

## NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY APPARATUS AND AKUFO-ADDO'S LONG GAME OF BREAKING THE EIGHT: BY MARTIN A. B. K. AMIDU

The press release issued by the Communications Directorate of the Jubilee House, Accra on 5 August 2022 announcing the appointment of new leadership for the National Security apparatus was the eventual actualization of an intentional and purposeful strategic decision by President Akufo-Addo since he lost the second round of the 2008 Presidential Election to ensure that if he ever ascended the Presidency he would not behave like former President John Kufuor to allow an election under his watch to be won by any other political party. Consequently, upon his assumption of office as the President of Ghana on 7 January 2017 Nana Akufo-Addo activated his long game to break the 8 at the 2024 Presidential Election. He determined to ensure that by the middle of his second term in office all the instruments of law enforcement, state security and intelligence power of the Republic of Ghana should be led by persons with proven political dedication and loyalty to his person, and his family and friends.

The appointment by the President of Mr. Edward Asomani, Deputy National Security Co-ordinator, to act as National Security Co-ordinator, with effect from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022 subject to the confirmation of his appointment to the receipt of the constitutionally required advice of the National Security Council, given in consultation with the Public Service Commission gives finality to Nana Akufo-Addo's long game to capture the National Security Secretariat apparatus towards his electoral agenda for the 2024 parliamentary and presidential elections.

The President by the same press release also appointed Nana Attobrah Quaioco, Deputy Director-General of the NIB, to act with effect from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022, as the Director-General of National Intelligence Bureau, with his confirmation also being subject to the receipt of the constitutionally required advice of the National Security Council, given in consultation with the Public Service Commission as part of Nana Akufo-Addo's long game to capture the National Intelligence Bureau apparatus towards his electoral agenda for the 2024 parliamentary and presidential elections.

A casual reading of the press release signed by the Communications Director of the Jubilee House does not disclose that it was purposefully written to hide a covert sequence of events in which the President's Family and Friends' Non-Governmental Organization, the Danquah Institute, was positioned since the 2008 elections as the strategic family instrument for producing Nana Attobrah Quaioco and Edward Kwaku Asomani for the leadership of the two critical National Security apparatus in anticipation of the 2024 Elections. The antecedents and true sequences of events in the rise of the new leadership of the National Security apparatus shows that Nana Attobrah Quaioco had sharpened his teeth as the Executive Director of the President's Family and Friends Danquah Institute before his purposeful appointment as the Deputy Director of the then Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) in May 2019. Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani also sharpened his teeth at the same Family and Friends Danquah Institute before his appointment in February 2021 by the President as the Deputy National Security Coordinator, in fulfilment of the pursuance of the "important research work, which will lead to another assignment." See Citi Newsroom online publication of 21 October 2019: also, the Daily Guide Network online publication of 23 October 2019 on the research work that was to lead to another assignment.

It is important for the reader to keep at the back of his mind the unspoken facts and evidence that Nana Attobrah Quaicoe, and Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani were recruited into Nana Akufo-Addo's Danquah Institute under the Chairmanship of his maternal cousin, Mr. Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko, an indispensable member of the family's planning and strategies cohort.

In a statement issued by Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh and reported on 3news.com/Ghana on 9 September 2015 the Danquah Institute named Nana Attobrah Quaicoe's who had worked with the Danquah Institute since its inception and rose to the position of Head of Research as its new Executive Director with effective from 1 September 2015. Nana Attobrah Quaicoe was taking over from Mustapha Abdul Hamid to enable him to fulfill other commitments. The strategic location and positions occupied by Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, and Dr. Mustapha Abdul Hamid within the Nana Akufo-Addo government of Family and Friends are now matters of notorious public knowledge. These are factors to consider in Nana Akufo-Addo's electoral long game.

Mr. Edward Asomani was appointed the Executive Director of the Danquah Institute with effect from 2 November 2018 to lead the Institute by promoting the Danquah-Dombo tradition and providing its effective leadership. A statement signed by the acting Chairman of the Governing Board of the Institute, Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko, stated, inter alia, that: "He will also be expected to undertake important research, policy advocacy, training and most importantly actively seek and mentor the next generation of leaders...." His research interests were also stated "to include the political economy of Africa, US foreign policy towards Africa, political leadership, elections and electoral democracy." (Emphasis supplied)

However, under a year Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani strategically exited the office of Executive Director of the Danquah Institute with effect from 21 October 2019 to "enable him pursue important research work, which will lead to another assignment". Mr. Richard Ahiagbah, now a Deputy Director of Research in the Office of the President at Jubilee House, who was appointed to succeed Mr. Asomani as the acting Executive Director of the Institute: "comes in with a strong public policy background. Also significant is his experience in electoral research and campaign strategy." Mr. Ahiagbah is reputed to have been a field organizer for President Obama's re-election campaign in 2012: a role he is said to have performed on other senatorial and gubernatorial elections in the United States. (Emphasis supplied).

