

# PARLIAMENT AND THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL AS MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT – ULTIMATUMS AND MOTIONS OF CENSURE: BY MARTIN A. B. K. AMIDU

*“Everyday things are getting worse  
Everyday things are getting worse  
Time so hard, why oh why oh Lord  
Time so hard, look upon Maud and Gerard.”*

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMATION

The sacrifice of the national good of our country by our elected members of parliament for their personal selfishness and partisan interest in contravention of the letter and the spirit of the 1992 Constitution is the main, and indeed the sole reason why for some time now, “Everyday things are getting worse” for the economic and social survival of the ordinary Ghanaian who elected them.

The simultaneous display of gamesmanship and posturing on 25 October 2022 by both the majority members of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in Parliament and the minority members of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in Parliament was a planned, rehearsed, and executed maneuver actuated by a selfish self-preservation interest of the members of parliament to secure their chances of re-election to Parliament at the 2024 parliamentary elections.

The majority and minority members of parliament bear more responsibility and blame for failing in their oversight responsibilities over the executive branch of government that has brought the country to its present sorry state of hardship and poverty. The gamesmanship that began on 25 October 2022 was a clever but unsophisticated way of seeking to divert the attention of their constituents and the public generally from the self-serving compromises they made with the executive in the performance of their constitutional functions that has led our dear country to our current messy situation for the first time in our history.

The best defense, it is said, is to attack. By falsely equating their membership of parliament with superior knowledge over the rest of their countrymen they sought to deceive us by the conflict strategy of shifting the entire blame onto the Ministers of Finance whom they had approved less than two years ago in a bi-partisan manner for appointment to office. The attempt by the majority and minority members of parliament to distance themselves from the mess caused to the nation’s economy and social fabric by the indecent compromises and collusion by parliament with the executive in bringing the national economy to its lowest level in our history fails upon any casual analysis of the role played by Parliament in bring the nation to our present situation.

What happened on the opening of the parliamentary session on 25 October 2022 demonstrates how the pursuit of purely partisan political and economic self-interest of our parliamentarians undermines the letter and spirit of the 1992 Constitution to create a country in which there would be a fair distribution of its resources and the sharing of responsibilities by citizens on a non-partisan basis. Both the majority and the minority members of parliament agree on one thing. The majority wants the Minister for Finance and the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance removed from office by the President before the presentation and approval of the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy

upon their ultimatum to the President. The minority caucus also wants the Minister of Finance removed from office by the President pursuant to a motion and vote of censure by Parliament.

The only reason they could not come together to pursue an agreed and common cause to achieve their objective is the selfish desire to take political credit for the removal of the two ministers which in their respective perceptions will enhance their chances of being re-elected to Parliament at the 2024 elections. Underpinning the inability of the members of parliament to adopt a common strategy and tactics to achieve what is a common and agreed objective is the use of gamesmanship arising from their actions for horse trading for personal economic benefits in the ensuing negotiations for the settlement of their respective demands with the executive branch of government led by the President.

The contradictory and divergent adoption of a mismatching conflict strategy of gamesmanship has manifested in the failure so far by the majority members to achieve the selfish and partisan objectives underpinning their original ultimatum to the President. The fact that the majority members of the New Patriotic Party gave the President an irrevocable commitment not to approve the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy but caved in within hours of making the irrevocable commitment to the people of Ghana when they met the President was a clear indication to the nation of the selfishness of their motives for horse trading for personal benefits that their press conference was intended to evoke. As one of the rebels said in letting the cat out of the bag in an interview, the replacement for the Ministers to be sacked must be made from the membership of the majority caucus.

And nobody who pretends that by walking back on their statements and ceding to the President the right to consider their ultimatum after the conclusion of the IMF negotiations, and the presentation and approval of the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy, the majority members of parliament from the New Patriotic Party had kept their promises to their constituents made at their press conference, is not living by any semblance of rational reasoning and argumentation.

An analysis of the pronouncements and posturing from the gamesmanship by the minority members to achieve their objectives through a vote of censure points to the ultimate failure of their endeavour because the achievement of that objective in a secret vote of the requisite total number of members required to carry the vote will lead to the implosion of the New Patriotic Party as a viable political party in the next election. And most of the majority members of parliament would lose their seats in the election to the next parliament at the 2024 elections.

