

**GHANA'S FOREIGN POLICY UNDER JERRY JOHN RAWLINGS: AN ANALYSIS OF
RAWLINGS' DECISION TO REALIGN GHANA'S RELATIONS FROM THE
EASTERN TO THE WESTERN BLOC IN APRIL 1983**

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ABSTRACT

The study analyses Rawlings' decision to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983. Although many scholarly works such as the works of Boafo-Arthur (1993,1999), Adedeji (2001), Ahiakpor (1991) and Jeong (1998) have reported on Rawlings' decision, only few have examined the events that led to this sudden shift. Therefore, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the decision-making process that led to Rawlings' realignment. The foreign policy decision-making of developing countries regarding specific decisions taken by its leaders are understudied. The study aims to fill in this gap by providing a detailed analysis of a key foreign policy decision in Ghana under the leadership of Jerry John Rawlings. This study draws mainly from secondary sources.

The findings from the study reveal that domestic and external factors accounted for Rawlings' sudden decision to shift from the East to the West in April 1983 in order to secure Ghana's economic survival. Ghana's worsening economic crises and the inability of Ghana's Eastern bloc allies to assist it in addressing them influenced Rawlings' decision to realign Ghana's relations from the East towards the West. The study further reveals that Rawlings' personality might have also influenced his decision.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my husband, Enock Kofi Anku and my daughter, Amy Sena Anku. Also, I dedicate this study to my mum, Faustina Dagadu, my dad, Theodore Kwasi Ansah and my sisters, Lilian Majeed, Ernestina Ansah, and Faustina Ansah.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRC:	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CPP:	Convention People's Party
ERP:	Economic Recovery Program
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IFIs:	International Financial Institutions
LTA:	Leadership Traits Analysis
NDC:	National Democratic Congress
NLC:	National Liberation Council
NRC:	National Redemption Council
PNDC:	Provisional National Defence Council
PNP:	People's National Party
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Program
SMC II:	Supreme Military Council II
UK:	United Kingdom
USA:	United States of America
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Unlike the foreign policy of many developed countries, foreign policy in developing countries especially those in Africa have been greatly shaped by external more than domestic factors and more specifically, by the world powers in the international system (Odoom, 2012). The trajectory of Ghana's foreign policy just like many African countries has been greatly influenced by external factors since its independence in 1957. After Ghana's independence, the country experienced serious economic decline gradually leading the country into ruins. Ghana experienced several economic problems such as currency depreciation, decline in commodities' export prices on the world market especially those of cocoa, high inflation, high deficits, and widespread corruption. Almost all governments after its independence faced these economic problems and tried various means to address the situation. Although all these past administrations strived, one way or the other, to address these economic issues, Ghana's economy did not experience much significant progress. Only the Jerry John Rawlings administration proved successful in achieving an outstanding level of economic development for Ghana.

Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings (Figure 1.1) is well known in Ghanaian political history as a military and a civilian leader who ruled Ghana from 1981 to 2001 and also for a brief period in 1979. Many Ghanaians recognize him as a leader who was very passionate and concerned about the welfare of not only Ghanaians but of Ghana as a whole. His concern was evident in how he showed an outward look about the plight of Ghanaians under previous corrupt governments in Ghana. Before appearing on Ghana's political scenes, Rawlings had witnessed

the widespread corruption of previous administrations that had resulted in hard living conditions for Ghanaians. For instance, corrupt government leaders and their officials had made the trading of basic commodities rise above its official controlled prices for their own benefit and made such commodities scarce and expensive for ordinary Ghanaians to purchase (Engmann, 2020). A documentary (Faces of Africa, 2014) revealed that Ghanaians had difficulty accessing basic commodities such as soap, sugar as well as other food items as a result of the increase in the prices of these commodities thereby resulting in hard living conditions for the poor in society.

The social injustices caused by the corrupt activities of these governments angered Rawlings who was then a junior military official in the Ghanaian Army and made him resentful towards such governments. Besides the social injustices, the Ghanaian economy was also in ruins. The country faced huge economic problems such as drastic decline in cocoa prices (which was Ghana's highest foreign exchange earner), high inflation and currency depreciation, and all other problems that previous governments had failed to address. Rawlings' main vision and objective were to address and improve the economic ills that had weakened almost every aspect of Ghana's economic sector such as the agricultural and industrial sectors and had caused hard living conditions for Ghanaians.

As an individual who hailed from a poor background, Rawlings was familiar with the harsh-living conditions that Ghanaians were facing. As he put it:

I am not an expert in economics, and I am not an expert in law. But I am an expert in working on an empty stomach while wondering when and where the next meal would come from. I know what it feels like going to bed with a headache, for want of food in the stomach (Faces of Africa, 2014).

Rawlings was familiar with the harsh living conditions that Ghanaians were facing under corrupt and unconcerned governments and wanted to address the social injustices and economic

problems Ghanaians were facing. According to a BBC News Documentary (2020), Rawlings referred to himself as, “an ordinary hungry screaming Ghanaian who wanted to realize his creative potential and contribute to Ghana’s development.” Thus, he wanted to address the social injustices in Ghana and transform Ghana’s economic situation.



Figure 1. 1: Jerry John Rawlings.

Source: Rawlings Archival Collection.

To this end, he staged his first coup that overthrew the weak and ineffective government known as the Supreme Military Council II (SMC II) under General Frederick Akuffo and became Ghana’s leader having the opportunity he needed to address the country’s social injustices and ensure its economic development.

Rawlings first ruled for a brief period in 1979, serving as Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), then in 1981, he became Ghana's leader and went on to preside over two different kinds of regimes in two different periods. His first administration was a military regime known as Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), which lasted from 1981 to 1992. He then served as the first President of Ghana's Fourth Republic in a democratic civilian government led by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) party from 1992 to 2001 (Boafo Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Adedeji, 2001). During all of this period, his main objective was to address the social and economic ills in Ghana and ensure social and economic development. He was highly motivated to restore Ghana's national pride through the elimination of social injustice and improve various key sectors of Ghana's economy such as the agricultural, infrastructural, educational, and health sectors (Nossiter, 2020; Imbeah, 2019). It has been argued that under his rule Ghana witnessed significant progress in its economy. According to Adedeji (2001), Boafo-Arthur (1999) and Siaw (2015), Rawlings succeeded in leading Ghana through a period of economic difficulty and achieved economic development for Ghana.

