STATE CAPITALISM AND NEO-COLONIALIST MILITARISM IN THE THIRD WORLD: GHANAIAN AND CAMBODIAN INTERVENTIONS

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No. 16

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Centre for Developing-Area Studies
McGill University, Montreal

July 1976
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This brief essay is predicated upon two assumptions: 1) that Marxist
inspired revolutionary movements will continue to struggle for socialistic
structural change in the Third World during the final quarter of the twentieth
century; and 2) that the prospects of success in given countries can be
enhanced by non-doctrinaire assessments of recent disasters. While the human
tragedy occasioned by the overthrow of Sihanouk in March 1970 has no parallel
in the fate suffered by Ghanaians after Kwame Nkrumah was forcibly deposed on
February 24, 1966, historical perspective now suggests that the long run costs
to the people of Ghana will be considerably higher. Because the price they
pay in lost opportunities for development will also be exacted from scores of
other peoples currently governed by monopoly and even state capitalist regimes,
the lessons of these two failures may have broad relevance to prospective
liberation movements.

While state capitalist systems in the Third World are no more uniform
in their characteristics than are governments in developed areas, the extent of
similarity on a number of key dimensions is sufficient to justify comparison.
In the period before their military coups, Ghana and Cambodia roughly conformed
to the following systemic parameters:

A. Recent Historical Experience
1. colonial domination until mid or late fifties
2. primarily political rather than military independence
   conflicts
3. attenuation but no severance of dependency relationships
   with former colonial metropole
4. early structuring of military and other relations with
   the United States and allied Western financial organizations
5. parallel development of a vigorous non-aligned foreign policy
   which moved from polite opposition to Western colonialism
   to denunciations of all forms of Western and particularly
   U.S. neo-colonialism

B. Economic Development
1. foreign exchange earnings dominated by one or two primary
   exports (cocoa for Ghana, rubber and rice for Cambodia)
2. limited foreign investment -- primarily in financial,
   extractive, and externally oriented commercial sectors
3. state expropriation of major (including domestically owned)
   financial and commercial enterprises
4. establishment of limited number of state industrial firms
   with aid and technical assistance from China, the Soviet
   Union or other socialist donor nations
5. decline in Western foreign exchange earnings for cocoa and
   rice, sharp reduction in Western development and external
debt restructuring loans, rise in trade relations with socialist countries

C. Political Dynamics

1. quasi-autocratic personalist machine organized by leader of independence struggle; use of plebiscites
2. moderate decline in legitimacy derived from "founding father" role; neutralized for youth sector by adoption of nationalist, state capitalist, and welfare goals
3. pragmatic and conciliatory leadership style; limited charismatic appeal to youth sectors; de facto tolerance of official corruption (smuggling, favoritism, embezzlement)
4. heterogeneous mass party with limited mobilizational potential — primarily for officially sponsored rallies; organizationally inefficient and urban based
5. rise of anti-state capitalist coalition spearheaded by comprador and traditionalist elements and permeating military, civil service bureaucratic and educational institutions; strengthened and encouraged by Western neo-colonial interests and agencies

D. Social Structure

1. peasant majority of 70-80% largely within market economy; living standard of peasantry somewhat above bare subsistence; small number of wealthy landlords and foreign owned plantations; numerically small but rapidly growing industrial and ancillary infrastructural workforce; virtually non-existent national haute bourgeoisie; active petite bourgeoisie primarily in commerce and small scale industry; burgeoning white collar strata
2. limited upward mobility provided by extension of state economic activities, creation of new party-linked organizations and establishment of cooperatives or state farms on previously uncultivated lands
3. rapid expansion of educational and health facilities for the lower classes
4. substantial upward mobility within expanded and nominally nationalized military establishment
5. gradual constriction of opportunities to accumulate wealth through entrepreneurial activities in commerce, finance, industry and large scale agriculture

Certain parallels also appear in the initial policies adopted by successor civil-military coalitions in both countries. Soviet and particularly Chinese influence was sharply curtailed as foreign policies veered in a markedly pro-Western direction — notwithstanding symbolic adherence to a non-aligned international status. Similarly, attempts were made to restore monopoly capitalist economic systems by transferring potentially profitable state enterprises to capitalist ownership while "opening the door" to foreign investors on more favourable terms than was the case under the state capitalist regime. While former supporters of Nkrumah and Sihanouk were excluded from
political participation, the military regimes utilized Western "aid" in an unsuccessful attempt to create a moderate party based political system. At the same time that officers and civilian allies enhanced their own economic resources by appropriating national assets, corruption trials were staged to punish non-Marxist figures from the deposed state capitalist regime.

Responsibility for the Coups

Because public figures generally crave recognition for "their" successes, military leaders in both Ghana and Cambodia were quick to claim exclusive responsibility for the rather well organized coups in question. While Nkrumah (1969: 46-51) and Sihanouk (1973: 36-67) have categorically fixed primary responsibility upon the C.I.A., Western scholars tend to "blame the victim"; that is, they regard the military coups as a natural or direct reaction to the economic, political and/or foreign policies which had been imprudently followed by the deposed autocratic leader. These analysts generally: 1) imply that the shift toward state capitalist development was ill-advised because of domestic managerial deficiencies, corruption, and/or the negative reactions of Western dominated international lending institutions (IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, AID, etc.); 2) give at most cursory attention to charges of export sabotage -- Cambodia's loss of rice exports due to massive rise in smuggling and the disastrous fall in Ghana's cocoa prices until shortly after the coup; 3) and totally ignore the likelihood of C.I.A. technical and material assistance to the conspirators. Evidentiary standards of several are so extreme that one would need a public confession or official admission before assigning credence to the charges by either Nkrumah or Sihanouk.

While political analysts recognize that ordering the dialectical funnel of causal relationships is no simple task, it is one that cannot be avoided by persons concerned with theory or its use to inform the tactical decisions of those endeavouring to transcend the structural constraints of monopoly capitalist dependency and underdevelopment in the Third World. As a way of ordering variable associated with the evolution and destruction of these regimes, we shall explore three hypotheses. In focusing upon the deposed leaders' policies toward the military conspirators, the third hypothesis is implicitly prescriptive, whereas the first two are predictive in conventional terms. Viewed dynamically, they may be regarded as sequential stages on a funnel running from broad structural to ultimate decisional and situational determinants of syncretic conflictual outcomes.

Hypothesis I: If civilian elites attempt to supplant monopoly capitalist dependency relations with a nationalistic state capitalist system, career military officers will for the most part become alienated from the regime.

The tendency of Western civil military relations analysts to assign a patriotic nationalist functional orientation to the military in underdeveloped countries is particularly dubious when: 1) senior officers had previously served in colonial armies; 2) those officers had not played an important part in the struggle for national independence; and 3) training relations were maintained or initiated with ex-colonial or other pro-colonial major Western powers in the post-independence period. Following renunciation of formal
sovereignty, the British continued to equip and indoctrinate the Ghanaian army with some participation by Israel, Canada, and India, while French and Americans provided similar aid to the Royal Khmer army. Similar training linkages operated with respect to the national police in both countries. Although Sihanouk forced a break in such relations with Washington between 1963 and 1969, some personal relationships seem to have been restored to a limited though increasing degree during the months preceding his ouster on March 18, 1970. Even so, the four year suspension of relations had a significant impact upon armed forces cohesion where units up to battalion size (Burchett, 1970: 71; Sihanouk, 1973:70-73) remained loyal to the Prince, or were not trusted by the plotters. In Ghana, on the other hand, there was a smaller but significant loyalist officer faction. Yet among the dozen or so top commanders who were arrested in part because of the conspirators' desire for upward mobility, there was some sympathy (Bebler, 1972:37-38) for the anti-national corporate goals of the successful plotters.

Notwithstanding my conclusion that receptivity to advice and encouragement by Western representatives due to previously structured reference group identifications best explains the formation of conspiracies in both countries, this fact alone is insufficient to fully explain why the plots were successful. Had a substantial number of junior officers not been sympathetic, it is unlikely that these acts of sedition would have been more fruitful than the multiple assassination attempts previously experienced by the two Third World leaders in question.

Officer corps disenchantment is most comprehensible if we conceive of such elements not merely as a stratum of professionals but also as an identifiable bureaucratic military class. As such, they share certain values with civilian bureaucratic classes: 1) authoritarianism; 2) anti-egalitarian elitism; 3) careerist opportunism; and 4) consumerism. In addition, officers do have distinctive martial lifestyles highlighted by haughty disdain (military chauvinism) for "undisciplined civilians" and reinforced in our cases by almost entirely illusionary heroic self-images. Their primary political resource is a command structure that upon brief notice can bring armed legions into the political arena.