The selfish economic and political power motives underpinning the divergent positions or tactics adopted by both sides of the House for the achievement of an otherwise common objective of removing the two ministers from office should demonstrate to the electorate that these members of parliament cannot be relied upon to fight for the citizens' objective and non-partisan economic and social interest for which the 1992 Constitution was promulgated.

Indeed, an examination and analysis of open source materials and intelligence points to the fact that the grandstanding displayed by members of the majority in parliament and the members of the minority in parliament on 25 October 2022 was planned to take place on the first day of the opening of parliament from the long vacation to give the appearance that

members of parliament from both sides had listened to their constituents and taken action on the complaints, suffering, and draconian economic hardship being experienced in the country at the least opportunity. The intelligence emanating from parliament coheres with the fact that the majority and the minority together with their leadership had consulted or knew about the other's impending action and their timing for 25 October 2022 but could not agree on who should take credit for the eventual outcome for reasons of purely partisan political and economic self-interest of the two sides.

The foregoing introduction and summation were derived from the detailed examination and analysis made hereunder of the simultaneous events ushered in by the gamesmanship of the members of the majority and minority caucus of parliament on 25 October 2022 to remove the two Ministers in the Ministry of Finance and the after mouths of those events.

### **THE MAJORITY'S CAUCUS ULTIMATUM AND ITS COLLAPSE**

The morning of 25 October 2022 saw a majority of the members of parliament of the New Patriotic Party call a press conference at which they issued (what the public perceived as gullible people were intended to take seriously as) an unprecedented ultimatum to the President to remove Ken Ofori-Atta, the Minister for Finance, and Charles Adu-Boahen, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance. On the same day, and morning, simultaneously the Minority Leader announced the filing of (what the same perceived gullible public was intended to take seriously as) a motion of censure to begin the process to remove Ken Ofori-Atta, the Minister for Finance from office.

The grievances, ultimatum, and the irrevocable commitment made by the majority members of the New Patriotic Party are captured in the following words from the press conference:

*“We have had occasion to defend allegations of conflict of interest, lack of confidence and trust against leadership of our Finance Ministry. The recent developments within our economy are of great concern to the greater majority of members of our caucus and our constituents....The summary of our concern leads to the plea that the Minister for Finance, Ken Ofori-Atta, and the minister of state at the Ministry of Finance, Charles Adu Boahene, should be removed from office....Meanwhile, we want to serve notice that until such persons as aforementioned are made to resign or removed from office, we members of the Majority Caucus here in Parliament will not participate in any business of government by or for the president or by any other minister....If our request is not responded to positively, we'll not be present for the Budget hearing, neither would we participate in the debate.”*

Within hours, the rebel members of the majority in parliament retreated from their threats and irrevocable commitments after a stern rebuke from the President for their failure to have raised the issues with him before going public. The President is reported by the government's authoritative Asaase Radio to have told them that he was in no doubt about the determination of the two Ministers of Finance to conclude the negotiations with the Fund, secure additional financing and finalise the 2023 Budget and appropriation to bring relief to Ghanaians - “You do not change a captain who is steering the ship out of a storm,” the President is reported to have authoritatively lectured them. The President, according to Asaase Radio's reportage:

*“.... asked for the two men, with their wealth of contacts and experience built up over the years and in their current jobs, to be allowed to conclude the Budget and IMF negotiations. If, at the end of this, the vast number of MPs are still not happy, he said, he has no problem*

*with listening to their concerns and taking appropriate steps to address these. Although he understands the MPs' anxieties, the president said, for him, given the exigencies of recent challenges, this is also a time for cool heads.*

The Majority Leader, Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu, was reported to have ingratiatingly welcomed the sentiments expressed by the President and told him that the leadership of the Majority Caucus in Parliament will meet with the MPs who demanded the Finance Minister's resignation, on Wednesday afternoon consult the "old lady" and revert to the President. Asaase News dropped the following hint "some of the ringleaders are still adamant that the duo must go." It reported further what it had learned as follows:

*"that some are even planning another press conference to say the position remains the same, and that there are moves to organise a demonstration against the two ministers... However, a large number of backbenchers who were also for the removal of Ofori-Atta and Adu Boahene are now shifting to the position that the two must be allowed first to prepare the Budget and conclude the IMF negotiations."*