To transform Ghana's economic situation, Rawlings relied on Ghana's external donors, including countries belonging to both sides of the ideological spectrum, that is, countries belonging to the Eastern and Western blocs (Adedeji, 2001; Ahiakpor, 1991; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Jeong, 1998). These two relations did not happen at the same time. During the early years of his rule, Rawlings formed close relations with the Eastern bloc countries such as Libya, Cuba, and USSR due to his socialist and Marxist orientation, an ideological belief that Rawlings shared with the Eastern Bloc (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Adedeji, 2001; Jeong, 1998). During the early years of Rawlings' regime, Ghana did not have any relations with the West because he and some key members of the PNDC government perceived the West as

capitalist and imperialist (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Jeong, 1998; Ahiakpor, 1991). According to Rawlings, the Western ideology was to be blamed for the economic woes of developing countries, including Ghana. Therefore, he refused to engage with the Western bloc. As a result, in 1981, during his PNDC administration, Ghana's relations were strictly with the Eastern bloc. However, it was not long before Rawlings made a turnaround. In April 1983, he shifted his ideological allegiance from the Eastern bloc to the Western one and engaged in relations with the West, and international organization such as the IMF and the World Bank in order to secure economic assistance (Adedeji, 2001; Shaw and Okolo, 1995; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015). This sudden realignment of relations came as a surprise, especially given Rawlings' initial dislike for the Western ideology and his commitment to the Eastern bloc and socialism. This sudden and unexpected shift has been described by scholars including Boafo-Arthur (1999) and Siaw (2015) as an "ideological suicide" which meant that Rawlings abandoned his previous Marxist ideology and adopted instead an ideology he had previously been against which was the liberal (Western) ideology. However, considering the circumstances under which the realignment occurred, it could be said that Rawlings took a bold decision to prevent Ghana from falling into a serious economic depression. This study explores why Rawlings suddenly decided to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Much academic attention has been devoted to Ghana's sudden economic recovery in the mid-1980s under Rawlings' PNDC government. Some of the works by renowned authors such as Adedeji (2001), Boafo-Arthur (1993, 1999a), and Ahiakpor (1991), focus on Rawlings balancing relations with the East and West which supposedly helped him resolve Ghana's economic problems. Other works including that of Boafo-Arthur (1999b), Kumah-Abiwu, 2016), Jeong

(1998), and Tsikata (1999) examine what happened after the economic recovery focusing on the various achievements attained and thus, indirectly at least, approving of Rawlings' decision to re-align with the West. The existing literature on Rawlings' PNDC administration has done little in accounting for the reasons behind Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West which led to Ghana's economic recovery. Therefore, this study provides an analysis of the decision-making process by identifying and explaining the variables that accounted for Rawlings to arrive at such a sudden decision.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

Why did Rawlings realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983?

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of the study is to understand why Rawlings arrived at this decision considering his initial commitment to the East. Specifically, the study seeks to,

1. Explore the personality of Rawlings as well as his economic policies.
2. Describe his relations with the Eastern and Western bloc and explore why he decided to engage with the East and not the West during the initial phase of his PNDC administration.
3. Provide an in-depth analysis of Rawlings' decision to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983.
4. Discuss the findings of the study and make some recommendations.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The foreign policy decision-making of many African countries is greatly understudied particularly for what concerns in-depth analyses of the decision-making of African leaders.

Particularly in Ghana, foreign policy decisions are hardly discussed. All one hears is a decision taken but no one gets to know why that decision was taken or even the processes that led to its selection. Several scholars have explored Ghana's foreign policy, but very little attention has been paid to specific foreign policy decisions and why they were made. Therefore, the significance of this study lies in its coverage of exploring a specific foreign policy decision and bringing to light why that decision was taken and the processes that were followed. The study also seeks to acknowledge Jerry John Rawlings' contribution to Ghana's economic recovery. Due to Rawlings' greatest contribution, one cannot talk about Ghana's economic development without making reference to him and the bold decision he took in April 1983 to prevent Ghana from falling into a serious economic depression. The study will also add to the existing literature on Ghana's foreign policy under Rawlings' PNDC government. Finally, the study intends to encourage leaders to pursue the national interest of their country and also encourage future researchers to focus on the foreign policy decision-making of developing countries.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into five main chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the study (background of the study, statement of the research problem, research question, objective of the research, and significance of the research) and describes the structure of the study. The second chapter focuses on reviewing all literature relevant to the study including the decision-making approach to the study of foreign policy, the Eastern and Western bloc, and most importantly, how Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West has been examined in the existing literature. Chapter three examines Rawlings' historical background and his psychological environment focusing on his relations with the Eastern and Western blocs. Chapter four provides an in-depth analysis of Rawlings' decision by focusing mainly on what triggered it and the

processes that were involved in the decision-making. Finally, chapter five concludes by summarising the main findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews various kinds of literature that help address the question of why Rawlings shifted from the East to the West in April 1983. The chapter will be divided into three main sections. The first section will examine literature that focus on the decision-making approach to the study of foreign policy. The second section will examine literature on the relationship between Eastern and Western bloc and developing countries focusing in particular on the issue of how such relations influenced the economic policies of developing countries. The final section will review the literature on Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West. It should be noted that the literature that examines this decision is very limited in scope. Most of it has examined the domestic and external factors that supposedly were the main factors behind Rawlings' decision while a few studies have focused on the leadership and personality traits of Rawlings.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Foreign Policy Defined

Foreign policy has received attention from renowned scholars such as Rosenau, Holsti, Niklasson, etc. According to McGowan (1973), foreign policy could be defined as the actions of national or central governments taken towards other actors external to the legal sovereignty of the initiating government. Hill (1954) as well as Carlsnaes (1987) define foreign policy as the actions and strategies that state officials take in relation to other states.

From these definitions, it can be gathered that foreign policy refers to the behaviour of states towards other states in the international system (Tayfur, 1994). Foreign policy involves various actions and processes that state officials take towards other states. Several factors come together to shape the foreign policy decisions that these actors make. These factors include psychological, environmental, international and domestic factors. In making foreign policy decisions, actors consider certain actions and go through certain procedures known as foreign policy decision-making process. This process is central to the study of foreign policy because it helps explain and understand the foreign policy decisions that states make. The study of foreign policy that focuses on the analysis of such a process is known as the ‘decision-making approach.’

2.3 FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING APPROACH

According to Mintz and DeRouen (2010, 3), the foreign policy decision-making approach focuses on the choices that individuals, groups, and coalitions make to decide a state’s actions on the international stage. Blankshain, (2019) argues that the foreign policy decision-making approach seeks to understand how states formulate and enact foreign policy. The decision-making approach to the study of foreign policy views foreign policy as a series of decisions taken by official decision makers. The approach focuses on the main individuals who take part in the processes in which decisions are reached and become policies (Tayfur, 1994). According to Blankshain, (2019), the literature on the foreign policy decision-making approach is often subdivided based on assumptions about the process by which actors make foreign policy decisions—primarily falling into rational and non-rational decision-making. The approach examines who makes the decisions as well as the variables, such as international and domestic constraints and interpersonal and group dynamics, etc. that are believed to shape or influence foreign policy decision-making process. Several models have been developed to explain how

foreign policy decisions of countries are made. According to Mintz and DeRouen (2010, 7), “the foreign policy decision-making approach is equipped with various theories and models that helps us understand how biases and errors, uncertainty, domestic politics and various decision units can shape decisions”. In sum, the decision-making approach explains why states make the decisions they do. The most commonly used model is the rational choice model.