The lifestyles and associated privileges of both the civilian and military bureaucratic classes depend upon the ability of the state to extract surplus from the economy. When Third World regimes endeavour to increase both surplus availability and independence by transferring initiative and control over productive resources to the public sector, the fiscal resources of the state commonly decline in absence of substantial new foreign aid injections. This is occasioned by a variety of factors: 1) retrenchment of credit availability from monopoly capitalist nations and their international agencies; 2) active bourgeois attempts to evade or subvert the new economic controls; 3) lead time required before managerial performance can be brought up to reasonably efficient levels in existing and new enterprises. Even though socialist states do offer technical and economic aid, the level of such assistance -- at least in the initial period -- tends to be inadequate to fully offset Western "aid" and trade sanctions. At the same time that bureaucratic classes are experiencing relative deprivation due to sudden shortages of imported consumer goods and limited though not wholly ineffectual austerity measures, the officer corps discovers that weapons -- their major
political resource — are not being replaced let alone increased at old rates. Worse yet, regime leaders like Sihanouk and Nkrumah sought to promote independence and military subordination by soliciting new military assistance from socialist states. This along with presidential encouragement (Nkrumah) or virtual indifference (Sihanouk) to the existence of leftist led paramilitary units within each country was perceived as a long range threat to the very privileged position of the traditional officer classes.

In the contemporary underdeveloping world, both monopoly capitalist and state capitalist systems tend to be unstable because of their inability to accumulate and invest sufficient surplus in productive economic projects. While Western powers drain much of the surplus that might be reinvested from monopoly capitalist systems, under state capitalist regimes a good deal of this is simply transferred to elite consumption while the remainder is "lost" for reasons cited in the preceding paragraph. Some of course was redistributed through new state sector employment, health care facilities and rapidly increased educational opportunities under Nkrumah and Sihanouk's leadership. As these leaders belatedly reached the conclusion toward the end of their rule that only a state socialist system could mobilize the existing and potential surplus that was vital for an economic development "takeoff," they moved in the direction of obtaining massive socialist aid commitments for political, economic and military transformations. It seems altogether likely that the more perspicacious within the consuming bureaucratic classes experienced a sense of foredoom. Hence the immediate and diffuse support for the successful military conspirators offered by high level civilian officials, comprador elements and even sectors of the petite bourgeoisie, professionals, etc. In the two cases it is striking that the lower classes either withdrew into apathy in Ghana following the shooting of protestors and strikers — or gradually rallied to the reactivated Khmer Rouge resistance.

In concluding this section, it may be appropriate to qualify the foregoing analysis on two points. First, state capitalist instability is engendered not only because of inadequate surplus to nourish existing and new bureaucratic personnel, but it is equally a result of competitive intervention by superpowers that are simultaneously seeking to alter the "internal power balance," that is, move the system to the left and the right. On the other hand, when "radical" military officers are themselves playing the dominant role (Algeria, Peru, Iraq) in creating a state capitalist system, stability is enhanced because they are in a position to ensure that priority claims on the budget are their own. In such cases austerity and forced savings are commonly imposed upon weaker civilian sectors including state employees who almost invariably become at least mildly disenchanted with their erstwhile praetorian allies. A similar process of coalitional disintegration occurs when the military regime is reactionary as in Ghana and Cambodia. Hence, within two or three years of the initial coups in both countries, a rather substantial civilian elite sector associated with managing the state apparatus become antagonistic toward military rule. In Ghana this led to austerity measures against the armed forces under Busia after the Kotoka-Afriifa clique wrongly assumed they would be deferred to as a veto group and allowed a right wing civilian administration to take office. The civilian interregnum was given its coup-de-grâce in 1972 by another military takeover — this time universally supported by all officer factions and branches. Busia denounced it as an "amenities coup." Civilian discontent following Lon Nol's 1970 mutiny was initially muted by very heavy injections of American funds. Yet between 1970 and 1973 literally thousands of civilian lower level civil
servants rallied to the "rebel" side in reaction to military chauvinism, rampant corruption, mismanagement and the virtual takeover of policy-making by U.S. officials. Of equal import was the existence of an alternative Government of National Union courageously led by Khmer Rouge forces which had received wholehearted backing from Prince Sihanouk within days of Lon Nol's coup.

Hypothesis II: If civilian elites attempt to transcend an economic breakdown under state capitalism by introducing egalitarian state socialist institutions, active military conspiracies will develop among officers with the strongest Western reference group identifications.

If salaries and the availability of imported consumer goods under state capitalism tend to be reduced at the same time that conflict increasingly characterizes relations with Western powers, the hiatus with the old monopoly capitalist order is still not so vast as to fundamentally threaten the essentially privileged position of the officer class within a still very highly stratified society. Western critics of Sihanouk and particularly Nkrumah have delighted in reiterating ad nauseam, the "socialism" of these regimes was yet to really transform elite norms and role orientations. While the rapid enlargement of state control and activity indisputably marked a sharp veering away from economic systems in which most large and medium enterprises are under corporate control, detractors argue that the change was an undesirable development because not only did the state firms generally operate unprofitably, but kickbacks, conversion and outright embezzlement became ubiquitous as did bribery, smuggling, political nepotism and other forms of corruption. Underlying this pattern of continuity with monopoly capitalism is an ethos of elite consumerism.

Conservatism is reinforced by Western cultural penetration and concomitant military internalization of "apolitical professional" role definitions. Because of the non-mobilizational character of British, French and U.S. political systems, military functions in such societies have been limited to the traditional ones of war and internal repression of strikes and other lower class protests -- anomic or organized. Within the Third World domestic repression is a primary military activity in monopoly capitalist areas, a less important one under state capitalism, and an exceptional one for state socialist systems. The shift to socialist mobilization implies not merely that all elites must set an inspiratory example by being austere in their consumption so as to maximize surplus availability for investment, but it also requires that the armed forces participate directly in the process by devoting all spare time to constructing developmental projects. Along with this reorientation is the new norm that military officers like civilian bureaucratic elites must at least symbolically soil their hands by engaging in what bourgeois socialized Westerners regard as demeaning manual work.

This break with the past creates the basis for a participant society in which new mass and cadre organizations became effective. These include paramilitary youth and worker units and relatively efficient police forces that together obviate much of the internal security function of the traditional military. Our argument here is that many officers -- especially at the senior and perhaps even among ranking junior levels -- not only prefer the traditional purely force oriented function of maintaining order, but are too well socialized into the authoritarianism, social elitism and associated inconspicuous consumerism...
symbolized by servants, clubs, cuisine, cars, travel, special quarters and a leisurely overall lifestyle. There is no need to belabour the obvious point that heroic and patriotic self-images are ideological because of their inconsistency with an "amenities complex" of this genre. At the material level, salary and particularly fringe benefits to assure a comfortable and secure upper middle class existence must be maintained to attract new officers and to inhibit discontent within existing military establishments. The behaviour of civilian and particularly military regimes reflects a nearly universal pattern of concern that officers be accorded the same comforts that had been received by colonial predecessor officers. Within underdeveloping areas this of course constitutes a relatively luxurious living standard diametrically at odds with the "puritanical" Western model.20

The portent of a spartan existence and subordination to a mobilizational cadre Party is sufficient to create a sense of personal insecurity among officers who recognize that they could never adjust to the new military roles.21 It is no accident that officers who were purged or on a probable liquidation list played leading roles in both coups. They and their fellow conspirators had been exposed to purposeful and repeated indoctrination by France, Britain and/or the United States. While they may not have initially entered the plotting stage as lackeys or "puppets" of imperialism, there is some evidence in both cases of personal contact and influence by Western officers during the period of sedition.22 As mentioned earlier, works by Wolpin (1972), Marchetti (1974), and Agee (1975) suggest the naivete of Bebler's (1972) already cited view that in absence of a confession of participation, it is unreasonable to infer a high probability of involvement. Not only does the general function and pattern of activities by the CIA argue for such a conclusion, but some of the events directly associated with these coups do as well. An "open door" for such covert action was provided by efforts upon the part of both Nkrumah and particularly Sihanouk to bargain (unsuccessfully) for Western aid until the eve of the coups in question.23 Illusions that this was even possible short of their own resignation actually facilitated the presence of Western military and intelligence operatives who needed only to advise officers slated for replacement. Funds could be furnished to encourage the hesitant, though low probabilities of survival can make even the largest sums unacceptable. While documentary confirmation is lacking, Nkrumah (1969: 49) has leveled accusations which deserve to be taken seriously:

In Ghana the embassies of the United States, Britain, and West Germany were all implicated in the plot to overthrow my government. It is alleged that the U.S. Ambassador, Franklin Williams, offered the traitors 13 million dollars to carry out a coup d'etat. Afrifa, Harlley and Kotoka were to get a large share of this if they would assassinate me at Accra airport as I prepared to leave for Hanoi. I understand Afrifa said: 'I think I will fail', and declined the offer. So apparently did the others.

