumah from prison, culled from BDEEP Series B Volume 1, Part 1, p. 281

drive. Without the riot, Ghana's nationalist drive for a new radical constitution for self-government would have been elusive in the 1950s.

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