There now appears to be an agreement between the members of parliament of the New Patriotic Party and their government that the parliamentary grievances against the Minister of Finance and the Minister of State for Finance will be dealt with after the completion of the IMF negotiations, and the presentation and approval of the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy by Parliament. The Majority Leader, who is also the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, appears to have urged his side to bear with the President until after the completion of the appropriation of the budget when he was quoted as having said in an interview that:

*"And that is how come for the avoidance of doubt I said let us include the appropriation so that there's no doubt in anybody's mind that after the budget has been read then agitations will start again.... We'll continue to engage and I believe we'll find an amicable resolution to this."*

Indeed the Majority Leader was just attempting to play both sides of the game with his rebel members and with the Presidency. This is the man who told Citi Breakfast Show on 26 October 2022:

*"I have listened to their concerns, about the fact that if the Finance Minister is removed it might help us in our recovery. I told them I appreciate their concerns. My only concern was the timing. Considering our negotiations with the IMF and how far it has come, and how it may affect the progress we have made so far.... I appealed to them to hold their horses, that was on Sunday, and I even revealed some discussions I had earlier with the President, and I thought that was going to calm their nerves a bit. But at the end of the day, I was unable to dissuade them." (Emphasis supplied)*

According to human sources acquainted with this matter, the President had assured the Majority Leader at an earlier meeting with the President to convey the grievances of the rebel members of the majority caucus to the President before the storm broke that there was going to be a reshuffle of his Ministers in January 2023 without saying who were going to be casualties of the reshuffle. But the minority caucus had been threatening a motion of censure against the Minister for Finance since July 2022 before Parliament went on recess. The majority caucus knew through their moles within the minority about the intended execution

of the minority's threat upon the opening of Parliament on 25 October 2022. The majority caucus in parallel determined not to allow the minority side to upstage them and take credit for the removal of the Minister for Finance from office. Doing nothing or acquiescing in the minority move would clearly have endangered the prospects of most of the majority caucus members from returning to the next Parliament after the 2024 elections.

As in every inter-group conflict, there are those within the New Patriotic Party members of parliament who are dissatisfied with the conclusions at the 25 October 2022 meeting with the President, NPP Executives, and the majority caucus at which there was no undertaking or promise by the President that their ultimatum had been accepted for execution after the approval of the budget and the passage of the Appropriated Bills by Parliament. The posturing, therefore, continues by some of the rebels in the majority caucus, with the Majority Leader who is also a core member of the executive branch, playing the delicate balancing role of throwing wool over the eyes of the perceived gullible public that the whole majority caucus has now aligned itself with the demands of the original 80 rebels in ensuring that the Ministers are removed after the passage of the Appropriation Bills.

### **THE SUPPRESSION OF SUSPECTED CORRUPTION AND CORRUPTION-RELATED OFFENCES**

The vain glorious pronouncements and ultimatum for the sacking of the ministers before the presentation and approval of the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy to parliament and its shameful recantation within hours in meek and sheepish diffidence to the President's rebuke, demands, or firm instructions to the rebels to toe the party line without any commitment by the President to accede to any of demands of the rebels were further compounded by the news that on the very next day, Wednesday 26 October 2022, an unnamed businessman approached the rebelling members of the majority in parliament with incentives in a fat envelope to persuade them to rescind their ultimatum for the removal of the Ministers in the Ministry of Finance from office.

The bribe or inducement according to the audio recording of the interview on Joy FM was first received by the rebel group before granting an audience to the businessman and later returned to the unnamed businessman when the group decided it could not do his bidding: he was told not to involve himself in the dispute. The interview which was supposed to be a display of honour and integrity by the rebels in the majority caucus does not appear to have achieved the purpose in the narration when examined and analyzed critically:

*“The man came and wanted us to turn round and reconsider the decision to appeal to the President to relieve Ofori-Atta of his post. We listened to him and he said that when he had come here to talk to us, we had given him the opportunity to address us and therefore he wants to make certain demands from us. Indeed, he got disappointed when we said we cannot take anything. It is not for the reason of money that we are making this demand. We are motivated by our conscience and therefore it is not about materialism. That is where we returned the money to him and he took it away.”*

The recording of the interview as reported by Class FM is blunt on the return of the bribe which had been received already as follows:

"We refunded it to him on the principle that we are not doing what we are doing for money. Because of that, we did not open the envelope to even know how much was in it." (Emphasis supplied)

A rational, reasonable, and level-headed understanding of the foregoing portion of the interview is that the interest of the business community in ensuring tranquility in the political space is a legal exception for affluent citizens from the business community to bribe our members of parliament and get away with their criminal offenses. This is what the leader of the rebels was reported to have said in the interview that gives credence to the foregoing conclusion:

*"He said that it is not in the interest of the business community to see this confusion in governance and therefore for the sake of the business community and their businesses let us ensure tranquility in the political space."*

The leader of the rebels is reported to have "...indicated that the MPs did not find any need to investigate the actions of the businessman since he was only interested in ensuring tranquility within the leadership of the government."

### **MAJORITY LEADER THROWS IN WRENCH OF A KNOWN BUSINESSMAN WITH WAYS OF DEALING WITH BOTH SIDES OF THE HOUSE**

The Majority Leader for reasons of his own threw in a wrench to put a damper on the unconvincing reasons assigned by the rebel members of the majority caucus for not finding the need to report the unnamed businessman to law enforcement for investigation when he informed the public in an interview on Joy FM on 1 November 2022 that the businessman in question is a known figure in the business community who has his way of dealing with both sides of the political divide. The Majority Leader thus underscored and brought to the fore again corruption by lobbyists, businessmen, the executive, and other power elites which Ghanaians had suspected all along to be pervasive and endemic on both sides of the political divide to the detriment of the common national interest enjoined by the Constitution to guide parliament.

Sources from within the minority side of Parliament have whispered in confidence the identity of the unnamed businessman as members of the minority saw the businessman when he came to Parliament to engage the rebel members of the majority caucus. The minority caucus, like the majority caucus, is also not prepared to rock the boat by going public with a public disclosure of the identity of the businessman who admittedly has his own corrupt way of dealing with both sides of the political divide in parliament. The response to the question of whether the businessman had also engaged the minority with fat envelopes to go slow with the motion of censure on the Minister of Finance was met with the answer: "No comments!".

The Honourable Members of Parliament who were pretending to be pursuing a constitutional duty on behalf of their constituents choose to participate in or to abate the unnamed businessman's crime of bribery and corruption by not reporting the matter immediately to any law enforcement agency for impartial investigation and possible prosecution to vindicate the integrity of Parliament. The Majority Leader admitted that he had knowledge of the bribery and took no action until the public started baying for law enforcement investigation when he made an about turn to say that the matter was under investigation to establish the

facts and reasons for any intended bribing of the members of parliament in the performance of their duties.

But the interview granted to Joy FM by the leader of the rebel members of the New Patriotic Party establishes conclusively that there was the giving and the taking of a bribe in a fat envelope by the unnamed businessman to the rebel parliamentary group and an alleged return of the envelopes when the group upon second thought decided against keeping the bribe. This narrative leads any rational citizen to one and only one irresistible conclusion that corruption and corruption-related activity took place between the giver and receivers of the fat envelope in the otherwise august House of our Parliament of all places. The return of the fat envelope does not negate the consummation of the suspected commission of the crime of corruption.

The Majority Leader's attempt to throw dust into the eyes of the public with an ongoing investigation after his in-group's admission of the abetment of or receipt of the proceeds of the crime of corruption or corruption-related offense is the newest display of the height of ingenuity which only parliamentarians the world over who have developed and perfected the art of parliamentary deception to hoodwink their gullible public can indulge in and which one questions at the peril of being cited for contempt of parliament.

And the Majority Leader knows too well that the identity of the businessman who the leader of the rebel group refused report to law enforcement for investigation will not be publicly known for investigation and prosecution. In any case, where is the proof that any bribes were indeed returned? This can only be established when a report is made to law enforcement for an impartial investigation to take place for possible prosecution of the giver and the takers of the bribe. In the meantime, the public is left to guess on whose behalf the businessman was acting to bribe the members of the majority in parliament. The probability that the businessman also corrupted members of the minority caucus too who were at the same time seeking to remove the same Ministers from office on motion of censure cannot be settled without an investigation into the suspected corruption of the rebel MPs.

