

GHANA 1981-1991:

A DECADE OF

FORCED REPRESSION

AND MIGRATION

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INTRODUCTION

On December 31, 1991, Ghana's military government, the Provisional National Defence Committee (PNDC) marked its tenth anniversary of being in power. Within that same period, Ghana, situated on the west coast of Africa with a population of about fourteen million, saw an unprecedented flight abroad of its citizens as refugees. During the 1981-91 decade, Ghana emerged as a source of substantial refugee outflow from Africa, next only to the devastated areas in the Horn of Africa. Whereas in the Horn, the flight of people was precipitated by recurrent ecological disasters and devastating wars (as in Ethiopia) or civil wars (as in Somalia), in Ghana military repression was the predominant factor behind the flow of citizens. Too often the enormous refugee crisis in the Horn and Southern Africa overshadowed and at times even led to a disregard of the realities of Ghana's forced migrations. A closer assessment, however, will portray Ghana as a dark-horse when the two related issues, repression of citizens and forced migrations abroad, are considered.

The flight of Ghanaians abroad is not a new phenomenon. In the 1960s clashes between President Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) and opposition parties caused the flight of some members of the opposition. In that early phase, involuntary migrations of Ghanaians were limited in magnitude; and neighbouring African nations and Britain were the major destinations.

The decade 1981-1991, on the other hand, witnessed flights of Ghanaians both unparalleled in volume and strikingly re-oriented from traditional destinations such as Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Britain, to new destinations such as Canada.

THE PNDC

This article outlines the activities of Ghana's military regime, the Provisional National Defence Committee (PNDC) between 1981-1991 and how it caused such a massive flux of Ghanaians abroad. The PNDC (still in power) is chaired by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings. He seized power from the former elected government — People's National Party (PNP) — on December 31, 1981. The essence of the PNDC involves two inextricably combined characteristics: military dictatorial tendencies and revolutionary-socialist ideals.

Soon after it assumed power, the PNDC established a dictatorial grip on Ghana. Under an Establishment Proclamation of January 11, 1982, the PNDC exercised all powers of government. In practice however, Chairman Rawlings developed all government policies, assisted by a number of close advisers. Suspending Ghana's constitution, the PNDC ruled through decrees. No guarantees of freedoms and rights existed. Public tribunals were set up to bypass the regular court system. Criticisms of the revolution, Chairman Rawlings and PNDC members were never tolerated. By severely crushing all coup-makers and conspira-

tors, the PNDC expressed its antagonism to dissent, opposition and "reactionary" attitudes. Also, the revolutionary vigilance of PNDC organs, such as the Bureau of National Investigations, and the overwhelming presence of armed personnel in public places perpetuated the predominance of the regime.

The PNDC launched policies designed to usher in a new revolutionary-socialist era. These were essentially anti-imperialism, anti-bourgeois and relentless in their denunciation of all capitalistic tendencies. In the early days of the regime the main preoccupation was the nationwide mobilization of citizens into revolutionary organs such as People's Defence Committees (PDC), Workers' Defence Committees (WDC), People's Militia, mobilization squads and Task Forces. Both the People's Defence Committees (PDC) and Workers' Defence Committees (WDC) were quasi-political organs, designed to give hitherto under-represented and underprivileged masses a voice in the government. Drastic changes occurred in the social location of power, in higher political and government offices, in urban and village communities and in work places where PDCs and WDCs were rapidly established by the able, angry and discontent. The PDC's and WDC's were collectively renamed "Committees for the Defence of the Revolution" in December, 1984.

Leftist intellectuals and activists from Ghana's high institutions such as the University of Ghana were recruited as key supporters of the new regime. The latter were organized in networks of influential and vanguardist bodies like the Pan-Africa Youth Movement and June Fourth Movement. It was from within such networks, partly composed of Rawling's confidants and partly those who subscribed to his revolutionary ideals, that the PNDC appointed leaders for para-revolutionary organs and key state institutions such as the media, state boards, energy commission, tribunals and other powerful committees.

Throughout the 1981-91 decade, the socialist leanings of the PNDC regime, its dictatorial nature and the revolutionary vehemence which characterized the implementation of policies, contributed to the flow of Ghanaians abroad.