Tayfur (1994) and Mintz and DeRouen (2010) argue that many analyses of foreign policy decision-making proceed from the rational actor assumption. Decision-makers are assumed to act in order to maximize gains and minimize losses. According to Levy (1992) the expected utility model of rational decision-making assumes that the decision-maker “attempts to maximize expected utility in {their] choice between risky options by weighing the utilities of individual outcomes by their probabilities and choose the option with the higher weighted sum”. Thus, the rational choice model posits that, actors make choices that maximize benefits and minimize costs. For instance, states will not go to war if the expected gains are smaller than expected losses (Bueno de Mesquita’s, 1981). The rational choice further posits that before actors make a decision, they go through various steps before choosing the best alternative. The steps involved in the rational choice model include, (i) identifying and explaining the problem, (ii) outlining the number of options available, (iii) weighing out the cost and benefits of all the options available, (iv) generating a list of the options after weighing the options, (v) evaluating the alternatives that were selected and finally, (vi) selecting the optimal or best alternative out of the ones that were evaluated. The actors go through these steps to choose the best alternative that will benefit them while completely ignoring ones that will cost them. Some scholars (e.g., Morin & Paquin, 2018; Levy 1992; Mintz and DeRouen (2010) view the rational choice decision model as an ideal one,

i.e., one that decision-makers should strive to adopt but that for different reasons is difficult to follow.

Other scholars have focused on the reasons why the rational model is difficult to follow. Decision makers, for instance, do not get access to all the information needed to identify all possible alternative course of action (Tayfur, 1994); they tend not to maximize but rather satisfice i.e., they stop evaluating alternatives when the first acceptable one is identified (Simon, 1957). As a result, several other models have been developed by various scholars to explain the foreign policy decisions of countries. Some of these models include the organizational model, the bureaucratic model, the cybernetic model, poliheuristic theory, and prospect theory (Blankshain, 2019).

The organizational model developed by Graham Allison (1972) rejects the idea that foreign policy results from the rationality of central authority and suggests that foreign policy results from organizational means. According to this model, bureaucracies adopt two strategies that can be used to solve or manage the problems they encounter. The two strategies are decentralization and Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) (Mintz and Sofrin, 2017; Morin & Paquin, 2018). Decentralization is when the decision-making process is divided amongst different units while SOPs involves the use of rules to determine the conduct or action organizational units have to follow when solving an issue in a given situation (Kuperman, 2001). Thus, the organizational model argues that actors have specific laid out procedures, which they strictly follow when making foreign policy decisions.

The bureaucratic model developed by Roger Hilsman focuses on the role played by bureaucrats in foreign policy decision-making and rejects the notion that leaders are the main actors involved in foreign policy decision-making. The model views the governmental unit as a

decentralized and pluralist framework within which several players interact. The main argument of this model is that governments heavily rely on bureaucrats when making foreign policy decisions and implementing them. Thus, unlike the rational choice which focuses primarily on political leaders as key decision makers, the bureaucratic model focuses on bureaucrats (Tayfur, 1994). The bureaucratic model further argues that foreign policy decisions emerge through an abstract political space rather than a formal decision procedure that relies on a formal chain of command (Morin & Paquin, 2018). The bureaucratic model posits that the players involved in the decision-making are not organized in terms of their specific and clear functional division of work but instead their work overlap which requires them to defend their personal viewpoints and interests against other players through the use of negotiations (Morin & Paquin, 2018).

The cybernetic model developed by Steinbruner argues that decisions are taken through a programmed and automatic process (Steinbruner, 1974). In other words, decision makers create programmed responses to certain recurring situations and put them into practice when those situations occur. According to March (1986) and Simon (1985, 1957), the basic argument of this model is that individuals face processing and other cognitive constraints that limit their computational capabilities, their memory, and recall abilities. Due to these constraints, individuals develop decision procedures that enable them to deal more effectively and decisively with both their own cognitive limitations as well as with the demands imposed by the decision environment.

The poliheuristic model suggests that decision-makers use several cognitive shortcuts which involve using different processes before reaching a decision (Morin & Paquin, 2018; Mintz and Geva, 1997). According to Mintz et al. (1997), the term poliheuristic can be broken down as poly (many) and heuristic meaning shortcuts which alludes to the cognitive mechanisms

used by decision-makers to simplify complex foreign policy decisions.” According to this model, decision-makers employ two stages when making decisions based on cognitive processes (Mintz and DeRouen, 2010; Morin & Paquin, 2018). The first stage is to reject policies that are unacceptable or politically unacceptable to the decision-maker. Thus, decision-makers eliminate options that are not politically acceptable to them. This phase is also known as the non-compensatory phase which means that the weakness on the political acceptability dimension cannot be compensated for by the strength of another dimension. Therefore, at phase one, an option that is politically unacceptable will be removed even if it has great gains such as economic or military gains. The second phase involves making choices from subsets of many alternatives and the aim is to maximize benefits and minimize risks” (Mintz and DeRouen, 2010, p. 79). At the second stage, different dimensions of options are examined simultaneously and the strengths of one option can compensate for the weakness of another. Unlike the other theories, the poliheuristic theory has existed for only a short time, however, it has shown its significance toward explaining foreign policy decisions of autocratic regimes (Mintz and Geva, 1997).

Finally, the prospect model asserts that people are risk-averse with respect to gains and risk-acceptant with respect to losses (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). The model postulates that individuals evaluate outcomes as a function of deviations from a reference point. They also overweigh losses relative to comparable gains (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Levy, 1992, 1997). Thus, the prospect model suggests that when individuals are confronted with a loss, most of them are prepared to take more risks to avoid that loss than if they were in a position to gain (Niv-Solomon, 2016). For instance, a state can strategically develop its foreign policy knowing that other international actors are subject to the same loss aversion (Morin & Paquin, 2018). Prospect theory suggests that using deterrence to prevent a foreign state from taking action is a better

investment than using coercion to force it to back down. The point of reference for assessing losses and gains varies as a function of how past events and future aspirations are interpreted. The prospect theory consists of two phases, known as the ‘editing phase’ and the ‘evaluation phase.’ In the first phase the decision is presented, options are identified, the outcomes and their associated probabilities are also ascertained. Also, framing effects occur in this phase, which asserts that the way the information is presented can affect the choice. In the second phase a choice is made based on the reference point and the value of utility function (Levy, 1992; McDermott, 2004). To sum up, the prospect theory negates the idea of a linear utility function, as is generally defined by the rational choice theory.