### **PURPOSEFUL RELEASE OF DELAYED FOUR STATUTORY PAYMENTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

A few days after the filing of the motion for a vote of censure of the Minister for Finance, Ken Ofori Atta, and the demand by the majority members of the majority caucus for the removal of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of State at the Ministry of Finance, Charles Adu Boahene and following up on the bribery or attempted bribery of the rebel members of parliament by the so-called affluent businessman, the Minister of Finance was reported online to have "released four major statutory payments in respect of Common Fund (Quarters 1 and Two), MPs Moni Monitoring and Evaluation (Second quarter), Q1 and Q2 of District Common Fund as well as the Disability Relief Fund to districts". One of the rebel New Patriotic Party members of parliament from the Afigya Kwabre North Constituency in the Ashanti Region, Charles Adomako-Mensah, confirmed and justified the payments as a member of a panel discussion on Metro TV as follows:

*"That is true, it is true. The payments were supposed to come and there were delays, and it has been paid. It is true....Uncle Kwasi, these are statutory payments, there were delays fortunately they have been paid, thank God, they have been paid...they've been paid because they have to be paid....I am not too sure if it was because of the demands ...the fact that it*

*was after but I am not too sure if it was because of the demands....Oh, Randy, delays in Common Fund payments are not something new.”*

Analytically, the Member of Parliament’s answers appears to summarize the sentiments of his colleagues on both sides of the parliamentary divide of a sense of selfish entitlement when their financial self-interest is at stake as members of the House. This overrides their responsibility to the plight of the several contractors and businessmen from their constituencies whose businesses have burst or are on the verge of collapsing because the Ministry of Finance has for years refused or failed to honoured payments for work done and completed for the Government.

The timing of the release of the statutory payments which have been a sore grievance of all members of parliament against the intransigence of the Minister of Finance was either an ingratiating move by the Minister to soften the adversaries or intended to influence the outcome of the parliamentarians to remove the two ministers from office. Whichever way one looks at it, it smacks of suspected corruption which Kissi Agyebeng, the Special Prosecutor will rather classify as peddling of influence or influence peddling which are not covered by the Office of the Special Prosecutor Act, 2017 (Act 959) to avoid possible prosecution in a court of law.

#### **THE MINORITY’S MOTION OF CENSURE AGAINST THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND ITS FATE**

On the same day and morning of 25 October 2022 the Minority Caucus in Parliament claimed to have successfully filed a motion of censure to initiate the processes to remove the Finance Minister from office. The Minority Leader, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, told Parliament on 25 October 2022 in a contribution in parliament that Ofori-Atta “cannot manage or supervise his own mess, he is not fit for the purpose”. He, therefore, urged his colleagues on the other side of the House to join the Minority to ensure Ofori Atta is removed from office.

Hon. Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, the Member of Parliament for North Tongu is said to have confirmed in a post on his social media: “We’re glad there’s positive indication some of our NPP colleagues will support us.” But the Majority Member of Parliament for the Subin Constituency, Hon. Eugene Boakye Antwi dispelled the perception that the 80 Majority MPs who also want the removal of the Minister for Finance, Ken Ofori-Atta, were going to support the Minority Caucus’s motion of censure to remove the Minister of Finance. He said:

*“I don't think we are going to support the NDC to remove our Minister. We have just made a separate call to the President of Ghana.... We are on a different tangent; not the same as the NDC. They are going through a censure motion.... We have demonstrated to the whole country today that it is not NDC members seeking the removal of Ken Ofori Atta. It is rather his own members of Parliament who are not happy with the performance of Ken Ofori-Atta.”*

A subsequent objection by the Deputy Majority Leader, Alexander Kwamina Afenyo-Markin, to the competence of and the admission of the motion of censure against the Minister of Finance sponsored by Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka, and 128 other Members of Parliament (MPs) being on the Order Paper of the House on grounds of lack of sufficient particulars was overruled by the Speaker of Parliament. The Speaker took the view that the concerned Ministers only needed to be told of the grounds of the motion and “I think exactly that is what has been done by the sponsors of the motion. And so, I rightfully admitted it.”

The Speaker stated further that the notice had been given for seven sitting days of Parliament, stipulating that:

*“Then after that 14-days from the receipt of the motion by the Speaker...and so that is what we are going by. The Minister definitely, since it is a notice to the public would have sufficient basis to prepare his defense and the Minister would be given the opportunity to submit his defense during the debate.”*

The Speaker concluded by stating that at the end of the day, the law was clear as to the support that such a motion should get to constitute a censure - a two-thirds majority vote of MPs was needed to censure a minister.