The deposed leader continued with the observation that "Dean Rusk, U.S. Secretary of State, at a meeting of 150 American top businessmen in June 1966, predicted that the 'downfall' of President Ben Bella, President Sukarno and myself would be followed by the overthrow of more left-wing world leaders. He started to name them, but thought better of it, and ended his predictions with an enigmatic smile."
Foreign policy shifts immediately following the military interventions are wholly consonant with the thesis of Western reference groups and encouragement. Lon Nol's wanton attacks on Vietnamese ethnic groups, his approval of several massacres by Khmer Serei as well as the assault on the DRV Embassy, thus seeking to inflame traditional Khmer prejudice against the large Vietnamese minority probably do reflect CIA advice and the Indonesian model (Burchett, 1970). As early as October 1969 Lon Nol suspended NLF rice deliveries for which his staff had already received gold payment from China. Five days before the March 13 initiation of the coup process, Lon Nol unilaterally abrogated accords which he had signed years earlier -- probably in 1965 -- with the Vietminh. These permitted NLF use of port and road transit, and apparently sanctioned minimal movements in border areas when absolutely necessary.24 For some time it had been well understood in Phnom Penh that available troops were grossly insufficient to close the frontiers. Hence, Lon Nol's invitation to American and presumably ARVN divisions to join in combined attacks not only brought war devastation to perhaps a third of the country but it exposed Cambodians for the first time in a generation to pillage, rape and other forms of humiliation by foreign and particularly Vietnamese "allied" troops.25 The simultaneous emergence of the U.S. Embassy as a virtual command center further discredited Lon Nol's pseudo-nationalism, as did the reported assignment of U.S. military advisors to middle and possibly company level units. Even in the agonizing final days of the Lon Nol regime the public statements and behaviour of its last "leaders" implied a pattern of prior service to American policy needs -- one that was partly responsible for close to a million casualties during the five-year revolutionary struggle by the Khmer Rouge.

In the Ghanaian case, post coup policy is also consistent with the thesis of Western reference groups and intelligence participation. During the military phase, it seems that Soviet and GDR security advisors in Flagstaff House were deliberately executed because of their possession of damning information.26 Accra immediately ended its militant hostility to the racist Smith regime in Zimbabwe, and expelled the Chinese along with several thousand Soviet technical assistance personnel. Aid and training for anti-imperialist liberation movements in Mozambique, Angola, Portuguese Guinea and South Africa was terminated. And as mentioned previously, the price of cocoa was driven up for some months to provide the regime with lead time to renegotiate an extension on existing loans. Meanwhile Western corporations were permitted to offer low bids for more than two dozen public enterprises that appeared potentially profitable from a micro-economic standpoint.27

While Anglophile reference groups reinforced by the high value placed upon existing and anticipated amenities go a long way toward explaining military leadership of the anti-Nkrumah coup, the motives and importance of similarly British trained high police officials are more ambiguous though probably not too dissimilar.28 It is possible that some of the military had been given "orientation" hospitality tours to U.S. bases. The United States probably began to train a few junior army officers at Fort Knox in 1963.29 Two years earlier senior officers had joined their British mentors in protesting Nkrumah's Congo policy and his desire to diversify foreign military aid donors. Between 1961 and July 1965, Nkrumah was forced to deal with generally successful high level military resistance to a variety of measures intended to institutionalize military subordination.30
Hypothesis III: If a revolutionary leader absents himself during a period of intense military resistance to impending institutionalized subordination, the probability of success by reactionary military plotters is exceptionally high.

Since we are invariably concerned with the dynamics of essentially personalist regimes, only the charismatic revolutionary leader possesses the loyalty, informational sources and knowledge necessary to coordinate reactive measures during the final stage of a military conspiracy. While presence in the country is doubtlessly no guarantee for the revolution, absence during such crises virtually assures the suppression of ascendant progressive sectors.

Plots as we have shown are not the work of the entire military, although successful ones probably occur more often when a broad stratum of sympathy exists within the armed forces. Because the conspiracy is forged by a handful of officers some of whom are usually in or near the capital, neutralization of such cliques is not especially difficult provided that the revolutionary leader is on the scene and thus can react quickly to intelligence reports. For reasons which remain obscure, Sihanouk chose to stay in Moscow when informed that a plane was prepared to immediately return him to Phnom Penh. This was on the 13th of March -- several days before Lon Nol's CIA trained ex-Khmer Serei shock troops actually seized the capital. 31 Ironically, both Sihanouk and Nkrumah were in Peking when informed of their overthrow. Their countries were in the process of obtaining massive increases in "Eastern" and particularly Soviet military and economic assistance. 32 Since Lon Nol had been a long time opponent of such aid, his demise was at best a matter of weeks. The same fate was certainly in store for virulently anti-Soviet Ghanaian officers who shortly would have to confront a strengthened POGR, a people's militia, and counter-intelligence officers who were completing training in Russia. Thompson (1970: 102) emphasizes that "(i)t was this group of officers who were completing their training at the time of Nkrumah's overthrow." The significance of their return is underlined by the following points. First, as early as October 1, 1964, it had been (Bretton, 1966:63) ordered that the Special Branch of the Ghana police be 'disintegrated' and its security function be transferred to the President's Security Service under the general heading Special Services... until that moment, the Special Branch -- incidentally, under two of the principal leaders of the 1966 coup, J.W.K. Harlley and A.K. Deku -- had shared with the presidential Security Service the responsibilities for internal security, surveillance, arrests, and detention.

Second, in July 1965 (Kraus, 1966:20) Harlley's national police were disarmed and control over Defense reorganization was shifted -- after certain officers had demonstrated "restiveness" earlier in the year -- to the President's Office. Reorganizing the Ministry of Defense in Accra and Otu had been temporarily kicked upstairs to well remunerated Bank of Ghana positions in Nkrumah, as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, now assumed direct operational supervision of... all military affairs. He even forbade the Minister of Defense to visit military installations without his authorization, a move designed
to conceal the creation of supporting strategic ammunition
dumps throughout the country (Bretton, 1966:104).

Finally, the impact of returning counter-intelligence officers would have been
high because an informant system already existed within the army. It was,
however, an unprofessionalized operation relying upon enlisted men and NCO's
who in some cases had been identified by the seditious clique and its
sympathizers.33

The POGR and Cambodia's municipal police commander in Phnom Penh were
loyal and actually attempted to frustrate military subversion in two countries.
While the mass parties lacked mobilizational potential, leftists in various
youth organizations were in a position to respond with paramilitary support to
a call from Nkrumah or Sihanouk.34 This assumes that some military commanders
would heed presidential orders to distribute arms to such youths. As noted in
the first section of this paper, neither command structure was unified in
support of the military conspirators. Furthermore, since intelligence sources
had reported these conspiracies prior to the final day, it would have been
possible to dismiss Lon Nol, Afrifa, Kotoka, Harlley, etc.34 What makes absence
from the country all the more incomprehensible is that prior patterns of
attempted subversion and assassination not only existed in both nations but were
linked to Western intelligence agencies and associated internal elements -- at
least in the eyes of the revolutionary leaders in question.

In periods of incipient systemic transformation, overconfidence is
probably even more dysfunctional than paranoia for those directing structural
changes. This is particularly true when the leaders in question have themselves
changed their views on societal structure after initially assuming power. They
are likely to believe that aides who were personally loyal during the shift to
state capitalism will remain so at a stage when an austere socialism is about to
become the order of the day.35 Only by anticipating opposition and maintaining
initiative in ruthlessly purging counter-revolutionary sympathizers can a
revolutionary succeed. Neither Sihanouk nor Nkrumah seem to have been
cognizant of the need to replace a conciliational "seesaw" style with one of
"blood and iron." This I suspect is best explained by the large element of
bargaining in their previously successful campaigns for independence from
colonial status. At the time both Britain and France were militarily over-
extended, and neither had reason to fear that independence would bring in its
wake a rejection of monopoly capitalism. Sihanouk was after all a Francophile
monarch who owed his throne to French favouritism at an earlier time while
Nkrumah willingly followed the advice of George Padmore and others in purging
Marxists from his party and trade unions in the fifties. Neither manifested
genuine puritanical outrage toward the corrupt in their entourage, nor for
that matter did they personally emulate a Spartan lifestyle. That they
encountered considerable difficulty in fully transcending earlier role
orientations is of course quite understandable. More remarkable perhaps was
their willingness in the final months to take decisions that would if
effectuated place mass and historical prestige on a higher plane than the use
of state resources to perpetuate a privileged bureaucratic social elite. It
is important to emphasize that despite their shortcomings, both Sihanouk and
Nkrumah carefully dissociated themselves with the efforts to suppress
revolutionary socialist groups during the unstable state capitalist period
-- once it became clear that monopoly capitalism was incompatible with their
national aspirations for independence and industrial development. Yet at the
time they nevertheless lacked the foresight to realize that these would be the only reliable organizations in an intense and unavoidable struggle for socialism. Hence, Nkrumah and Sihanouk were tardy in becoming aware of the need for anticipatory purges at the top to prevent restraints upon the growth of revolutionary organization at the base. Naturally no other individual possessed the prestige or authority to institute such measures.

Conclusion

Although state capitalist systems appear viable for socio-economic orders that have already industrialized and therefore can "afford" to tolerate some measure of consumerism at elite levels, this approach is inherently unstable in the underdeveloping areas. Not only are these systems the target of manipulative intervention by competing external aid donors, but their very dependence upon even diversified "assistance" reflects a malaise which incapacitates such regimes from mobilizing sufficient resources to close the developmental gap.