ECONOMIC POLICIES

The economic policies of the PNDC had by far the greatest impact on the life of Ghanaians and also on their flight abroad. The PNDC assumed power in a Ghana where insufficient foreign assistance, corruption and years of economic mismanagement had created chaotic economic conditions. The regime inherited an incredible budget deficit that could only be financed by printing money, generating still more inflation. Exports were falling, cocoa could not be moved to the ports and Ghana's terms of trade had dropped by thirty-one percent since 1980. Further, Ghana had no external financial reserves. Because of its large debt arrears (about \$348 million) it was unable to obtain external credits.

In tackling these dire economic problems, the PNDC pursued an austere economic restructuring program unparalleled in scope and duration elsewhere in Africa. The harshness of the policies and the manner in which they were enforced, compounded by a total clamp-down on all who challenged the viability of the economic policies, had a profound impact on forced migration within the decade. The PNDC launched an Economic Recovery Program in 1982. This contained plans to rehabilitate roads and infrastructure, revive ailing industries, increase agricultural production and to conduct a house-cleaning exercise aimed at profiteers, smugglers and tax evaders. The specificities of the recovery program were often cast in strong revolutionary rhetoric.

To ensure external cash flow, the PNDC entered into an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to institute economic

reforms in line with a structural adjustment program (SAP). In eighteen months, Ghana devalued the local currency "cedi" by one thousand eight hundred and eighteen percent, leaving it worth five and a half percent of its prior nominal value. This also raised real costs of imports by more than eighteen times. Government controlled prices were eliminated on necessary imported goods and services like drugs and spare parts, permitting the full impact of the increased costs to be passed on to the consumers, with devastating impact. Price controls involving far lower subsidy levels were retained on only twenty-three widely used essential commodities. The structural adjustment program (SAP) also called for large layoffs or redeployments in order to reduce employment, incomes and effective demand.

Due to harsh economic measures, real wages saw no increases. Real wages in 1982 were only sixteen percent of their 1975 level. Minimum wages rose in successive stages from 12.50 cedis (approximately 6 cents) per day to 70 cedis (approximately 24 cents) per day in December, 1984, leaving wage and salary earners worse off than they were in April, 1983.

The effects of the austere economic policies on Ghanaians were agonizing and engendered a total rejection from organized university students, professional bodies, trades, teachers and other groups who were affected. The government and its organs counter-attacked all such critics and demonstrators by accusing them of being reactionaries. Spokespersons amongst protesting groups became targets of abuse, surveillance and military terrorization. The harsh economic reforms, scarcities, lay-offs and the high inflation caused a lot of Ghanaians to leave for abroad. Also, the clamp-down on protestors forced leading members of organized anti-PNDC groups to seek refuge elsewhere.

The PNDC's anti-bourgeois and revolutionary socialist ideas surfaced in the form of incessant attacks on property owners, mer-

chants, industrialists, expatriate investors, professionals, traditional nobilities and so on. The intimidating bodies, Citizens' Vetting Committees (CVC) were established in January, 1982 to screen assets and economic activities of people suspected of "profiteering, corruption and tax evasion." The ordeal of appearing before such militaristic committees caused a large section of Ghana's business community, their families and close associates to flee abroad.

Self-employed petty traders in central markets in Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi, Takoradi and Koforidua were forcibly impelled to migrate more than any other group. The PNDC persistently denounced traders as profiteers who were responsible for all forms of economic malpractices including hoarding and over-pricing. Stringent import licences regulations and frequent army swoops on traders combined to endanger the life and livelihood of these people. Actions taken against traders included public whipping, subjecting females to gross indecencies, arrests for profiteering, seizures and so on. Their powerlessness in the face of unparalleled revolutionary measures forced countless numbers to flee. Estimates of traders in flight could be as high as twenty thousand.

The exigency of Ghana's economic development and the policies for its eradication were associated with arrests, imprisonments without trial, deportation of expatriates, abductions, executions, ceaseless harassment and terrorization of the business community. The result was a massive exodus of Ghanaians.

MILITARY POLITICS

Throughout the decade of 1981-91 the impact of Rawling's dictatorial grip on power was profound. Government policies stemmed from the PNDC's insistence that covert imperialist agents in league with predominant forces outside Ghana, were working meticulously to topple the regime and derail the ongoing revolu-

tionary socio-economic programs. PNDC Law 4-Preventative Custody Law was established in 1982 for "the arrest and indefinite detention without trial of persons determined to have engaged or engage in activities not in the interest of national security." Other obnoxious laws included: the 1984 PNDC Law 91, which prevented a person detained under the Preventative Custody Law from filing for Habeas Corpus, the Newspaper Licensing Law - PNDC Law 211, which was used to terminate the critical press and the Religious Bodies Registration Law which interfered with freedom of conscience and religion.