The strategic subtlety and craftiness of placing dedicated and loyal members of Nana Akufo-Addo's Family and Friends of the Danquah Institute in critical positions within the constitutional apparatus of the Republic towards the actualization of turning Ghana into a private family estate can be discerned by any reasonable and critical thinking citizens who have followed appointments into the Republic of Ghana's state institutions since the President's assumption of office in January 2017.

Suffice it to reiterate that in the case of Nana Attobrah Quaicoe, and Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani, Nana Akufo-Addo had appointed Nana Attobrah Quaicoe, a former Executive Director of the Danquah Institute as the new Deputy Director in Charge of Operations, and One Timothy Coleman, a career BNI officer as the Deputy Director in charge of Administration at the Bureau of National Investigations in May 2019 on the opportunity of the removal of Ambassador Rasheed Seidu Inusah as the Director of the BNI and the

elevation of his then Deputy Director, Mr. Kwaku Domfeh as the substantive Director of BNI.

Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani who strategically exited the office of Executive Director of the Danquah Institute with effect from 21 October 2019 to “enable him pursue important research work, which will lead to another assignment” was appointed in February 2021 by the President as the Deputy National Security Coordinator, in fulfilment of the pursuance of the “important research work, which will lead to another assignment.” As a result of this appointment of Mr. Asomani in February 2021 intelligence began circulating in September 2021 of the intended appointment of Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani as the substantive National Security Coordinator to replace Major General Francis Adu Amanfo (Rtd) who had been appointed to replace Joshua Kyeremeh who died in January 2021. The intended appointment of Mr. Asomani to the substantive position in September 2021 was reported to have been creating internal friction within the National Security Secretariat staff.

By way of an aside which reinforces Nana Akufo-Addo long game to break the 8 at the 2024 Elections, it ought to be said that Nana Akufo-Addo’s Family and Friends radio station, Asaase Radio on 17 November 2021 announced the appointment of Mr. Richard Ahiagbah (who was appointed to succeed Mr. Asomani as the acting Executive Director of the Institute with effect from 21 October 2019 to replace Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani) as the Deputy Director of Research in the Office of the President with retrospective effect from October 2021 to assist Dr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah the Director of Research in the Office of the President “to monitor and evaluate the work and output of all presidential appointees, providing continuous feedback for the president and ultimately contributing to the development and execution of strategic decisions of the second term of Akufo-Addo government.” His profile as published by Asaase Radio stated that:

*“Profile of Ahiagbah*

Richard Ahiagbah was a field organiser for the former US president Barack Obama’s re-election campaign in 2012. He has also undertaken similar roles in senatorial and gubernatorial elections in the United States.” (Emphasis supplied).

Many a citizen who do not have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the working of the Republic’s law enforcement, security and intelligence apparatus designed under the 1992 Constitution to be applied with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability for the protection of the constitutional and democratic regime for the good governance of citizens may not appreciate the abuse of constitutional power involved when a disingenuous president subtly uses the power and instruments of state in capturing the essential institutions designed to ensure a free and fair elections.

The events and circumstances of the 2008 Presidential Elections instead of enhancing Ghana’s democratic credentials created in the loser of that election, Nana Akufo-Addo, a fixation and paranoia that former President John Agyekum Kufuor could have rigged the elections for him but failed or refused to do so out of personal spite. Nana Akufo-Addo appears to have carried the post-traumatic stress disorder generated by losing the results of the 2008 elections and determined that never under his watch as a President of Ghana will he supervise the smooth changing of government from one political party to another in Ghana. No matter what happens, his political party must win the exiting election under his watch. Those with eyes, minds, and ears to see, think and listen discerned Nana Akufo-Addo’s long game since 2017 to ensure that he left the Presidency on 7 January 2025 handing over power

to his own political party, no matter what happens. His actions and pronouncement upon becoming president with our support vindicates the perception of his fixation and paranoia of supervising the winning of the 2024 elections by his chosen presidential candidate and successor at whatever cost to the preservation and defence of the 1992 Constitution.