Competition for available surplus by civilian elites -- some of which are responsive to mass aspirations -- implies tension with "autonomous" military establishments so long as the former endeavour to manage the affairs of state. Even if a military faction does seize control, instability will reappear as growth rates decline after an initial period of rapid development. Subsequent stagnation can, of course, be postponed by massive injections of foreign aid or investments as occurred in Algeria, Egypt and Somalia. Regardless of ideology, the long-term failure of such societies to close the gap with the North will be an abiding source of factional discontent at elite levels and alienation among more "modernized" mass sectors.

Although Western civil-military relations theorists tend to view excess mass demands upon the economic system as the primary source of military intervention, their reasoning assumes the existing mode of economic organization should be treated as a "given." In rejecting such an inherently conservative approach we also reject its assumption -- never demonstrated -- that mass discontent is a source of new demands upon existing surplus. More often than not, popular discontent is probably a conservative reaction to system malfunctions, i.e., sudden declines in mass security or welfare as a result of inflation, eviction from land or living quarters, new taxes or suppression of trade union and other bargaining agencies.

Our assumption then is that the basic source of "instability" can be found in the inability of existing economic systems to generate, capture and invest sufficient surplus. This failure is reinforced by both external dependency relationships and declining terms of trade as well as military and other upper middle class demands upon limited surplus. In order to transcend such a self-defeating cluster of mutually reinforcing relationships, it is necessary to somehow penetrate the boundaries and transform the internal functions of the praetorian "state within a state." Only when the "party commands the gun" will a relatively egalitarian mobilizational socialist system become a practical option. Existing socialist systems are the only ones actually closing the gap with industrialized capitalist societies. Generally they conform to a model featuring six institutionalized constraints upon military insubordination. Because these have been essayed at length elsewhere
(Wolpin, 1975), we now only list them and indicate how fully each had been implemented at the time of the coups in Ghana and Cambodia (M = marginal or non-existent, P = partial, C = completely);

**DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL MILITARY SUBORDINATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>Cambodia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Security Police Penetration</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Para-Military Forces (Socialist)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Party Penetration &amp; Control</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Civilian Production Linkages</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Intra-Military Criticism</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Broad Officer Recruitment Base</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P</td>
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The importance of leadership and even fortuitous events in "transitional" Third World systems is highlighted by the historical experience of successful socialist revolutions. In almost all cases a military establishment was effectively neutralized by triumphant Marxist-led guerrilla forces, by the proximity of a deterring Red Army or by both. Not only must revolutionary leaders be cognizant of such historical patterns, but it seems that neither fatalism nor overconfidence can be tolerated if the converted socialist Prince is to be successful. Once state socialism is adopted as the goal, he must simultaneously reject conciliatory "seesaw" tactics in favour of pre-emptive initiative which spares none from anticipatory sanctions.

The clique nature of reactionary military conspiracies makes them particularly vulnerable to selective purging by civilian leaders who enjoy broad public support. While the situational hazards confronting the revolutionary Prince should never be underestimated, neither should his mass resources if he is willing to "go to the people" while simultaneously enforcing draconian sanctions against those who plot sedition within the military and allied oligarchic sectors. Those who lack the flexibility or personal courage assuredly will invite disaster even if they avoid the temptation to travel abroad during periods of acute crisis. Unfortunately it is the present and future generations who pay the immense human costs of such tactical inertia, moderation and other worldly illusions.

**Notes**

1. Worth noting, perhaps, is that neither Sihanouk nor Nkrumah were responsible for the execution of any political opponents. While these regimes may be classified as semi-dictatorial, their treatment of political opponents stands in sharp relief against the brutal measures adopted by both Western-supported military successor regimes. For examples of such repression, which do not include the civilian suffering occasioned by curtailing or eliminating welfare programs, see: Nkrumah (1969:27-27), Burchett (1970:73), Chomsky (1970:162-78), Bebler (1972:203), Sihanouk (1973).
2. Three regime types will be referred to in the discussion. All involve extensive state involvement in economic decision making at the national level. Under monopoly capitalism, the political and bureaucratic elites "regulate" to enhance the profitability of the private corporate sector. Because the latter is dominated by transnational corporations in most underdeveloped areas, so long as indigenous officials acquiesce in such relations their domestic and even foreign policy choices tend to depend upon favourable reactions by such corporations and associated international financial institutions. Hence, "dependency" is the reciprocal of monopoly capitalism in the Third World. As Gunder Frank (1967), Jalée (1968), and Rhodes (1970) and others make clear, these phenomena are functionally related to declining terms of trade and "under" development.

State capitalism involves attempts to radically reduce dependency (enlarging policy alternatives) and simultaneous promotion of industrial development. Characteristic of such regimes are state ownership of most large economic enterprises and diversification of economic relations so that major transactions occur with Eastern state socialist systems.

State socialist systems may be distinguished from state capitalism in the following ways. First, the residual private sector is being reduced rather than tolerated as legitimate. This residual private sector is also much smaller and generally limited to medium and more commonly small scale economic undertakings. Finally, primary elite roles are those of production mobilizers rather than bureaucratic consumers. Their socialist orientation is manifested by a distinctive ethos and style of life.

Many societies are obviously on a continuum, and neither linearity of movement nor stability of position are ubiquitous. In short, state socialist systems (Yugoslavia) may "degenerate" into state capitalist regimes, while revolutionary elites who seize monopoly capitalist systems (China) can virtually telescope the state capitalist phase by moving quickly on to state socialism. Similarly, state capitalist regimes like Egypt and Ghana may revert in some measure toward monopoly capitalism.

3. These rather unpleasant endeavours were assigned to reactionary comprador elements led by Siri Matak in Cambodia and Busia in Ghana. At the same time, however, the coalition was implementing economic policies that necessarily limited the military regime's potential mass appeal. Hence, even with massive foreign aid and C.I.A. "technical" assistance (Caldwell and Tan, 1975), the Lon Nol-Matak coalition failed to attract substantial popular support. Similar consequences ensued in Ghana (Bebler, 1972:40-51, 206-11) despite apparent C.I.A. funding of a "civic education" apparatus, renegotiation of debts and a sudden short-term rise in cocoa prices. Hence more than a year after the overthrow of the supposedly unpopular (Bretton, 1966) Nkrumah, and the imprisonment of thousands of loyal leaders of his Convention People's Party (CPP) and associated organizations, "(w)hen it came to the formation of a Constituent Assembly...the NLC knew that despite the officially administered police quarantine the CPP still had a substantial following in the country, and, if allowed, had a chance of winning a democratically held election." Even though the CPP remained outlawed, General Afrifa, a key military conspirator -- had felt it necessary to threaten "to stage another coup" if Busia's monopoly capitalist United Party were defeated. Within days of the Cambodian coup, Prince Sihanouk's appeal had contributed to the regime's loss of control over sixty percent of the nation's territory (Burchett, 1970; Sihanouk, 1973).
4. In varying degrees, the following share such a perspective: Kraus (1967); Sale (1966); Bretton (1966); Lee (1969); Foltz (1970); Leifer (1970); Bebler (1972).

5. This is particularly true in the Ghanaian case. In their studies published by Praeger, neither Bebler (1972) nor Bretton (1966) regard charges of C.I.A. intervention as anything but spurious. The latter claims that "(a)bove all it was unnecessary. Internal opposition to Nkrumah in the army, police, university, civil service, and among most of the groups of urban and rural population was sufficiently widespread and strong enough to destroy the regime once its security force was neutralized. It is unlikely that the engineer of the coup, Colonel E. Kotoka had plotted with foreign interests or with their agents." Yet the slightly more objective account of Bebler notes: 1) that the conspiracy only narrowly succeeded; and 2) the mass public was uninvolved. Nkrumah (1969:29-30) argues that "demonstrators at the time of the coup were mainly common criminals released from jails by the military, intellectuals and professionals who "had always been against my government which they felt quite rightly, was challenging their position of privilege....Even so it was necessary for the army to force children from their school rooms and to dragoon demonstrators in order to make a satisfactory show....Banners and posters, most of them prepared beforehand in the U.S. Embassy, were pushed into the hands of the unwilling 'demonstrators'. Many of the slogans and words used on them were quite foreign to the Ghanaian people, and in some cases completely incomprehensible. The same kind of thing was noticeable in the newspapers and news bulletins issued immediately after the seizure of power." The rightest observer Foltz (1970) acknowledges that those who sacked the NLF and DRV embassies in Phnom Penh at the time of the coup were "professionals." Burchett (1970:62-63) records that for the "spontaneous" demonstrations "the slogans were posted up in English; that Western correspondents, normally banned from Cambodia, were on hand, and the embassy sackings were so beautifully filmed that it looked more like a movie than a documentary," as one top English TV executive remarked to me later. The sacking of the embassies has to be seen also as an organic part of the plot to depose Prince Sihanouk. It was all written into the one scenario, with timing that does credit to the stage managers. The sackings took place just 24 hours after Sihanouk's announcement that Premier Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam would pay a state visit to Cambodia and a few hours before the Head of State was to fly off to Moscow from Paris. His actual overthrow took place a few hours before he was due to leave Moscow for Peking as the last stop on the way home."