These laws were frequently used against critics of the regime. In 1983 up to four hundred and ninety-two former officials of the erstwhile PNP and members of other political parties were detained under PNDC Law 4. In 1988, two organizations, the New Democratic Movement (NDM) and Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards (KNRG) issued a statement in Accra demanding to know why four of their members continued to be detained without charge or trial since their arrest in May and July, 1987. The NDM/KNRG statement called the continued detention of these four, an instance of the wider problem of repression of democratic rights in Ghana.

Amnesty International reported in 1991 that at least forty political detainees — possibly more — were still held in administrative detention at the end of 1990. The report indicated that majority of the detainees had been held since the first half of the 1980s on suspicion of involvement in conspiracies against the government. The conditions which detained people endured were notoriously punitive. Allegations of torture sometimes leading to death were rampant. Released prisoners talked about practices of being brutally whipped while tied down, beaten by rifles, and so on. Other forms of maltreatment included dep-

riuation of food, water and medication.

Throughout the decade personnel from the PNDC's security arm, the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI), frequently took people into custody with or without warrants. The imposition of curfew and its attendant state of emergency at the inception of the revolution facilitated secret abductions of people at the whim of the regime. Tribunals formed to try political prisoners depended on judges with little or no legal experience. They adopted shortcuts to legal safeguards and due process to provide "rough" and "ready" justice. The pro-PNDC stance of the tribunals led to frequent imposition of the death penalty on defendants — who were mostly those convicted of coup attempts.

The PNDC's tight grip on power, merciless treatment of opponents, unfair justice system and political persecutions contributed to the involuntary migration of Ghanaians throughout the decade of 1981-91.

REVOLUTIONARY ORGANS

Relentless harassments, intimidations and terrorization from Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR), Civil Defence Organization (CDO) and People's Militia were also responsible for the exodus of Ghanaians during the decade under consideration. All three groups mentioned above worked as revolutionary organs, charged with mobilization of people for the implementation of government policies. They were also vested with responsibility for tracking and reporting dissident activities, conducting anti-smuggling operations and working with security agencies in their local communities.

The revolutionary organs were a source of unceasing harassment and coercion to Ghanaians. At the workplace the activities of CDRs interfered to the point of fanaticism, causing disruptions and lost pro-

duction. In state owned enterprises CDR members accused workers and management of being counter-revolutionaries — the consequent friction and clashes caused loss of employment and promotion. Workers and managers were framed on charges of corruption and hoarding in order to settle personal scores. Within the community, CDRs passed on information about people's political affiliations, activities and so on to military officials, which led to their arrests and/or persecution. They also engaged in forced entry into homes and monitored telephones and mail during security investigations. Their presence undoubtedly constituted real terror and discomfort among Ghanaians.

In rural areas revolutionary organs organized their own courts and meted out justice according to no established procedures. Outspoken people at community or town meetings were occasionally accused of inflaming anti-revolutionary sentiments and reported to military authorities.

Military personnel posed a threat to Ghanaians. Operating under emergency regulations soldiers physically assaulted, brutalized, abducted and killed civilians as part of their "house cleaning exercise." Military squads caused a high level of violence against civilians soon after the installation of the PNDC. The most widely reported execution during 1982 occurred on June 30, when three High Court Judges and a retired army major were abducted from their homes during curfew hours and shot. Soldiers went on rampages as a result of their own personal disputes. The victims of such squads originated from all sectors of the society; they included journalists, students, trade union leaders, lawyers and political leaders. News and rumours of disappearances, abductions and killings caused people to doubt their security under the regime and they therefore left for protection elsewhere.

THE PNDC AND STUDENTS

The 1981-91 decade was replete with clashes between students and the military. Ghanaian students, through their mouthpiece, the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), acted as a formidable pressure group capable of criticizing government policies. In a situation of civilian helplessness and powerlessness under a military regime, the concentration of diverse academic minds resulted in the necessary socio-political power and inspiration for the students to act. Between January-March, 1982, students mobilized into a Task Force which engaged in cocoa evacuation, teaching, political education and the formation of CDRs (then PDCs and WDCs). Notwithstanding these signs of cooperation, student-military relations endured awkward moments. Throughout 1982, students recurrently expressed concern about education policy, human rights infractions and the country's political future.