An interview former President John Kufuor gave to the Financial Times on or about 25 October 2010 alluded to the dissatisfaction of Nana Akufo-Addo and his supporters with the alleged manner he supervised the second round of the 2008 Presidential Election. Mr. Kufuor was accused of not doing enough to support his party's candidate even though he had no option than to obey the final declaration of the results by the Electoral Commission. Mr. Kufuor said:

“When my term ended, and the votes were declared by the electorate, I obeyed. Even with some of my people questioning. But I said that was the constitution. If anyone felt aggrieved let them go to court.”

After the Electoral Commission had given notice of a re-run of the presidential election for the outstanding Tain Constituency, a faction within the NPP supporting its candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo, with his tacit blessings sought an injunction in the High Court to restrain the Electoral Commission from holding that election and frustrating the handing over of power on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009. President Kufuor summed up the implication of the restraining order sought by the supporters of his party's candidate against the Electoral Commission when he said in an interview with the Financial Times that:

“...Suppose I had sided with my side going to court to restrain the electoral commission it would have meant frustrating the electoral commission from holding the election and then we couldn't have met the constitutional deadline of 7th January. So the only way for me to stay on would have been to declare a state of emergency. And on what basis? So I had to consider the whole thing. Then I said 7th of January I will hand over power to whoever the electoral commission announced. Anyone who felt aggrieved could go to court. So I drove back to Accra a distance of some 100 miles. That's what happened. The implication was that I would be staging a coup.”

Nana Akufo-Addo has used every major political conference and event of the New Patriotic Party during his second term as President to underscore his long game of playing his part to ensure that the constitutional institutions of the Republic are positioned in such a way with politically loyal leadership appointees as to deliver his fixation to winning the 2024 elections for his chosen successor. He has consistently underscored the fact that despite his determination, without the variable condition of a united NPP behind the chosen presidential candidate his determination to break the 8 will come to naught. As the Daily Graphic of 19 December 2021 reported, Nana Akufo-Addo told the party's delegates in Kumasi on Sunday that: "Every step taken now leading to 2024 is going to be decisive either to give us victory or not." He is reported to have “reckoned that it would require discipline and a united front; promising a level playing field for all presidential aspirants to produce an acceptable leader to be backed by all.”

Nana Akufo-Addo is also reported by the Daily Guide Network on 14 April 2022 to have shared his dream when he met the National Executive Committee (NEC) members of the New Patriotic Party in Accra on Tuesday by reiterating his strong desire to hand over power to another New Patriotic Party (NPP) government in 2025 to ensure continuity of the good work done by his administration. Mr. John Boadu, the then General Secretary was reported to have quoted to journalist at a press conference in Kumasi the words of the President at the NEC Accra meeting as follows:

“The NPP members should remain steadfast and united around the sterling leadership of the government which is steering through these difficult times.... The party can only realise its ambition of retaining political power in 2024 when the party members eschew all forms of bickering, antagonism and all other things that tend to divide us...If we adhere to my wise counsel and remain united as one elephant family with a common destiny, definitely we shall win the elections and I, Nana Akufo-Addo, will hand over political power to another competent NPP person in 2024 (sic),” the President purportedly stated.

On 30 July 2022, at the occasion of the New Patriotic Party’s 30th Anniversary and National Thanksgiving Service held at the Kofi Ohene-Konadu auditorium of the University of Professional Studies, Accra, under the theme; 'NPP@30: Our Shared Traditional, Holding and Working Together a Stable and Prosperous Nation', the President, Nana Akufo-Addo concluded his speech to the party gathering as follows:

“I want to end by making one appeal, I want you to help me to achieve the last great political feat of my career in Ghanaian politics, that on the 7th of January 2025, I will go to Black Star Square and hand over the baton to our next NPP President of the Republic who we would have chosen, supported and brought to victory.” (Emphasis supplied).

Akufo-Addo said further that: “Victory in 2024, that is our goal, that is our task and that by the Grace of God, we will achieve.” (Emphasis supplied).

And as if to thump a finger in the eyes of the electorate and people of Ghana on 5 August 2022, the Communications Directorate of the Jubilee House, Accra then issued a press release announcing the appointment of Mr. Edward Kwaku Asomani, and Nana Attobrah Quaicoe as the new leadership for the National Security apparatus. Then on 8 August 2022 in an interview with the North Star radio in Tamale Nana Akufo-Addo relived his post-traumatic stress disorder of losing the 2008 presidential elections. He is reported on Ghana Web of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022 to have said, inter alia that:

“A lot of people are forgetting that in 2008, we almost broke the 8 then. The elections of 2008 which is the first one with me as a candidate of the NPP, I won the first round and in fact, I was short of outright victory by 23,000 votes. Very narrow. 23,000 votes should have gone the other way round wherever and I would have been president in the first round in 2008. It didn’t happen.... We went into a second round and in that second round, the NPP lost by 40,000 votes. President Mills was elected with 50.01% of the overall votes. It is the narrowest margin of victory in any presidential contest of the 4th Republic. That tells you the NPP was extremely close to making that statement [of breaking the 8] as far back as that (time)... We have all learnt our lessons from what happened. Those that came from our own side, the problems that we had ourselves and those that were external to our party. We are determined this time round that not only will it be a victory, it will be a decisive victory because this National Democratic Congress, they should spend more time in opposition so they can organize themselves better for the future of Ghana than what they are today.” (Emphasis supplied)

The groundwork to facilitate the accomplishment of the dreams of Nana Akufo-Addo to abuse the constitutional process through the appointing powers vested in him to load the institutions of state power responsible for impartial law enforcement, security and intelligence of the electoral process with the new leadership of the National Security apparatus appointed by Nana Akufo-Addo had already been laid during his first term in office as President when he captured the commanding heights of the Ministry of Communications and Digitalization and its associate regulatory authorities and agencies responsible for information technology, and communications.

The biometric data of all citizens of voting age who use SIM cards as instruments of ICT are to be captured and stored in a database at the National Information Technology Agency (NITA) pursuant the authority of the Minister and the National Communications Authority (NCA). It is imperative for citizens to remember that the Director-General of the National Communications Authority (NCA), Mr. Joseph Anokye, was purposefully brought or encouraged to returned home to facilitate the winning of the 2016 elections by Nana Akufo-Addo and was duly rewarded with that appointment in January 2017. For those who do not know or remember: the Director-General of the National Information Technology Authority (NITA), Mr. Richard Okyere-Fosu, was a former group head of information technology at cousin Ken Ofori-Atta's Data Bank Financial Services Limited who went along to the Ministry of Finance with Ken Ofori Atta as the Minister of Finance and was later transitioned to NITA first as Director of Finance and Administration and subsequently elevated to lead the agency.

And for those who understand the power of controlling voter's and citizens' biometric data and means of information technology communications during the 2024 elections the possibility of surveillance of political opponents could not have been far from the main reason for the insistence and railroading of Ghanaian on the Ghana Card registration, and the SIM Cards re-registration exercise using the unconstitutional and infamous process of the Establishment of Emergency Communications Instrument, 202 (E. I. 63). Nana Akufo-Addo's long game to use the instruments of state power disingenuous and opaquely to prepare an uneven electoral playing field in such a manner as to realize his fixation and paranoia of winning the 2024 elections, no matter what happens, is being gradually achieved. Interested readers of further details may wish to re-visit my article: "Nana Akufo's Dictatorship – Illegal Sim Card Re-Registration and Solidarity for Boycotting the Use of Mobile Phone" of 10 February 2022 which is available online.

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana demands a fair and transparent governance process based on merit and participation by every qualified citizen and enjoins each of us who are citizens to ensure that the Presidential oath to uphold and defend the Constitution and do justice to all citizens without fear or favour, affection or ill will is respected by the President Nana Akufo-Addo. Former President Rawling did not use the instruments of state power to prevent former President Kufuor from winning the 2000 elections against the late Vice President Mills as the governing party's candidate and I as his Vice-Presidential candidate during the second round of that election. Former President Kufuor also underscored the importance of not interfering with the electoral process when he stated in 2008 that:

“When my term ended, and the votes were declared by the electorate, I obeyed. Even with some of my people questioning. But I said that was the constitution. If anyone felt aggrieved let them go to court.”

The 1992 Constitution has endured the longest in the democratic history of our dear nation and enjoins all citizens to defend it against any attempts to undermine its spirit or to establish

by any subterfuges a one-party state by an elected President entrusted with the levers of state power of the Republic of Ghana. President Nana Akufo-Addo's long electoral game while appearing to follow the letter of the law in making appointments to public office substantively breaches the fundamental spirit of the Constitution of integrity, transparency, accountability, and merit and is leading to the actualization of a calculated and deliberate intention to undermine the 2024 electoral process. It is in consideration of the foregoing that I hereby break my silence from public political discourse which I imposed upon myself to call on all patriotic citizens to come together in defence of the 1992 Constitution to ensure that the processes leading to the 2024 elections are not undermined by Nana Akufo-Addo's penchant for impunity and abuse of constitutional power that may lead to the jeopardy of the Constitution that we as citizens are enjoined to protect and defend. Ghana must always be put first.

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