To conclude, foreign policy decisions are made by leaders in diverse contexts and environments and these decisions also involve various processes. The models identified and explained above are relevant to the study of foreign policy decision-making and help in explaining and understanding the foreign policy decisions of countries and how and why they were enacted. Hudson (2007: 165) argued that foreign policy decision-making to the study of foreign policy is “rich, detailed, multifactorial, multilevel, multidisciplinary and focuses on explaining the foreign policy decisions carried out by actors.” Although various models such as the organizational, bureaucratic, poliheuristic, prospect were identified, the rational choice decision-making model is the closest to understanding the decision that this study seeks to analyse.

2.4 THE EASTERN AND WESTERN BLOCS

In the 1940s through to the 1980s, the world witnessed an ideological war known as the “Cold War” between two Great powers identified as the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc. The Eastern bloc also known as the Communist or Soviet bloc consisted of communist and socialist states

under the control of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Eastern bloc believed in Marxism and socialism as an ideology and sought to expand this ideology all over the world in order to gain dominance (Adams, 2001). On the other hand, the Western bloc also known as the capitalist bloc consisted of liberal countries that were under the influence of the United States of America (USA). These countries believed in liberal democracy and capitalism as an ideology and also sought to expand their ideology over other countries (Nehru, 1979; Loth and Knight, 1994; Calpham, 1985). Several authors have reported the intense competition that existed between these two blocs and their allies throughout the Cold War and how the war pitched the two blocs against each other for dominance in international affairs. Loth and Knight (1994) observed the conflict that existed between the East and West and their hopes of gaining dominance over other countries. Loth and Knight observed that the tension between the USA and the USSR resulted from the failure of the two blocs to agree upon a joint settlement of political problems of law and order. This division gradually led to the world being sucked into this tension with the blocs hoping to gain other countries to their side in their quest of being the dominant bloc. The USSR claimed to be the head of revolutionary and conservative countries and accepted such countries as their allies. On the other hand, the USA claimed to be head over liberal democratic countries and also accepted liberal countries as allies (Loth and Knight, 1994).

Rivero (2012) also examined the competition that existed between the United States-led Western bloc and the Soviet bloc and the level of influence these two blocs had over less developed countries during the era of the Cold War. Due to the poor economy of the less developed countries, the great powers hoped to use their ideology and influence over the developing countries and dominate as many developing countries as possible. As argued by

Rivero, the two blocs sought to expand their ideology over the less developed countries. The tool they intended to use in expanding their ideology was to offer financial support to the less developed countries that chose to align with them by embracing their ideology and adopting their policies. Katz (1990) observed that the Eastern bloc planned to support developing countries mostly revolutionary states as a means to expand their ideology while the West also planned to do same with democratic countries and even in some cases revolutionary countries as well. Due to the bad economies of most of these less developed countries, attracting them through financial aid was the best means for these blocs to achieve their plan of expansion and dominance. According to Morgenthau (1962), economic aid was an important tool used to buttress and consolidate alliances in less developed world.

Following the independence of most developing countries, many of them decided to engage with the external donors for assistance to resolve their economic problems. Due to the competition between the two blocs, the developing countries seeking to gain foreign aid from the external donors had to align with the bloc with which they shared a common ideology. According to McMarhon (2013), the alignment one made determined the flow of benefits or blockage of benefits. As a result, after gaining independence some developing countries sought alignment with the United States because their commitment to the West seemed to align best with their key domestic needs while other developing countries also aligned with the Eastern bloc because their domestic needs seemed to align with the Eastern ideology.

Pitcher and Askew (2006) noted that not less than 35 out of the 53 African countries proclaimed themselves as socialist at a point in their history. Thus, more than half of these African countries embraced socialism/Marxism as their ideology after they gained their independence from their respective colonial masters and aligned with the Eastern bloc.

McMarhon (2013) further reported many states in less developed countries including Asia and Africa embracing the socialist ideology in the 1960s. Katz, (1990) also argued that many developing countries after their independence aligned with the East and enjoyed cordial relations with the USSR and their socialist allies and benefitted greatly from this alliance. According to Katz, in the 1970s, the Eastern bloc provided massive support to countries that embraced the Marxist ideology. The Eastern bloc believed that such countries would become reliable and stable allies to the East. In the same manner, Duncan (1988) revealed that in the 1980s, several leaders in the Third World countries associated with the Eastern bloc countries due to their interest in Marxism as an ideology in providing economic development. Thus, with the East providing economic support to Third world countries, many leaders in the developing world, decided to align with the East. Last but not least, Chandra (1977) also reported Soviet trade activities and aid in less developed countries in the 1960s and 1970s confirming the alignment between the Eastern bloc and some of the developing countries.

On the other hand, Nehru (1979) identified some developing countries that aligned with the West immediately after their independence. Nehru examined how these developing countries embraced liberal democracy as their ideal form of government. Although Pitcher and Askew (2006) examined less developed countries that adopted socialism in the 1980s, their work also showed that these countries later embraced neoliberalism¹. Their work made mention of less developed countries such as Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Congo that once aligned with

¹ Neoliberalism is a term generally associated with policies of economic liberalization or market-oriented reform policies such as privatization, deregulation of capital market, elimination of price controls, lowering of trade barriers, and reductions in government spending in order to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society (Goldstein, 2011).

the Eastern bloc in the 1980s and later transitioned to adopt western ideology which was neoliberalism. However, the article does not discuss into details why these African countries transitioned from socialism to embrace neoliberalism. Akpokpari (2005) observed how the political leaders of most newly independent states across Africa were preoccupied with establishing and strengthening political and diplomatic ties with ideologically friendly governments within the polarised international system in the 1960s, specifically the West.

Thus, due to the competition that existed, developing countries had to choose which side of the bloc they wanted to align with in order to gain the economic assistance they needed. Thus, the weak position of developing countries in the international relations and the global economy made them prey to these Great Powers. It can be argued that the domestic factors of these African countries influenced their decision to align with these Great Powers based on their ideological orientation. As argued by Odoom and Tieku (2012) most of these developed countries were externally influenced by the world powers in the international system. Hence, it is evident that domestic and external factors greatly shaped the foreign policy decisions of these African countries.