Students' anti-PNDC activities reached a climax in May, 1983 when over two thousand mine workers from Obuasi charged on the campus of UST, provoked by the students' criticism of PNDC's austerity budget and calls for a return to civilian rule. The workers were armed with pickaxes, machetes, clubs and other weapons. On May 6, 1983 students at the University of Ghana also demonstrated through the main streets of Accra. This invited a violent counter-attack by militant workers. The PNDC eventually closed down all three universities in Ghana in May, 1983 until March, 1984. During the closure, security agents sought students accused of "misleading" and "misguiding" students. News of such arrests prompted students who played various roles in the agitations to flee abroad. Student agitations subsided in 1984 only to flare up in 1987/88. During the academic year, students and the government clashed over an education reform program. Students opposed plans to end the government's subsidies on

feeding, boarding and rent increases. This led to closure of the universities and arrest and imprisonment of student leaders.

In the midst of such student agitations, the PNDC took swift and punitive measures. Student leaders were denounced as imperialist stooges, paid by outside forces to ferment dissent among students. Undercover agents terrorized students and their families.

THE PNDC AND RELIGIOUS BODIES

Though the PNDC is not necessarily anti-religion, its first decade in power witnessed incessant intimidations and hideous persecution of religious bodies in Ghana. The most heinous attack occurred in February, 1982 when over fifty soldiers from Kumasi's Fourth Battalion Infantry Brigade launched an attack on a religious sect "The Lord is my Shepherd." The Pastor, Odiyiefoo Asare, was killed, his body was dismembered and put on public display. In another incident in 1989 the leader of "The Resurrection Power Ministry," Brother Amoako, died in an accident involving a military vehicle, after preaching against the PNDC.

The PNDC's intimidation of religious bodies crystallized in 1989 when PNDC Law 221 (also called Religious Bodies Registration Law) was introduced on June 14. According to the Ministry of the Interior, PNDC Law 221 was created because certain individuals and groups (were) using or planning to use church premises as meeting grounds in furtherance of their political schemes and also because church premises had already been used for activities calculated to undermine national unity. In practice, however, this law permitted the government to screen existing religious groups in order to weed out those deemed prejudicial to PNDC interests.

In June, 1989, the government banned the activities of Jehovah Witness and the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter Day Saints, also known as Mormons. The PNDC's ban stemmed from its concern that these local branches of worldwide religious sects could be used as havens for international spies. In spite of the ban, Jehovah Witness followers worshipped secretly in schools, back rooms and in the bush. Such secret worshippers became prey for CDR and security officials. The ban on the Mormons was lifted in December, 1990, while the prohibition of Jehovah Witness activities persisted until November 1, 1991.

A REIGN OF TERROR

Faced with the massive arrests, curfews, harsh economic policies, persecutions and absolute intolerance of any opposition whatsoever, Ghanaians were forced to live in a reign of terror characterized by perpetual insecurity and discomfort. The persistent violations, aggravated by the punitive economic policies, had a profound effect on flights of Ghanaians abroad.

All too often authorities involved in the refugee determination in both Europe and North America have been quick to reject Ghanaian refugee claims as bogus. Hastily lumping all such applications into a "fraudulent" and "bogus" category makes light of the wanton victimizations, ceaseless terrorizations, abuses and persecutions which occurred under the PNDC reign between 1981-91. People fleeing from the oppression, arrests and other violations are victims of both an unsafe political system and economic disorderliness.

GHANA REFUGEES

It is extremely hard to establish a precise total of Ghanaians in flight, due to their being scattered all over Africa, Europe and North America. Data on Ghanaian refugees in Europe assembled from United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), combined with estimates from community based agencies in

Canada, indicates that approximately fifty thousand Ghanaians sought refuge abroad between 1982-1990.

Three categories of Ghanaian refugees were identifiable. Firstly, there was the "elite group" composed of key members of the civilian administration dethroned by the 1981 coup. Included in this category were parliamentarians, heads of Ghana's diplomatic mission abroad, lawyers, judges, university lecturers, heads of governmental boards and corporations, top political party officials and other administrative officials. The average age of this group was thirty-five. They were highly educated and belonged to Ghana's top income bracket. Their ties to the dethroned administration made them targets for the military regime. They were the most wanted group. Upon their escape their relatives became targets for the revolutionary cadres.