### **Minority and Majority Members to join hands in carrying through the motion of censure?**

Consequently, the members of the minority National Democratic Congress in Parliament have had their motion accepted by the Speaker and tabled for debate on 10 November 2022. There are those within the body politic who think that in spite of the gamesmanship being displayed by both sides as to who should take credit for removing Ken Ofori Atta and Charles Adu Boahene from office, should the vote of censure go to secret balloting of the members of the disgruntled New Patriotic Party will join the 129 members of the National Democratic Congress to achieve their common objective of removing the two ministers from office.

The available facts, intelligence, and a critical analysis of the reality point to the minority motion of censure also failing. The cost to the members of the majority New Patriotic Party in joining the members of the minority National Democratic Congress to remove the Minister for Finance from office on the minority’s motion of censure will be too high a price to be paid by the whole majority caucus of parliament and ultimately affect the very survival and existence of New Patriotic Party as a political party in Ghana.

Because the minority and majority members of parliament are acting in their individual and partisan self-interest to ingratiate themselves to their constituents as the ones who fought the President to ameliorate the economic hardship felt by their constituents, in order to safeguard their re-election to Parliament in 2024, their strategies and tactics for the removal of the two ministers could not be coordinated as a bi-partisan endeavour. The grounds upon which the minority seeks to remove the Minister for Finance from office are grounds on which the minority had earlier compromised with the majority in parliament during the approval process of the Ministers by Parliament or are ones that are subject to ongoing investigations by committees of parliament, and therefore sub judice for purposes of the filing and commencement of a fair motion of censure process.

It is imperative because of the gamesmanship between the majority and minority members of parliament to take credit for saving the country from the economic mess they each contributed to by their laxity of oversight of the government to state the grounds of the motion of censure to refresh our memories:

*“1. Despicable conflict of interest ensuring that he directly benefits from Ghana’s economic woes as his companies receive commissions and other contractual advantages, particularly from Ghana’s debt overhang.*

*2. Unconstitutional withdrawals from the Consolidated Fund in blatant contravention of Article 178 of the 1992 Constitution supposedly for the construction of the President's Cathedral;*

*3. Illegal payment of oil revenue into offshore accounts in flagrant violation of Article 176 of the 1992 Constitution;*

*4. Deliberate and dishonest misreporting of economic data to Parliament;*

*5. Fiscal reckless leading to the crash of the Ghana Cedi which is currently the worst-performing currency in the world;*

*6. Alarming incompetence and frightening ineptitude resulting in the collapse of the Ghanaian economy and excruciating cost of living crisis;*

*7. Gross mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy which has occasioned untold and unprecedented hardship”*

In spite of the similarity of the above grounds of the minority's motion of censure with the ultimatum by the rebels of the majority caucus for seeking to remove the Minister for Finance from office, the motion of censure cannot and will not be supported by the members of the majority caucus for reasons of self-preservation. The New Patriotic Party, its members in parliament, and the government would from the conflict studies point of view have suffered such irreparable damage to their reputation and standing before Ghanaians and the whole world from the success of such a vote of censure introduced by the minority that all that will be left of the NPP and its parliamentarians will be the destructive internal escalation of in-group antagonism that may eventually lead to its splitting or to its demise as a viable political party.

## CONCLUSIONS

The simultaneous deceptive actions by the majority and minority sides in parliament were intended primarily to assuage the anger and disappointment of their constituents that both sides of the parliamentary divide shared the suffering and hardship brought upon the nation by the economic and social policies of the executive branch under the President. The assumption behind this insult to the intelligence of the public which both sides in Parliament have always perceived to be gullible people was their conviction that the mass of the population cannot on their own discern the facts in their plain sight that the President's mismanagement of the economic and social policies could only have been possible with the support and cooperation of Parliament.

Their constituents are supposed not to be able to reason that the Constitution had clearly apportioned to the legislative branch of government the mandatory function of being the bulwark and gatekeeper against any breaches of the peoples' trust by the President in any pursuit of misguided economic and social policies detrimental to the wellbeing of their constituents and this country as a whole.