6. According to Nkrumah (1969:46), "(a)proximately one-sixth of Ghana's officer corps were trained at Sandhurst, though for some years we had been sending an increasing number to train in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries." Sources which discuss the extent and behavioural effects of such military training include: Bretton (1966:140-41, 150); Kraus (1966:17-19); Price (1971); Wolpin (1972); Bebler (1972:32-33); Sihanouk (1973).

7. Sihanouk (1973: 111, 115) records "(f)rom 1954, until diplomatic relations were broken in 1965, my intelligence services listed twenty-seven known C.I.A agents registered as 'diplomats' at the Phnom Penh embassy." He adds that between 1958 and 1963, there had been two foreign inspired assassination attempts, both apparently involving some complicity by Lon Nol and the C.I.A.
In 1963 a crate of weapons addressed to the U.S. Embassy was discovered. With respect to Ghana, the C.I.A. probably worked with British intelligence (Agee, 1975:38) and/or those of Israel, Canada or India -- all of which provided military training. Thompson (1970:102) implies Washington may have written off Nkrumah: "(e)arly in 1964...a time of great ideological fervour in Ghana, when an irrevocable step was taken to make Ghana a one-party state committed to the building of socialism, leading American observers to claim that Ghana had already gone the way of Cuba. These changes vastly strengthened the Marxist cadre in the CPP; at the same time Nkrumah was significantly increasing his involvement in radical Afro-Asian courses that the Russians were interested in..." American hostility appears to have been shared by other Western military aid donors. Aside from diversifying military assistance which provoked "disapproval among both British advisors and the top brass in Ghana," Bebler (1972:130, 140) recounts equally important sources of Western antipathy: "Nkrumah... undermined the almost exclusive position of Britain and British-American private capital in the modern sector of the Ghanaian economy...(he) also had enlisted Soviet, Chinese, East German and Czechoslovak security and military assistance in order to disrupt in numerous ways Western positions and influence in Africa. This list of Nkrumah's 'sins' is not complete but sufficient to understand, to put it mildly, the unfriendly feelings of the West toward his regime."

8. The coup itself was executed by troops from "far outside" Phnom Penh (Foltz, 1970:20). It seems that these units as well as those which sacked Vietnamese diplomatic legations and subsequently massacred hundreds of Vietnamese were for the most part not even regular Cambodian troops. They appear (Sihanouk, 1973:67-73; Chomsky, 1970:171-73) to have been C.I.A. trained Khmer Serei mercenaries, the first units of which began to return to Cambodia as early as January 1969 (Chomsky, 1973:197) -- after Sihanouk apparently agreed with Richard Goodwin during the latter's November 1968 visit to restore relations with the U.S. Burchett (1970:65) records a fascinating paragraph in 'The Periscope' column of Newsweek (May 25, 1970): "A team of Cambodian officers secretly visited Indonesia last November, and again in January, to study in depth how the Indonesian Army managed to overthrow President Sukarno...It also helps explain Indonesia's prompt offer to send arms to Lon Nol." According to Marchetti (1972:341), the C.I.A. decided in the first months of the Nixon administration to "concentrate its covert pressure tactics on Latin American, African and Asian targets, using more foreign nationals as agents and relying more on private U.S. corporations and other institutions as covers." Sihanouk (1973:36-58) recounts evidence of C.I.A. plotting from October 1969 and possibly earlier in that year.

9. Nkrumah (1969:27) maintains that the key conspirators -- presumably Lt. Colonels Kotoka, Afrifa and Ocran -- deemed it necessary to deceive their "troops" by alleging "that I intended sending them to fight in Vietnam and in Rhodesia, and that I had deserted Ghana taking with me $8 million. There was, they were told, no government left in Ghana, and it was their duty to assume control of the country to maintain law and order. Already it was said, Russian planes were landing on a secret airstrip in northern Ghana. Furthermore a secret tunnel had been made from Flagstaff House, the presidential residence, to Accra airport, and for days Russians had been arriving. The only way to save Ghana, and to avoid being sent to fight in..."
Vietnam, the troops were told, was to take Flagstaff House." He also
notes (46) "that not one of the officers trained in the Soviet Union took
part in the February rising." He fails to mention however that few Soviet
trained regular officers were commissioned in the army at the time. These
were either lieutenants or were serving in Gen. Hassan's fledgling
counterintelligence branch.

stress the use of military training programs and advisory groups as
C.I.A. "covers". The reinforcing value of foreign officer training to
structure neo-colonial external reference groups is also examined by
Wolpin (1972) as is the U.S. preference that Britain and France "carry the
ball" whenever possible. Presumably this would also apply to allied aid
donors such as Israel, Canada, India (a friendly army rather than an ally)
and Japan (in the Cambodian case -- co-conspirator Siri Matak served as
Ambassador in Tokyo during the late sixties after alleging he was "bored"
by a similar assignment in Peking). Son Ngoc Thanh -- a secondary
conspirator who led the C.I.A. trained Khmer Serei forces -- also had
close links to the Japanese. These two arch enemies of Sihanouk may have
been brought together in Tokyo during early 1969 to formulate plans for
the eventual coup. Interestingly, Sihanouk (1973) notes that Matak
requested his reassignment shortly after a key C.I.A. business cover was
exposed in Phnom Penh.

Price (1971) cogently argues that British military reference groups
predisposed Ankrah and particularly Lt. Cols. Afrifa and Ocrum to join
Kotoka's conspiracy. One suspects that the behavioural significance of
French reference groups was only moderately weaker in Cambodia where
Paris had never been wholly supplanted by Washington. In March 1970
France actually had military advisors with units of the Royal Khmer Army.
Before Prince Sihanouk boarded his Paris flight for Moscow several days
prior to the coup, he asked Pompidou for French support against the
conspirators and would have returned immediately had the French Premier
not been "evasive." According to this account by Jean Lacouture (Chomsky,
1970:180), Pompidou had just returned from a visit to the United States.

11. The first three of these military characteristics are examined by Vagts
(1959), Nordlinger (1970), and Abrahamsson (1972). While consumerism is
generally inconspicuous, the emphasis upon salary increases, social
amenities and various fringe benefits to attract new officers as well as
similar budgetary increases and corruption following coups are consonant
with this imputed value, as are observations of the following on African,
Ghanaian and Cambodian lifestyle privileges and/or grievances: Price
(1971:416-19, 426-28); Kraus (1966:16-17); Lee (1969:92-96); Nkrumah
(1969:62-69, 126); Bebler (1972:34-38, 44, 116-17); Sihanouk (1973:52);
U.S. Army (1968:309-10, 322-23). Related observations and pertinent
quotations also appear in notes 14, 20, 27 and 28 below.

12. Acknowledging that the Ghanaian officer corps had easily assimilated high
British salary structures, fringe benefits, traditions, and social
amenities, Bretton (140-41) goes on to note that all of this was militarily
justified by an "almost non-existent professional hazard of what was only
a glorified super-police." Moreover, because of the rapid growth in army
size and Africanization of the officer corps after 1961, a majority of
officers actually were devoid of combat experience. Ironically then the
conspirators who led the coup claimed as a reason apprehension that they were about to be sent to fight with ZANU's liberation forces in Zimbabwe (Price, 1971; Bebler, 1972). A small number of officers had served under de facto British command in Kinshasa during the 1960-61 U.N. intervention. Even then they preferred a limited military role and thus helped C.I.A. backed anti-Lumumba elements.

As for the Cambodian army, while some of the senior officers had served under colonial French command in Vietnam prior to 1954, they proved incapable of ejecting ARVN forces which had occupied the Stung Treng region in 1958, and subsequently displayed no propensity to engage the NLF. In fact, Sihanouk (1973:52) records that "(i)t was Lon Nol himself who signed many of the agreements with the NLF, agreements which the NLF had scrupulously respected." Elsewhere the Prince recounts that NLF units which sojourned in eastern Cambodia had never threatened the lives or property of the local Khmer population. At the time of the March 1970 coup, it was necessary to use C.I.A. trained Khmer Serei troops not only to seize Phnom Penh but an elite "Mike Force" of KKK commandos had to be flown under U.S. supervision from Saigon's territory to hold the Khmer capital after the coup! According to Chomsky (1970:141), "(w)hile days of the coup, elite troops of the Saigon Army, with American air and logistic support, entered Cambodian territory for extensive attacks on Vietcong positions. American advisors accompanied these troops and also took part in planning meetings with military officers of the ARVN and Cambodian armies." As with the Ghanaian army, neither national self-respect nor heroic martial values seem to have been operationalized at the normative level -- except among foreign based C.I.A. trained mercenary units which are better denoted by the term barbaric.