The next category was the semi-elite group. This was composed of university students and journalists who as a result of their outspokenness, anti-military demonstrations, pamphleteering and criticisms of military policies clashed with the military regime. Also included in this group were civilians and army personnel involved in unsuccessful coup attempts. This class was relatively young and educated.

The third and largest group was the "general category" which consisted of those induced to flee as a result of revolutionary measures like raids on traders, control of religious activities, stringent economic measures, clashes with revolutionary organs and those accused of engagement in illegal economic activities. The average age of this group was twenty; their educational background was up to about high school level. Those included in the general group consisted of traders, pedlars, factory workers, drivers, artisans, smugglers, peasants, etc. This last group formed the bulk of Ghanaian refugees abroad since they easily fell prey to military raids and "revolutionary measures." The foregoing categorization may not be exhaustive but it provides a general framework for classifying Ghanaian refugees.

DESTINATION OF GHANA'S REFUGEES

Before the 1980s Ghanaians in flight sought refuge in neighbouring African nations, particularly Togo, Nigeria and Ivory Coast. The choice of these destinations was convenient in terms of proximity, cost and lack of immigration restrictions. Potential refugees gained access to these nations covertly through bush paths, or small communities located on the borders. The fact that Ghanaians could easily fit in and were acquainted with the local cultures made it easier to seek refuge in neighbouring nations. A few Ghanaian refugees also went to Britain. In the past decade however, the final destination of the majority of Ghanaian refugees shifted from the African continent to destinations in Canada, Germany, France, Sweden and Britain. Such a re-orientation is attributable to numerous factors.

The most crucial factor which refugees considered in their choice of destination was their safety. Ghanaian refugees never considered Ghana's neighbouring countries as safe places for refuge due to proximity to their source of danger, the PNDC. These fears were reinforced by the lack of adequate protection in the African nations they fled to.

The absence of any programs or even viable policies to assist them on their arrival in the African countries made it problematic for them to resettle. The majority of Ghanaian refugees who arrived in places like Ivory Coast and Nigeria had to find their own way about in terms of accommodation and means of livelihood. Reluctance of those in flight to declare themselves as refugees to appropriate authorities made them unable to benefit from any refugee assistance, even when it existed, thus making it hard for them to survive in their new locations.

The poor state of the economics of the African nations impeded their ability to provide meaningful support for potential refugees. In Togo, for instance, the extremely poor financial state of the nation, aggravated by the continuous influx of Ghanaians, made

TABLE 1

Ghanaian Refugee Claimants in Four European Nations

Country	Total	Period
Federal Republic of Germany	7,482	1988-1990
Netherlands	6,032	1983-1990
France	1,240	1988
Belgium	1,196	1988
	15,952	1988

Source: UNCHR, 1990.

it difficult for the country to support refugees. Considerable assistance was needed from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Unable to provide adequate protection and resettlement, these neighbouring African nations, Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Burkina Faso, served as temporary stations for many Ghanaian refugees enroute to final destinations in Europe and beyond. UNHCR figures made available to West Africa Magazine indicated that nineteen thousand seven hundred and sixty-three Ghanaians sought political asylum in seventeen European countries between 1988 and October, 1990. The British Refugee Council (BRC) maintained in 1990 that the largest concentration of Ghanaian political exiles was in Britain, which may be partly explained by Ghana's historic ties to Britain. The latest figures from the BRC showed there were three thousand two hundred and twenty-eight Ghanaians with Convention Refugee Status (the UNHCR definition of refugee status) in Britain. The Council cautioned that since the figures excluded families of these refugees, the number could be over six thousand. Available figures of Ghanaian refugee-applicants in other European nations between 1981-91 are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 2**Incoming Claims (Fast Track)
Top Ten Source Countries and Totals**

