

The Political Economy of Northern Ghanaian Development: Issues for Discussion

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INTRODUCTION

- Present situation with regards to NG's development is based history, geography, natural resources etc.
- It is more importantly based on certain false perceptions by policy makers and politicians, including northern politicians over the years.

Introduction (Cont.)

- The false perceptions are:
 - NG contributes marginally to Ghana's economic development. This is historically and presently false!
 - NG is a drain on Ghana's economy. Often mentioned cases are conflicts. Also largely false. Beneficiaries of Northern conflicts are in Accra.
 - NG has very limited natural and other resources. Not true!
 - NG is too poor to be relevant in wealth creation. The wealth of NG is grossly underrated.

The Issues

- NG is marginally part of the political process in Ghana. Ironically both major political parties have their origins in NG. The CPP also has a very strong following in NG
- Governance of any type follow that the 1/3/12/70 paradigm (the leader, the inner core, the outer core and the periphery) and those that determine what actually takes place are the leader and the inner core!
- No northern politicians has ever been in the inner core in any of the two major

Education

- Education critical to any kind of development!
- There has not been any political will to bridge the gap over the years!
- It is possible to bridge the gap and Kwame Nkrumah proved it.
- Others have just refused to see the dangers of a large illiterate population on the economy.

Agriculture

- Ghana as a country is yet to recognize the importance of the food crop and livestock sub-sectors as growth nodes for the economy. Until that is done NG cannot make much progress.
- NG farmers all belong to the private sector. All they need is an enabling environment which must be created by the various governments.
- Increased production in food crops and livestock without an enabling environment will only lead to greater poverty!

The Shea Industry

- The industry that almost every body agrees has great potential since independence has been the shea industry. It is still the most neglected area in terms of research and development.
- All has been done to underdevelop it:
 - It is part of the cocoa sector
 - Its research unit is part of CRIG
- Is that a deliberate “development policy”?

Irrigation

- Little attention to the sector every body agrees NG cannot do without.
- No discussion on irrigation with any body.
- Decisions on irrigation are taken in Accra
- No technical input.
- Another deliberate “development

Livestock

- There is a Ministry of Fisheries (Cabinet rank)
- Fish is far more important to Ghana than cattle, sheep, goats and poultry put together.
- A deliberate “development policy”?

PSI

- I pity the MoFA of agric very much!
- All the major agric components seem to be given special attention outside agric.
- Why not so for crops that are produced in NG?
- A deliberate “development policy”?

MCA

- Tractors, large scale production etc. etc., we have heard and seen all that before. I cannot contemplate success when better planned projects could not succeed.
- MCA does not seem to know or even care exactly what Ghana should do in agriculture.
- All we think is something to export!! Exports are very important but **WE DO NOT EAT EXPORTS!!**

Infrastructure

- That has been discussed extensively!!