2.5 AN OVERVIEW OF GHANA'S FOREIGN POLICY

2.5.1 Historical Context of Ghana's Foreign Policy

Ghana is one of the developing countries located in West Africa. It is known to be the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to gain political independence in 1957 from its European colonial powers. The independence of Ghana marked its emergence in the international world and the evolution of its independent foreign policymaking (Kumah-Abiwu 2016). The literature on Ghana's foreign policy by scholars such as Thompson (1969), Aluko (1975), Libby (1976), Bofo-Arthur (1989, 1993, 1999a, 1999b), Agyeman-Dua and Daddieh (1994), Asante (1997),

Bluwey (2002), Adibe (2001), Armah (2004), Akokpari (1999, 2005), Gebe (2008) as well as Tieku and Odoom (2012) mainly examined Ghana's foreign policymaking through the complex interaction of domestic and external factors (Kumah-Abiwu, 2016). Aluko (1975) argued that the pattern of Ghana's foreign policy since independence has remained the same focusing on specific areas such as ensuring good neighbourliness, inter-African relations, extra-African relations, and economic diplomacy (Aluko, 1975). In the area of economic diplomacy, Ghana had to rely on external donors to resolve its persistent economic issues. Like almost all developing countries, Ghana battled with economic underdevelopment after its independence. Almost all the political governments in Ghana after independence had to rely on the external donors to resolve Ghana's economic issues. Siaw (2015) observed that due to Ghana's bad economic situation, all governments in Ghana prioritised economic diplomacy at the top of their foreign policy decisions and sought ways to address economic issues. Because Ghana's independence happened during the Cold War, almost all of the governments in Ghana had to align with a particular bloc due to the competition that was ongoing in order to gain economic assistance from the bloc they affiliated with. Bofo-Arthur (1993) asserted that due to the competition in the international system, political governments seeking assistance had to align with either the East or the West based on their ideological preference in order to attract financial assistance to address Ghana's economic issues. Although the first President of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, adopted a non-alignment approach after independence towards the two blocs, he had to still show commitment to a particular bloc in order to gain economic assistance. He later identified as a socialist and aligned with the Eastern bloc. Aluko (1975), Asante (1977) and Bofo-Arthur (1993) argued that Dr. Kwame Nkrumah aligned with the Eastern bloc in order to gain economic assistance from the bloc he affiliated with, else he would have been refused

further assistance from any of the blocs. However, subsequent leaders after Nkrumah were very clear about which side of the ideological spectrum they chose to align with. Aluko (1975) argued that Dr Busia, the leader who took over from Dr Nkrumah aligned with the West due to his interest in Western ideology. Acheampong also chose to align with the West after failing to address Ghana's economic problems using a self-reliant approach. Thompson (1969, p. 162) observed that Ghana's foreign economic policy remained pro-Western under these political governments.

The interesting thing is that all the past governments of Ghana since its independence aligned with either the East or West and never shifted sides during their administration except for the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government under Jerry John Rawlings who during the initial stages of his administration aligned with the East but soon turned to the West. According to Boafo-Arthur (1993), Rawlings' PNDC regime aligned with the Eastern bloc during the initial phase of his administration, and it was not until the mid-1983 when Rawlings' PNDC government's alliance with the East was abandoned for Western alliance. Several scholars have reported on this decision and have argued that both domestic and external factors influenced Rawlings to arrive at this decision. Agyeman-Dua and Daddieh (1994) agreed with Boafo-Arthur (1993) by stating that complex interactions between domestic factors (socio-economic conditions) and global forces shaped the PNDC's foreign economic policy decisions in the 1980s. These factors as examined in the existing literature are discussed below.

Boafo Arthur (1993) asserted that Rawlings' shift from the East to the West was shaped by both domestic and external factors. According to him, Ghana faced severe economic issues that seemed to worsen by the day. Due to lack of resources to resolve the economic problems, Rawlings had to seek for assistance from the external donors. With the ongoing competition

between the two blocs, and each bloc granting support to their allies, Rawlings had to choose sides in order to attract support. Boafo-Arthur revealed that Rawlings aligned with the Eastern bloc during the early years of his administration in order to gain their support and attract assistance from the Eastern allies to address the economic issues in Ghana. Nonetheless, as Boafo-Arthur further observed, not long after this alignment, Ghana's economic problems kept increasing and there was little or no support coming from the Eastern allies to resolve the economic problems. As a result, Rawlings abandoned Ghana's relations with the Eastern bloc and instead aligned with the West which was willing to offer support. Thus, to Boafo-Arthur, both domestic and external factors accounted for Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West. Although Boafo-Arthur acknowledges that the shift happened, his work pays little attention to the decision-making process involved in the shift.

Chazan (1984) shares in Boafo-Arthur's argument about the domestic factors that influenced Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West. According to Chazan, Ghana's severe economic problems influenced Rawlings' decision to make the shift. Like Boafo-Arthur (1993), Chazan also argued that Rawlings abandoned his Eastern posture in the mid-1983 and turned to the Western bloc with hopes of addressing Ghana's economic situation. Chazan observed that Rawlings abandoned his Eastern ideology and embraced Western ideology leading him to engage in relations with the IMF and the World Bank and adopting Western economic reform programs to address Ghana's economic issues. However, Chazan's work doesn't pay attention to the lack of assistance from Ghana's Eastern allies as Boafo-Arthur examined. Nonetheless, Chazan's work argues emphatically that Ghana's domestic factors specifically its economic issue was what influenced the PNDC's government's decision to shift.

Jeong (1998) also examined Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West in his study on economic reform and transition to democracy in Ghana under Rawlings' PNDC government. Jeong examined Ghana's economic crisis under Rawlings PNDC regime and focused on the economic reform programs that Rawlings adopted in resolving these economic crises. According to him, Rawlings initially aligned with the Eastern bloc due to his ideological preference for the Eastern ideology. Jeong further noted that the alignment with the East led to Rawlings adopting the socialist policies of the Eastern bloc in order to address Ghana's economic problems. Rothchild (1985) shared Jeong's view by arguing that Rawlings' ideological posture influenced his decision to align with the Eastern bloc during the early years of his PNDC rule and further discusses Rawlings' adoption of the Eastern policies. However, Jeong observed that failure of the socialist policies to address the economic issues influenced Rawlings to abandon the Eastern bloc and turn to the West and adopted the Western policies to address the economic issues. Thus, Jeong's work focuses more on how the failed policies influenced Rawlings' decision to shift. However, his work pays little attention on Rawlings' alignment with the West and the decision to shift from the East to the West. Instead, majority of Jeong's work focuses on Ghana's transition to democracy under the PNDC government and its adoption of new Western economic reform policies (specifically the Structural Adjustment Program) to address Ghana's economic issues. As a result, Jeong's work contributes very little to the literature of this study because it focuses less on Rawlings' decision to shift.

Boafo-Arthur (1999) wrote about Rawlings' external economic relations during the initial phase of his PNDC administration. The work examined how Rawlings balanced relations with both the East and West in order to ensure economic development. Boafo-Arthur asserted that the PNDC government's international economic relations involved establishing relations with

countries across the ideological spectrum which was both the Eastern and Western bloc to resolve Ghana's economic problem. The work argued that ideology, domestic and external factors all influenced Rawlings' decision to shift. For instance, Boafo-Arthur observed that the PNDC government was characterised by Marxism during the early years of their administration. Then economic stagnation, failure of socialist policies to solve Ghana's economic problems and the inability of the Eastern bloc countries to offer economic assistance to Ghana influenced Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West in April 1983. Boafo-Arthur's work contributes greatly to this study because it discusses all the factors that influenced Rawling's decision to shift from the East to the West that has been examined in the literature concerning this decision.