13. During several years preceding the coups (1962-1966 in Ghana and 1966-1970 in Cambodia), sharp declines in export earnings combined with virtually nonexistent soft loans by Western financial agencies forced the two nationalistic governments to increasingly restrict imports of non-developmental commodities. In Cambodia it seems that Lon Nol's army (Smith, 1975) reacted to the exhaustion of U.S. pipeline aid in the mid-sixties by smuggling (Chandler, 1969:347) hundreds of millions of tons of formerly exported rice. It is altogether likely that the Pentagon and the C.I.A. facilitated or even inspired this clandestine operation.

Interestingly, the massive illegal export of Cambodia's surplus rice began, as did major Khmer Serei attacks and covert operations, after Sihanouk broke relations with the United States in 1965. The Chinese had built several industrial plants for Cambodia in the early sixties, but seemed unable to divert sufficient aid from Vietnam after the 1965 escalation by the U.S. Because Sihanouk had endorsed a number of Chinese foreign policy perspectives in the mid-sixties, the Russians seem to have been unwilling to provide much assistance between 1965 and March 1970. These factors, rapid extension of state ownership between 1963-65 and the end of U.S. aid, combined to bankrupt Cambodia's foreign exchange position by the end of 1966.

While Sihanouk reacted to this dilemma by erratically though increasingly temporizing with the Lon-Nol -- Siri Matak clique, Nkrumah shifted to the left during the last four years of his regime. The price of Ghana's major export cocoa continued to decline sharply -- a trend which seems to have begun shortly after Nkrumah's nationalization of the Cocoa Marketing Board
in the late fifties. While Nkrumah's radicalization was accompanied by marked increases in Soviet and GDR assistance, the amount was simply insufficient to stave off austerity and continued reliance upon high interest supplier's credits. Between 1964 and 1966 the Russians urged (Thompson, 1970) -- with increasing success (Nkrumah, 1969, 1973) -- greater self-reliance by mobilizing an entirely new domestic revolutionary constituency along with limiting investments to activities with a short-term prospect for profits. Bretton (1966:83-87, 90-94, 110, 115-26, 158-63) unwittingly provides considerable evidence that Nkrumah was, in fact, preparing Ghana for a socialist future during his final year or so in office, as does Kraus (1967:43) more obliquely. Whereas Nkrumah finally reached this position as early as July 1965, it took Sihanouk until the eve of his overthrow to break with the West. Unlike Lon Nol, he failed to recognize that only his own ouster and active Cambodian participation in the anti-Vietminh war would prompt the U.S. to offer new hard currency loans. Since almost 15 percent of the population was Vietnamese and a smaller percentage were Chinese, the American "price" even if accepted by Sihanouk implied overt military dictatorship, guerrilla war, invasion and increased bombing by ARVN -- i.e. the Vietnamization of Cambodia. Sihanouk's ultimate sin, then, was to believe that the upwardly mobile Lon Nol would be satisfied with the rewards already bestowed upon him and not bring destruction to the nation or permit others to use him for such narrow class and neo-colonial interests.

14. While the shortage of replacements and new weapons may be classified as a "professional" grievance that profoundly alienated much of the officer corps, there are ample grounds for doubting such a self-serving rationale. First, new equipment was not necessary for external missions, heroic ambitious or domestic security threats. Second, socialist military aid was available. Opposition to accepting Soviet or Chinese equipment was limited to an indeterminate number of neo-colonialist officers in senior and high field grade ranks who falsely alleged that aid diversification would necessarily reduce military capabilities. In fact this reflected their military dependency psychology. Because of "army" position, most socialist military aid was used to equip the relatively new service branches -- naval and air. Significantly, in neither country did "professional" senior commanders of these branches play any role in the conspiracies. Finally it should be emphasized that to the extent armies did internalize a genuine patriotic or nationalistic orientation they ought to have welcomed military aid diversification as well as temporary austerity because of their relationship to de facto independence.

The foregoing notwithstanding, Sihanouk (1973:25) acknowledges that by 1970 "(t)here had been no replacements of U.S. military equipment...so there was a lack of everything, especially transport. The army officers were restless and there was a real risk that they would demand the restoration of U.S. military aid unless something were done quickly." So in early March Sihanouk took leave from empty-handed Premier Pompidou and journeyed to Moscow where he quickly obtained major Soviet military aid commitments -- at the very moment his supporters were being arrested or dismissed by the Lon Nol clique!

In Ghana the army seems to have been adequately equipped with the exception of training apparel and other domestically produced items. Hence, Price (1971:417-18) records Lt. Col. Ocran's complaints as involving such items as poor quality sneakers, unavailability of imported leather boots, new charges
for electricity, elimination of training allowances and free travel abroad for families, and the reduction of domestic travel allowances "to such a low level that Government servants could not afford to use their cars for duty journeys...when the British were here our interests were better protected." Price (426) also compares this with the post-coup "spectacle of the military, its officers and men attired in new and striking uniforms and driving fleets of brand new trucks, jeeps, personnel carriers and half trucks, is hardly likely to convince the general population of the need for austerity and inspire it to acts of self-sacrifice. Indeed, whatever alleged ascetism of military life, the image presented to the public by the Ghana military was not always congruent with the NLC's claims of national austerity. Take for example this newspaper account of a public military ceremony in Northern Ghana: 'Air Marshal Otu and General Ocran came in Black Mercedes 330's, driven by equally gorgeously uniformed soldiers. At precisely 9 o'clock General Ankrah arrived in a sleekly streamlined Rolls Royce adorned with Ghana's Coat-of-Arms."

15. Although the Khmer Rouge were reorganized in 1957 and maintained a semi-clandestine supportive presence in some areas -- primarily in the northeastern region bordering Vietnam -- Sihanouk (1973) never seems to have actively supported Lon Nol's post-1966 advocacy of army efforts to liquidate them. For their part, the Vietminh declined to provide modern weapons to these forces until after the Lon Nol coup in March 1970, even though many urban sympathizers had fled Lon Nol's C.I.A. advised (Sihanouk, 1973:62-69) crackdown on the left in 1967. This repression occurred while the Prince was abroad and appears to have involved a contrived pretext. Sihanouk did approve paramilitary training for Khmer Socialist Youth units and had he been able to return from Moscow and Peking, it appears (Sihanouk 1973:24-25, 42-43) that Soviet military advisors would have replaced French officers within a matter of weeks. Allman (1970a:17) observes that the coup may have been a last minute decision -- presumably to foreclose major policy shifts upon Sihanouk's return.

In Ghana by early 1966, Soviet and East German advisors were organizing a second battalion for the elite President's Own Guard Regiment. Bebler (1972:34) recounts that "(i)n June 1964 military training was introduced into the Workers' Brigades, numbering 7,000 men, but the project soon was abandoned; the brigades were never armed /probably due to high level army opposition/ and did not become a serious paramilitary force. At the time of the Rhodesian crisis Nkrumah publicly advanced the idea of creating a people's militia and several thousand were enrolled in the new Volunteer Brigade." Bebler (1972:123) and Nkrumah (1966:46-47) are in accord on this point -- that the immediate concern of the conspirators was to prevent the institutional reinforcement of civilian supremacy. The latter admonishes that "(t)he only way to ensure against the possibility of internal subversion carried out by the army and inspired and aided by outside forces is eventually, when an All-African Union Government has been established to abolish professional armies altogether and to build instead a people's militia, by arming the peasants and urban workers, as in China and Cuba. Such an armed force cannot be subverted and is the best guardian of the people's interests and welfare. We were moving towards the establishment of a people's militia in Ghana and this is one of the reasons why there was support among certain army officers for a seizure of power. They feared competition from the militia and the Presidential Guard Regiment, thinking I was building up a 'private army'. Kotoka admitted this when he visited
New York to consult his masters some months after the setting up of the 'N.L.C.' 'Nkrumah,' he said, 'was building a militia. Who can tolerate that?'

16. Hence despite the ubiquitous and frequently foreign encouraged corruption in Cambodia (Leifer, 1969:89; Sihanouk, 1973:92-96, 118-37) and especially in Ghana, both regimes actually "delivered" tangible benefits, citizen status and new national dignity to the masses. According to a U.S. Army (1968:87-122, 252-55) publication and another quasi-official source (Hanna, 1968:6-9), Sihanouk's socioeconomic policies had contributed to: 1) rising peasant living standards despite concurrent inflation; 2) a substantial reduction in rural illiteracy by utilizing "community development cadres"; 3) vigorous anti-malarial and irrigation programs; 4) provision of "low cost" medical services to peasant families by such measures as: a) increasing the number of hospitals, health centers, infirmaries and dispensaries from 119 in 1955 to 452 in 1967, and b) increasing the number of nurses, midwives and health officers from 755 to 3,459 during the same period, etc.; 5) purchasing about a half-dozen new factories from China while expanding a number of nationalized enterprises (by 1967 the state was the largest employer due to nationalization and the imposition in some cases of mixed ownership); 6) enforcement of labour legislation in the 25 state owned firms; 7) increases in primary school enrollments from 596,320 to 903,000 along with larger percentage increases in vocational and secondary enrollments.