May 21/86 – March/87		April/87 – Feb./88		Total Fast Track May 21/86 – Feb./88				
Claims	%	Claims	%	Claims	%			
Ghana	1,072	16.5	Chile	1,495	10.7	Ghana	2,233	10.0
Portugal	1,007	15.5	Ghana	1,161	7.3	Chile	2,067	9.3
Turkey	916	14.1	Iran	1,071	6.8	Turkey	1,922	8.6
Haiti	477	7.3	El Salv.	1,070	6.8	Portugal	1,915	8.5
India	374	5.8	Turkey	1,004	6.4	Iran	1,122	5.0
Chile	372	5.7	Sri Lanka	989	6.3	El Salv.	1,108	5.0
Somalia	315	4.8	Portugal	908	5.7	Sri Lanka	1,017	4.6
Pakistan	194	3.0	Honduras	633	4.0	India	903	4.0
Ethiopia	173	2.7	Lebanon	553	3.5	Haiti	895	4.0
Poland	154	2.4	India	529	3.3	Somalia	843	3.8
Total	5,054	77.8	Total	9,615	60.8	Total	14,023	62.9

The Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands both received a substantial number of Ghanaians within the decade. The totals of one thousand two hundred and forty and one thousand one hundred and ninety-eight for France and Belgium respectively, were considerable for the single year 1988.

The increasing number of asylum-seekers in Europe in the early 1980s attracted restrictive measures. According to UNCHR "some governments introduced measures including prohibitions from working and reduction of social benefits while applications were being considered." Preoccupied with the economic recession and the heavy financial burden constituted by asylum-seekers whose cases often took years to determine in view of the lengthy eligibility procedures, certain governments were no longer in a position to maintain the generous admission criteria of former years. In the Federal Republic of Germany, measures were instituted in 1980 to reduce the duration of asylum procedure and work permits were also prohibited. These measures were reinforced in 1985. Also in Germany neo-Nazi and other anti-immigrant organizations scored propaganda victories, virtually forcing public figures to take a tough stance against immigration in general. In France political parties and groups adopted anti-immigration issues as profitable platforms on which

to campaign and this helped to encourage restrictive laws and actions against immigration. Both Belgium and the Netherlands imposed a Refugee Admission Quota in 1984. The flow of asylum-seekers to Britain was checked with the imposition of visa regulations for Ghanaians from their point of departure for Britain.

The stringent measures adopted in Europe had an impact on Ghanaian refugee claimants, causing them to look at North America — particularly Canada. From 1984 onwards when Europe adopted tougher measures against asylum-seekers, the Canadian Refugee Status Advisory Committee (RSAC) began to receive Ghanaian refugee applications in a sizeable number. As shown in Table 2, successive refugee applications from Ghanaians were among the top ten in Canada between May 21, 1986 and February, 1988. Within the period covered by the table, Ghanaian incoming claims surpassed that of major crisis areas like Somalia, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. The table reveals that in the twenty-two month period May 1986 — February, 1988, two thousand two hundred and thirty three Ghanaians sought refugee status in Canada, the highest among ten countries. The Canadian total of two thousand two hundred and thirty three contrasts sharply with the total of four hundred and two Ghanaian refugee applications Britain received in the same period.

Ghanaian refugees influx to Canada in 1981-91 was influenced by the comparatively flexible refugee policies. Claimants faced no immediate deportation, no refusal of entry, relatively little harsh treatment and so on. The socio-economic opportunities present in Canada also served to boost the choice of Canada as a final destination. Such a preference, however, was not met with a high degree of acceptance. About sixty percent of Ghanaian refugees are still caught in the huge refugee backlog (the acceptance rate was estimated at twenty per one hundred).

Between January 1 and September 20, 1991, eight hundred and eighty-seven Ghanaian refugee claims went through the "Initial Hearing Stage" conducted by the Convention Refugee Determination Division of Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board. Out of these a total of seven hundred and ninety-six were judged to possess credible basis — consequently, they were eligible to proceed to a "Full Hearing Stage." However, out of four hundred and twenty-eight cases which were considered at the final hearing stage, only one hundred and seventy-six cases were given positive recommendations.

CONCLUSION

Repressions and persecution continue to characterize Ghana's PNDC regime. The helplessness of Ghanaians in the face of such inhumane treatment means that the flight abroad will persist. This calls for a coordinated external effort to bring pressure to bear on the military regime to amend its ways. There is the need to open the dialogue on linking economic assistance to poor nations with a decent human rights record.

Notes, Table 2:

- The Fast Track process was implemented on May 21, 1986.
 - The data are divided into 11 month periods for purposes of this table.
- Source: Refugee Status Advisory Committee, unpublished data.

Note

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