Other scholars have argued from a different perspective concerning Rawlings' decision to shift focusing more on Rawlings' leadership and personality traits. Adedeji (2001) established that the leadership qualities of Rawlings contributed greatly to his economic diplomacy and later to his decision to shift. His work focused on Rawlings' character as a passionate leader who was concerned and eager to do everything in his power to address Ghana's economic problems and achieve economic development for Ghana. Kumah-Abiwu (2016) also shared in Adedeji's view of Rawlings' leadership trait or personality influencing his decision to shift. He examined Ghana's foreign economic policy decision-making under Rawlings in the early years of 1980 through the lens of the Leadership Traits Analysis (LTA)². His work took an alternative approach and argued that the individual-level explanation of Ghana's foreign policy also matters. The study examined how the leadership traits of political actors contribute to foreign policy decision-making using Rawlings as a case study. Kumah-Abiwu argued that the leadership traits

² The LTA refers to a framework that is used to measure how leadership and personality traits of political leaders shape their foreign policy decision-making. It is a theory that was developed by Hermann (1980, 1999) and rests on the assumption that political leaders matter in foreign policy decision (Kumah-Abiwu, 2016).

of Rawlings to some extent shaped Ghana's foreign economic policy in the early 1980s. Drawing from the theory of LTA, the work examined the foreign economic policy decisions of Rawlings during the early years of his PNDC administration. He discussed Rawlings' alignment with the East and then the shift to the West and sought to investigate whether the leadership traits of Rawlings influenced his decision to shift from the East to the West. The study concluded that although domestic and external factors contributed to Rawlings' decision to shift as pointed out by several scholars, the leadership and personality traits of Rawlings also contributed to the shift from the East as shown through the LTA. Other works by Agyemang-Dua (1987) and Bofo-Arthur (1993; 1999a) that studied Rawlings and his PNDC regime also discussed his personality influence on his foreign economic policy and how it influenced his decision to shift from the East to the West.

2.6 CONCLUSION

As discussed, the literature that examines Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West is very limited in scope. However, the arguments raised by the existing literatures cannot be overlooked. From the evidence gathered, the literature revealed that the factors that explain Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West can be attributed to domestic, external and as argued by other scholars, leadership trait factors. Nonetheless, the commonality among these works is the fact that most of them have broadly examined the decision through the complex interactions of domestic and global factors. Although these scholars provide their various arguments, none of them have provided an in-depth analysis of how the decision took place. This is the gap I seek to address in this study. The study draws on the existing literature that has been reviewed above and provides an in-depth analysis of Rawlings' decision to shift from the East to the West in April 1983.

CHAPTER THREE

AN OVERVIEW OF RAWLINGS' PSYCHOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of Rawlings' psychological environment during his time in power. This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section examines Rawlings' historical background and focuses on Rawlings' political career, including the state of political affairs during the period he took over power and how he addressed all the social, economic and political challenges that Ghana was facing. The second section focuses on Rawlings' perception of foreign aid in Ghana's economic development and his perception of the East and why he aligned with the East and not the West during the initial phase of his PNDC administration.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF JERRY JOHN RAWLINGS

Jerry John Rawlings was born in Accra, Ghana, on 22nd June 1947 to a Ghanaian mother and a Scottish father. He was educated at one of the prestigious schools in Ghana, the Achimota School, which is known to have been attended by other former African heads of states such as Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014; CIA Document, 2008b). During his time as a student, his main ambition was to be a pilot. As a result, after his senior high school education, he joined the Ghana Armed Forces, specifically the Air Force, to realize his dream. Due to his enthusiasm and passion for

flying, he excelled in his Air Force training and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Ghana Air Force (BBC News, 2020). In 1978, he became a flight lieutenant and an expert pilot in the Ghana Armed Forces (Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014; CIA Document, 2008b).

Before appearing on Ghana's political scenes, Rawlings was known as an individual who was generally concerned about Ghana's welfare (Figure 3.1). As a pilot, Rawlings had the opportunity to travel to various parts of Ghana. During his travels, he witnessed the underdevelopment and poverty that had engulfed most parts of the country (Engmann, 2020). He witnessed the widespread corruption of governments such as the SMC II and PNP governments³ under General Akuffo and Hilla Limann, respectively, and their reluctance to address the economic hardships of Ghanaians (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2015; BBC News, 2020; Bofo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015). The corrupt activities of these governments, such as increases in controlled prices of goods for their benefit, had resulted in harsh living conditions for ordinary Ghanaians as well as caused a serious decline of Ghana's economy (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2015; Engmann, 2020). For instance, there were high rates of inflation and depreciation of the Ghana cedis and increase in prices of basic commodities amongst other economic issues (Ocuaye, 2004). According to Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2015), Rawlings had always thought of government leaders as people of integrity whose main aim should be to ensure that their citizens were taken care of. However, he witnessed the opposite situation in which government leaders and officials were amassing wealth for their own ends at the expense of ordinary Ghanaians. Rawlings was disappointed and angered about how the few elites (mostly government leaders and officials as well as businessmen) in society were taking advantage of the poor and amassing wealth for themselves (Gwaikolo, 2005). The BBC News (2020b) reported that Rawlings vented out his anger against the indiscipline, corruption and mismanagement that previous military regimes

³ SMC II stands for Supreme Military Council II while PNP stands for People's National Party.

were exhibiting and became a critic of the government, calling its leaders to do more to help the poor in society (BBC News, 2020). According to Imafidon (2020) and Gwailkolo (2005), as a member of a secret organization in the military known as the Free Africa Movement that was passionate about a United Africa continent free of corrupt government leaders, Rawlings was motivated to resolve the social injustice in society and improve the living conditions of Ghanaians. Hence, after Rawlings became a flight lieutenant in 1978, he became politically active to achieve this goal (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2015; Imafidon, 2020).



Figure 3. 1: Rawlings expressing his concern for Ghanaians.

Source: Rawlings Archival Collection

3.2.1 Rawlings' Coups

Rawlings entered the political scene to address the social injustice in Ghana and ensure economic development. Adedeji (2001) observed that Rawlings envisioned his leadership role to be that of a "watchdog" for ordinary people and address the problems of incompetence, injustice and corruption. He was highly motivated to address Ghana's problems and transform Ghana's economic situation.

According to the *Guardian* (2020), Rawlings' desire for a new era of social, economic and political justice inspired some group of other junior military officers who joined him in his fight against social injustice and economic underdevelopment. With the help of these junior officers, Rawlings staged his first coup d'état on May 15, 1979, to overthrow the then corrupt military government headed by General Frederick Akuffo and known as the SMC II (Boafo Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Adedeji, 2001; BBC News, 2020; Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014). However, the coup was unsuccessful, and Rawlings was arrested⁴ (Figure 3.2) and, following a military trial sentenced to death (The Guardian, 2020; BBC News, 2020; Nossiter, 2020; Imafidon, 2020).