An equally impressive record is cited by Nkrumah (1969:372-418) who contrasts this with the post-coup give-away of scores of state enterprises to foreign interests, a "large scale" rise in unemployment, new requirements that students purchase textbooks, and a "cut down (in) social services to a point where they are in danger of total collapse." Even Bebler (1972:38-45, 117, 203) notes military corruption and the "harsh brutality" displayed by the army against striking trade unionists in the months following the 1966 coup. One of the most virulent (Bretton: 1966:150-57) critics of Nkrumah nevertheless devoted two pages of his book to recounting major changes under the regime involving large increases in hospital beds, education, industrialization, economic growth, telephones, mail service, highway construction, newspaper circulation, electric power, etc. Bretton also notes (106) that employment in public enterprises rose from slightly over 60% (245,000) of the labour force at the end of 1963 to almost 70% (261,900) a year later. By March 1965, 47 state enterprises had been established.

17. Sources appear in note 1 above.

18. For this reason it is inaccurate to view the major goal, source or motive of internal militarism as "domestic." Yet, Nkrumah's stress upon imperialism as the "cause" also ignores the fact that dependency and neocolonialism were most consonant -- in the short run at least -- with the domestic class interests of the comprador -- military coalitions in these countries. Hence it is inaccurate to view the coups as essentially foreign inspired or primarily domestic. In Accra, high army officers like Ankrah and Otu simultaneously protested moves toward internal state capitalism as well as Ghana's non-aligned foreign policy. Analogously, the Lon Nol -- Siri Matak regime -- appointed shortly after relations were formalized with Washington -- immediately began a campaign to dismantle state economic controls and enterprises. By October they had managed to induce an
oligarchy-dominated National Assembly to ratify such measures. Within a matter of weeks -- despite the resignation of four ministerial protégés of the Prince from the cabinet following a Sangkum denunciation of the moves to restore monopoly capitalism and Sihanouk's January departure from the country -- they nevertheless closed the government casino, devalued the currency, relaxed luxury import restrictions, submitted a "letter of intent" to the IMF, commissioned preparatory studies for the sale of state enterprises and remitted unpaid assessments to the monopoly capitalist dominated Asian Development Bank. These measures and unprecedented tacit military cooperation with US-ARVN that began in December appear to have been inadequate! Thus Burchett (1970:62) recalls "(o)ne high-ranking Cambodian official whom I met in February 1970 said: 'Some people think all this is part of a stick-and-carrot treatment. In fact all we are getting so far is the big stick.'" But he went on to say that a 'carrot' was being promised only when Cambodia had given proof by deeds and not by words that there was a real change of heart toward the United States. World Bank officials arrived during my February visit and I talked with some of them. But they showed an elaborate disinterest in any immediate aid projects. My impression was they were there to reinforce the U.S. Embassy attitude that concrete evidence of a 'change of heart' was needed before World Bank money would be available." Hence the plausibility of Nkrumah's (1969:48) claim that "(i)n each case when there has been counter-revolutionary armed action there has been a link-up between foreign trained army officers, local reactionary opposition elements and imperialists and neo-colonialists."

As with the coalition between imperialism and local monopoly capitalist elements, the basis of unity between civilian and military bureaucratic classes is common fear of egalitarian socialist restructuring. Once an organized left no longer threatens these two classes, the natural tendency toward conflict over surplus shares via double jobs, budgetary shares, extortion or bribes from foreign corporations and other issues will assume prominence. The 1972 coup that ousted Busia not only reversed his cutbacks in military expenditures, but also forced an end to his flirtation with Johannesburg, his abandonment of state farms, his refusal to maintain relations with China, continued give-aways of public enterprises, failure to maintain a vigorous nonaligned foreign policy, etc. Bebler (1972:57-58) details these grievances as well as the fact that underlying the economic squeeze was Busia's inability to secure a major influx of new Western aid funds and a renewed decline in cocoa prices -- thus forcing a budgetary crisis upon the corrupt monopoly capitalist oriented regime. Apparently the West was no longer pre-occupied by the threat of socialism in Ghana. Disillusionment with imperialism, and an absence of a mass challenge may explain the new appeal of non-alignment and the attenuation of Anglophilic reference groups as a primary behavioural influence.

J.M. Lee (1969:94) provides comparative salaries for Ghanaian officers and those in several other African ex-colonies. Thus, a major general earned £2,777, a brigadier £2,410, a colonel £2,095, a major £1,307, a 2nd lieutenant £734, a private £300. A very similar scale governed police remuneration. Price (1971) details various fringe benefits and amenities, some of which are specifically mentioned in note 14 above. Hence according to Kraus (1966:17), "(t)he officers identified with other upper and middle class groups in Ghanaian society, such as their counterparts in the police, civil service, and the professions...Certainly the Army had little
identification with the CPP's efforts to restructure the society and the economy. Ghana's military remained a colonial institution... (t)he attitudes of the officer corps were shaped by a common educational background and economic status, professional elan, and long association with British military personnel.

Hence Nkrumah (1969:126) reports that when they were brought to trial for attempting a countercoup in April 1967, Lts. Arthur and Yeboah "gave the reasons for their action, stating that the 'N.L.C.' had no political mandate, that members of the 'N.L.C.' were amassing private fortunes, and that they were deeply dissatisfied with the way the 'N.L.C.' was governing the country."

With respect to Cambodia, the U.S. Army (1968:322-23) reports that "(t)he general environment and physical conditions surrounding military life have not changed significantly since French colonial times. Many of the facilities of the colonial era continued in use, and many of the newer ones still adhered to familiar patterns. The life of the serviceman, though not one of ease, was not particularly austere, and he was, for the most part, well cared for by the authorities. He was respected and well compensated and the conditions under which he served rated relatively high in comparison with normal local standards.

Military posts were scattered throughout the country, with a heavy concentration in the Phnom Penh area. Although primitive by Western standards they compared favourably with most civilian facilities and adequately met the needs of the services. In general, quarters, food and pay were as good as a man could find outside the service and often were considerably better. There were separate accommodations for officers and on most stations housing for families was provided. Troop barracks were mostly of tropical wooden frame construction, but occasionally there were more elaborate buildings of stucco and tile.

There were other advantages that added attraction to a military career such as medical care, retirement pay, accrued leave and survivor benefits. Rations were generally superior in both quality and quantity to the food consumed by much of the population; standards of nutrition were higher and provided greater variety and a more balanced diet. Although menus were built on a rice base and were repetitious from a European point of view, meals conformed to local dietary patterns and the average soldier considered himself well fed.

There are no reliable recent figures on current pay scales, but it is evident that the military are adequately paid by Southeast Asian standards. Basic pay rates were raised moderately in 1967. The latest figures available, however, were for 1965. These ranged from the equivalent of $14.65 a month for a private first class to $192.00 for a colonel (and navy or air force counterparts). A master sergeant received $43.00 a month; and a captain $97.71. In addition to base pay, there was a wide variety of supplementary allowances for officers and men, including family and station allowances, as well as additional compensation for specialists, paratroops and flying personnel. Every man received a fixed ration allowance and there were general re-enlistment bonuses and equipment allowances for officers and men."

21. Bebler (1973:155-56) reports that "(t)he drive to have all Ghanaian officers enrolled in the party was initiated by Minister of Defense, Kofi Baako, at
the annual army conference in 1963. However, the degree of acculturation of the Ghanaian officer and NCO to British norms was so strong that Nkrumah listened to the advice given to him by his confidant, Brigadier Barwah, and quietly shelved the idea. A modest number of membership cards seems to have been actually distributed before the 1966 coup, chiefly in the privileged presidential guard and among junior officers looking for promotions." In Cambodia, junior officers who had been commissioned from the ranks — approximately 1/3 of the total according to the U.S. Army (1968) — probably were disproportionately represented among those who remained loyal to Prince Sihanouk in 1970. Because in contradistinction to Ghana, Cambodia was afflicted by a highly stratified aristocratic class system, these men almost certainly experienced social discrimination in promotion to senior ranks. Although Lon-Nol was an exception in this respect, it is problematic in view of his links with the Siri Matak clique whether such ascriptive discrimination would become a thing of the past under "his" military regime.

22. Burchett (1970), Chomsky (1970), Sihanouk (1973), Caldwell and Tan (1975) provide abundant circumstantial evidence of such relationships for Lon Nol, Siri Matak and their Khmer Serei ally, Son Ngoc Thanh. Aside from the Anglophile sentiments and already mentioned training relations in the Ghanaian case, the only other evidence is: 1) Kotoka apparently visited Britain in July 1965 after Gen. Ankrah was finally forced out because of his categorical refusal to authorize the dispatch of counterintelligence cadets for Soviet training; 2) Kotoka was subsequently assigned with Afrifa to command the distant Kumasi garrison in order to keep him away from the capital — and the former felt particularly "insecure"; 3) during the coup, Western embassy attaches used "their influence" to prevent Ghanaian officers from killing large numbers of Soviet embassy personnel; 4) charges — to be shortly quoted in our text — by Nkrumah's Attorney General, Geoffrey Bing, that cash payments were offered. Bebler (1972), Kraus (1966), Nkrumah (1969:49) and Thompson (1970) are sources for these admittedly inconclusive points.