Ken Ofori Atta and Charles Adu Boahene were vetted and approved in dubious circumstances less than two years ago in a bi-partisan manner by the very members of parliament who on 25 October 2022 were sacrificing them for removal from office to divert

public attention from their respective roles in enabling the creation of the messy economic situation in the country. All questions about their competence, conflict of interest, and the harshness of our social and economic circumstances as a nation were raised by civil society and other better enlightened and knowledgeable citizens within the public and brought to the notice of all the members of Parliament.

Now is the time, therefore, for the Minority Leader, Haruna Iddrisu, to honestly tell the public about the consideration that motivated him as the Minority Leader and ranking member of the Appointments Committee to have seconded the motion for the approval of the report of the Appointments Committee presented to the plenary by the Majority Chief Whip Frank Annor Dompreh on behalf of the chairman and first deputy Speaker Joseph Osei-Owusu who was presiding when he seconded the motion knowing that he was not satisfied with the performance of the nominee, Ken Ofori-Atta, who in Mr. Iddrisu's words must face the consequences of running down the economy for the past four years. The Majority Leader, Osei Kyei Mensah-Bonsu who is also now appearing to be holier than thou, and the Minority Leader, Haruna Iddrisu led the bi-partisan approval processes in parliament with the very so-called 80 rebels of the NPP, and those in the minority now championing the censure motion.

Now is also the time for the Minority Leader to reconcile his boastfulness in the viability of his whip when he said in an interview in relation to the motion for censure of the Minister for Finance that: "I have issued a nine-line whip, not even three-line whip, three times three ... and we will stand strong on this matter," with his earlier interview on Pan African TV when he said, inter alia, that:

*"If you put that to a vote and you saw the embarrassing outcome of Hawa Koomson, Kojo Oppong-Nkrumah, Kwesi, any elected MP is an adult, I Haruna Iddrisu cannot accompany an NDC MP into a ballot box to guide him how to exercise his vote. He is responsible enough. Mine is to issue the party whip, which is the directive that we expect you to stand against this policy, nothing more. And as an adult, respecting the secrecy of the ballot, I cannot be held responsible."*

It is imperative that the leadership of parliament is held accountable for their deceptive and contradictory words designed to cheat the intelligence of the public which is made up of citizens who are better knowledgeable and honourable than some of those who by chance find themselves sitting in Parliament.

The public needs to guard its expectations against the possible outcome of the selfish and self-serving gamesmanship from the majority and minority members of Parliament struggling for re-election to parliament after collaborating with the executive branch to lead the nation into the harshest economic and social suffering in our history. There is no better warning in our present situation than the words of Sammy Gyamfi, the National Democratic Congress's National Communications Officer on 4 March 2021 when Ken Ofori-Atta and other Ministers were approved with the suspicious support of the minority in parliament. He wrote in his Facebook comments that:

*"Comrades, the betrayal we have suffered in the hands of the Speaker of Parliament, Rt. Hon. Alban Bagbin, the leadership of our Parliamentary group, particularly Hon. Haruna Iddrisu and Hon. Muntaka Mubarak, and dozens of our own MPs, is what strengthens me to work hard for the great NDC to regain power. They brazenly defied the leadership of the party and betrayed the collective good for their selfish interest. And we, must not let them*

*succeed in their parochial quest to destroy the NDC, the party that has done so much for them and all of us. The shame they have brought on the party will forever hang like an albatross around their necks....”*

These are words of wisdom if members of the National Democratic Congress in Parliament hope to gain the confidence of the public to form a Government in the future. The same words apply to the members of the New Patriotic Party in parliament as to what not to do to worsen the lost confidence of the people in their Government after the mess caused by the blind support they gave to their Government to cause the mess.

The foregoing examination and analysis have demonstrated that the gamesmanship that members of both sides of parliament on 25 October 2022 pretended to separately pursue in removing their common adversary on similar grounds and reasons could be a scam to ensure their re-election to parliament after their contribution to the current economic mess of the country. Hopefully, patriots after reading this piece will be steeled against being disappointed by the eventual failure of the motion of censure after the failure by the majority to remove the ministers before the presentation and approval of the November 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy in Parliament.

Let us continue to put Ghana First! God save Ghana!

**Martin A. B. K. Amidu**

*Song lyrics from “[Time Hard](#)” by The Pioneers*