⁴ Although the coup was staged by Rawlings and some junior military officers who were loyal to him, Rawlings took all the blame when they were arrested and asked for the other military officers to be released. General Akuffo granted Rawlings' wish and released the other officers but kept Rawlings captive and sentenced him to death (Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014).



Figure 3. 2: Rawlings and the junior military officers at the Tribunal.

Source: goldcoastghana

Inspired by Rawlings' enthusiasm and passion, some junior military officials broke him out of jail, where he was awaiting his death sentence, and together they staged another coup on June 4th, 1979 (Engmann, 2020; Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014; BBC News, 2020; Modern Ghana; 2019). This coup popularly known as the “June 4th Revolution” (Figure 3.3) was successful and has been marked in Ghanaian political history as the day Rawlings liberated and freed Ghanaians from the corrupt and ineffective government of General Frederick Akuffo, who led the SMC II government (Boafo Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Faces of Africa Documentary,

2014). The success of Rawlings' second coup can be attributed to the help provided by the loyal junior military officers who rescued him from jail before General Akuffo executed him.

After the coup, Ghanaians were excited to be free from the corrupt government of General Akuffo. Rawlings, who was not widely known before staging the coup, was hailed as a hero by many Ghanaians for freeing them from the corrupt government of General Akuffo (Boafo Arthur, 1999). Rawlings made it clear to Ghanaians that his coming to power was not for his own political gains but to resolve the social injustice in Ghanaian society and also to transform the economic situation in Ghana. In a report by the Faces of Africa documentary (2014), Rawlings stated that his coming to office was not due to his desire to be a leader but his passion to serve justice and his love for freedom for all Ghanaians. The African Voice Newspaper (2020) revealed that, Rawlings and his loyal junior military officers were inspired to "risk everything" in order to promote the welfare of the poor and Ghana at large.



Figure 3. 3: The June 4th Revolution.

Source: Gettyimages.

It is worth noting that before staging the coup in June 1979, Ghana was in the process of undergoing an election, which was scheduled to happen in the summer of 1979. Rawlings was aware of this upcoming scheduled election. However, according to Amamoo (2000), Rawlings' dislike of the corrupt activities of the Akuffo government and its reluctance to address the problems Ghanaians were facing motivated him to come to power before the election, (probably to prevent further decline in Ghana's economic situation) and resolve the issues himself. According to Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2015), Rawlings' aim was to perform a swift operation that would clean up the armed forces and punish both soldiers and civilians who had contributed to Ghana's economic ruins through bribery, hoarding, corruption and other malpractices. Hence, he staged the coup before the election was conducted. However, Rawlings declared his intent to

hand over power to the government that would win in the upcoming election even if he had not yet accomplished what he had set out to do (The New York Times, 1979).

After the June 4th Revolution, Rawlings became Chairman and leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC served as an interim government until the upcoming election was complete and took control over running the political, economic and social affairs of the country (Boafo- Arthur, 1999; Adediji, 2001). During the three months he ruled, he embarked on a “house-cleaning exercise.”⁵ He identified corrupt officials of the Akuffo government suspected of leading the country down to economic ruins and arrested and jailed them. Some were also executed after the arrest (Rothchild & Gyimah-Boadi, 1986, p. 265; Brydon & Legge, 1996, p. 15). For instance, the New York Times (1979) and Nossiter (2020) reported the execution of former heads of state including General Akuffo and Acheampong, who were accused of involvement in corrupt activities that resulted in harsh living conditions for Ghanaians.

Three months later, after the scheduled election was complete, Rawlings handed over power on 24th September 1979 to the PNP government headed by Dr. Hilla Limann (Figure 3.4), which won the election, with the confidence and hope that the Limann government would continue the house-cleaning exercise the AFRC government had begun and address Ghana’s economic problems (Adediji 2001; Faces of Africa documentary, 2014; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; CIA Document, 2008; Foli, 2015). As Rawlings put it: “We can only hope that we would have laid the foundation that would make possible for the incoming government to see the necessity of having to continue the cleanup.” (Jerry John Rawlings, cited in New York Times, 1979).

⁵ The house-cleaning exercise involved the removal and execution of previous government officials and civilians (mostly businessmen) who were suspected of corrupt activities such as bribery, hoarding and other malpractices (Ahiakpor, 1991; The New York Times, 1979; BBC News, 2020).