23. Bebler (1972:130-31) recalls that "Nkrumah had never severed all his ties with Great Britain, the United States, West Germany, the Commonwealth, the smaller Western nations, and until the last moment tried to maneuver between the West and the East....During his last months in office, Nkrumah unsuccessfully tried to obtain a Western loan of $1 billion."

All analysts agree that the Lon Nol -- Siri Matak administration was appointed following restoration of relations with the U.S. as part of an effort to obtain new aid from the U.S., the IMF and the Asian Development Bank. And before flying to Moscow in March 1970, Sihanouk had probably raised this question with Pompidou who, in turn, had almost certainly discussed it in Washington prior to their final meeting.

24. Ironically, U.S. bombing of these areas in 1965 prompted Sihanouk to request that American representation be reduced to the consular level. Washington's reaction to what must have been perceived as insolence was to break relations! Lon Nol's personal loyalty during this period best explains the Prince's confidence in him subsequently -- hence the latter's shock at the "betrayal" referred to in the text and note 12, above.

25. The May invasion appears to have been intended -- as Sihanouk and Burchett maintain -- to prevent the immediate encirclement and collapse of the Lon
Nol regime. While the "destruction of Vietcong sanctuaries" was undoubtedly a secondary objective, this was rendered nugatory by several days of open preparations for the invasion. It seems that arms which had not already been given to Khmer Rouge supporters were distributed on the eve of the attack. Hence the invasion was a disaster though less for this reason than because it discredited Lon Nol's attempt to create a nationalist image. Ironically, he belatedly denied having invited ARVN forces into Cambodia.

26. An alternative explanation is implied by events summarized in note 9 and item three of note 22 -- i.e., induced fear by subordinate officers that the Russians were in the process of seizing control of Ghana. A third explanation is that Soviet and East German security officers were shown the light of day for encouraging POGR troops to resist Col. Afrifa's assault.

27. In addition to noting that "moderate nationalists" who initially backed the coup openly denounced this giveaway, Price (1971:419-24) emphasizes "(t)he openness and trust displayed toward foreign /Anglo-American/ interests" contrasting this with Hans Kohn's concept of nationalism. He also notes that the military regime declined to default upon many high interest Western suppliers' credits that had been secured by bribery. Military indifference on this score may be more usefully explained by materialistic class interests than by external reference group identification. Bebler (1972:117) concludes that "(t)he strength of the issue of corruption naturally declines when the coup-makers themselves are not very different in this respect from the previous elite."

28. Although Nkrumah (1969:43-44) believes that K.A. Harlley, who directed Ghana's national police, induced Lt. Cols. Kotoka and Afrifa to lead a military police mutiny, Bebler (1972:37) assigns the primary role to Kotoka and Afrifa who commanded Kumasi garrison troops and subsequently emerged as the dominant figures in the regime. Ocran apparently delayed until after Flagstaff House had been captured following an hour of fierce combat. Had the second POGR battalion been brought into action during this period, it "would have doomed the insurrection." While Ankrah may have been a "swingman" figurehead to preserve some semblance of a command structure, the police did play more than an ancillary role. For in Nkrumah's (1969:44) view, Harlley alone had information vital to the coup's success. Bebler (1973:36) reports that last minute coup "movements did not cause alarm in the capital because Major General C.M. Barwah, acting defense chief of staff in the absence from the country of Major General Aferi, took it for another false alert and because the police intelligence system was 'plugged out' by Harlley." His motive was, according to Nkrumah (1969:42-43), fear of exposure for involvement in diamond smuggling. Attorney General Geoffrey Bing has just discovered the complicity of both Harlley and another high police official -- Deku -- who also became a charter member of the N.L.C.

29. Although specific mention is not made of Ghana, Wolpin (1972:89) reports that "(d)uring July 1963...an Army Officer Leadership Training Course was inaugurated at the Armor School in Fort Knox, Kentucky. Between fifty and seventy-five carefully selected African officer candidates from such countries as Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Mali, Tunisia, Congo (Kinshasa), joined 20-30 officer candidates from Syria, Jordan, and other
unstable capitalist and non-aligned regimes. The six-month Officer Candidate School type of course was intended among other things to provide trainees with the skills necessary to protect their governments against subversion and domestic disorders. Training objectives also encompassed the customary anti-Communist indoctrination and furthering of pro-American loyalties. In subsequent years, the Defense Department justified such aid in terms of maintaining our commitments to our allies and friendly armed forces. This distinction is crucial in the case of radical or non-aligned regimes. Elsewhere (Congressional Quarterly, 1969:44), it is reported that a total of 33 Ghanaian military personnel were trained prior to July 1963, and that an additional 13 officers received training between then and July 1968. It appears that training was terminated by Nkrumah in either 1964 or 1965 and not formally resumed until after the coup.

30. Kraus (1967) perceptively essays Nkrumah's efforts to create a Marxist leadership faction, the intense resistance by old guard elements in the CPP and civil-military bureaucracies to socialism and Eastern aid, and Nkrumah's personal fear after assassination attempts in 1962 and again in October 1964 -- this time by members of Harlley's special police guard. Between that date and July 1965 Nkrumah slowly created an independent Soviet trained security police and POGR. Until July Ankrah and Otu successfully prevented Ghanaian army cadets from receiving training in the U.S.S.R. A group that had been sent in 1961 had been recalled at military behest within a matter of months. Already mentioned was Nkrumah's inability to introduce party organization or socialist education into the military -- other than a few lectures sponsored by the short-lived Bureau of African Affairs. Nkrumah (1969) "explains" his tolerance of many hostile officials in both the military and civil administration by referring to the paucity of socialist minded personnel with the vitally needed technical skills and qualifications; i.e., the government would have collapsed as would public order had they been purged in the early sixties. On the other hand and within the framework of such constraints, Nkrumah was clearly superior to Sihanouk in using his appointive power. It may be no accident that the narrowly successful conspiracy was the work of two obscure junior officers, for "(t)hrough manipulation of promotion and by pitting one senior officer against another, Nkrumah attempted to divide the officer corps"(Bebler, 1972:33).

31. Upon disembarking at Moscow's airport on March 13, Sihanouk (1973:21) reports "(a)fter welcoming me, President Podgorny said there was a plane waiting to take me straight home to Phnom Penh."

32. According to Sihanouk (1973:25), "(a)fter a few days of talks, the Russians agreed to supply everything we needed." Kraus (1967:46) refers to a marked increase in trade with the East in 1965 "due to Ghana's inability to obtain further credits in the West and the extremely low price of cocoa. As a result of agreements signed in December 1965, two-way trade with the Communist world would have certainly increased had the coup d'etat not intervened." Hence by 1966, the Soviet Union (Bebler, 1972:162) had "become the biggest single buyer of Ghanaian cocoa."

33. Sihanouk (1973) complains that national police head Gen. Sosthene Fernandez denied him such reports and Siri Matak also refused to allow direct communication between bureaucratic subordinates and the Prince. If on the scene, he could have availed himself of Soviet and Chinese intelligence and
simply countermanded Matak's directive while replacing the corrupt opportunist Fernandez. Since he implies the national police did have agents within the army, there is no reason why he could not have encouraged them to report directly to him when seditious conspiracies were discovered.

34. On March 16, loyal Socialist Youth elements actually surrounded the National Assembly building while Phnom Penh municipal police officers unsuccessfully attempted to arrest Lon Nol. Sihanouk (1973) emphasizes that "batallions" remained loyal joining Khmer Rouge forces. Bebler (1972:37) records that in Ghana, many senior officers were arrested or shot. Furthermore, Nkrumah had not only the POGR but also could have called upon ordinary soldiers and such Marxist-led organizations as the Trade Union Congress, the League of Ghana Patriots, Party Vanguard Activists and the National Association of Socialist Students Organizations. Since 1964 Nkrumah had been supporting the growth of these organizations and the active diffusion of Marxist perspectives in the press and through increasing numbers of educational institutions of one sort or another.

35. Sihanouk (1973) delineates both incidents and relationships which should have made him exceptionally distrustful. Thompson (1970:90-97) provides similar evidence for Nkrumah who actually did distrust a number of high bureaucratic civilian and military officials.


37. Interestingly, in neither Cambodia nor Ghana was mass discontent even an indirect source of regime "instability" before the coups occurred.

38. On the basis of pre-World War II data, Chorley (1973) concludes that unless the regular army of the previous order is defeated or otherwise neutralized, social revolutions invariably fail.

39. Nkrumah endeavoured until July 1965 to mollify or win over many officials who were too materialistic to take socialism as more than a rhetorical symbol. Allman (1970a) and Sihanouk (1973) argue that the latter turned over policy making to Lon Nol primarily for the purpose of discrediting the comprador sector -- under the assumption that economic liberalism would prove unviable. Then Sihanouk expected to return and reverse policy in a "socialist" direction. The Prince correctly believed that Lon Nol would have to be insane to involve Cambodia in an American war in order to open the foreign aid sluice!
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July 1976