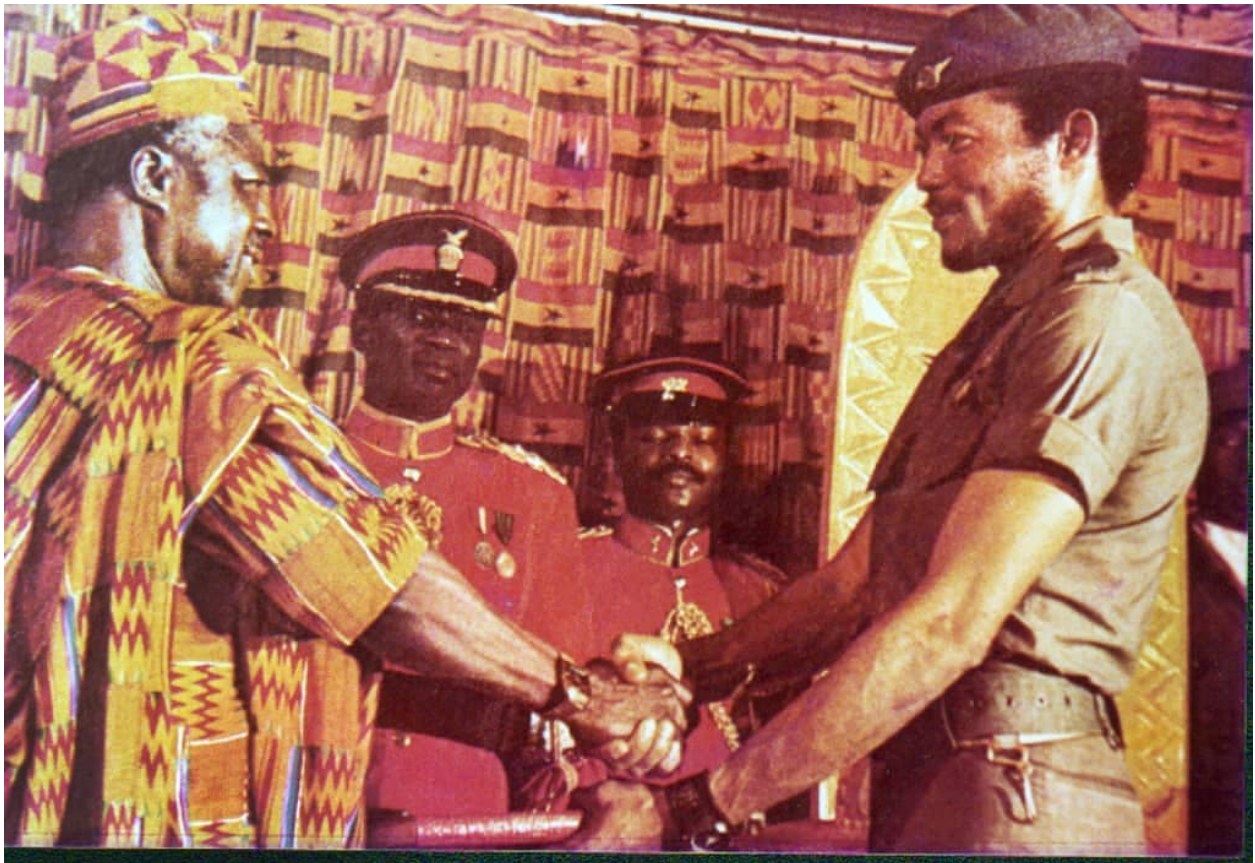


Figure 3. 4: Rawlings handing over power to Dr. Hilla Limann in September 1979

Source: goldcoastghana

However, what Rawlings hoped for did not happen. Several sources revealed that during the period in which Limann headed the government, inflation kept rising, corruption kept on increasing, commodities became scarce (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Adedeji, 2001; Badu, 1993; Dash, 1982; Adedeji, 2001; Engmann, 2020; Imafidon, 2020). As noted by Imafidon (2020), the economy became so bad that Ghanaians wondered about the difference between the Limann government and that of Akuffo. Hence, Rawlings staged another coup on December 31, 1981, which has been referred to by various scholars as Rawlings' "second coming" and overthrew the weak and ineffective government of Limann accusing him of leading the nation

“down to total economic ruin” (BBC News, 2020; Britannica 2019; Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014). Following the overthrow, Rawlings claimed that it was “not a coup, but a revolution.” By this, he meant that the overthrow was a means for him to transform the social and economic order of the country, referring to the “coup/revolution” as a “Holy War”⁶ and giving power to the people (The Guardian, 2000, Engmann, 2020, Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2015). After Limann was overthrown, Rawlings became Ghana’s new military leader and established the PNDC government, which was made up of civilians and soldiers, and imprisoned Limann (Britannica, 2019). As Chairman of the PNDC government, Rawlings governed Ghana as a military leader from 1981 to 1992. He made it clear to Ghanaians that they had the power to run the affairs of their own country. To inaugurate the "second coming," Rawlings stated,

"Fellow Ghanaians, as you will notice, we are not playing the national anthem. In other words, this is not a coup. I ask for nothing less than a revolution - something that will transform the social and economic order of this country. Fellow citizens, it is now left to you to decide how this country is going to go from today. We are asking for nothing more than the power to organize this country in such a way that nothing will be done from the Castle without the consent and authority of the people. In other words, the people, the farmers, the police, the soldiers, the workers, you - the guardians- rich or poor, should be part of the decision-making process of this country" (Shillington, 1992, p. 80).

This statement showed how eager Rawlings was in wanting to solve Ghana’s economic issues. He sought to embark on various economic plans that would transform Ghana’s economic issues and secure Ghana’s economic development.

3.2.2 Rawlings’ Economic Plans and How They Were Executed

Upon assuming office in 1981, Rawlings faced a dwindling economy that had left Ghana in great ruins. He had inherited the economic problems that had resulted from the previous governments’ corrupt activities. These economic problems included an external debt that stood at over \$1

⁶ The ‘holy war’ referred to Rawlings taking overpower through the coups he staged and fighting against the corrupt activities of the previous administrations.

billion, inflation of about 116 percent, decline in the production of cocoa, which was Ghana's leading foreign exchange earner, due to the limited transportation to move the harvest from the villages to the port and also decline in cocoa prices on the world market. There were also severe food shortages, the imposition of price controls, and depreciation of the Ghana cedis (CIA Document, 2008b; English, 1999; Tsikata, 1999; Ocquaye, 2004).

During the entire period of Rawlings' government from 1981 to 2001, his main objective was to address Ghana's economic problems. Several sources such as Ahiakpor (1991), Boafo-Arthur (1999), Siaw (2015) and the Faces of Africa Documentary (2014) observed that, the main objective of Rawlings was to address Ghana's economic issues and ensure social and economic transformation in every aspect of Ghana's economy. Rawlings' first economic plan was to transform Ghana's economic situation by embarking on various developmental projects in the agricultural, educational and health sectors (Boafo Arthur, 1999; Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014; Rawlings' Story, 2014; Imbeah, 2019). These sectors were Rawlings' main focus due to the fact that they were the key driving forces of Ghana's economy and could promote a sustainable economic development for Ghana (Rothchild, 1991). In the agricultural sector, Rawlings' plan was to embark on measures that would increase agricultural productivity (Imbeah, 2019). Some of the measures included, enhancing irrigation, providing various farm products such as insecticides and sprayers and constructing storage facilities for farmers especially for cocoa farmers to boost productivity. In the educational sector, Rawlings' plan was to restructure the educational system to suit the economic and social needs of Ghana. According to Imbeah (2019), Rawlings believed that the previous education curriculum was not well suited to meet Ghana's social and economic needs. As a result, Rawlings' plan was to introduce a new curriculum in Ghana's education system that was relevant to the social and economic needs of

the country (Ministry of Education [MOE], 1998). The new curriculum would include teaching students some basic skills such as fixing bulbs, building, farming, gari processing etc. In the health sector, Rawlings' plan was to construct new health facilities in most rural places and also introduce user fees that would reduce the amount of health expenses especially for people in the rural areas (Agyepong, 1999; Imbeah, 2019; Rawlings Story Documentary, 2014). He also planned to embark on infrastructural projects such as the building of roads, railways and bridges. These infrastructural developments were believed to help boost the agricultural sector by making transportation of goods and services from the villages to the cities easier (Rawlings Story documentary, 2014; Imbeah, 2019). For instance, with the access to transportation, farmers would be able to easily transport their harvest from the villages to the markets in the cities. Rawlings also sought to make electricity accessible to various rural areas in Ghana (Imbeah, 2019). He believed that the provision of electricity could help people in the rural areas to convert their raw materials into useful products that could help generate more income for the country and also improve the living standard of people in the rural areas (Imbeah, 2019; The Rawlings Story Documentary, 2014). It is evident that Rawlings was motivated to see almost every sector of Ghana's economy thrive and develop rapidly.

Furthermore, Rawlings sought to involve Ghanaians in the development of the country by involving them in the projects he sought to embark on such as building and construction of old and new roads, railway and bridges (The Guardian, 2000). He believed that the power to govern and develop the country belonged to the people and not government officials hence involving Ghanaians in these developmental projects would make them feel relevant in playing a part towards the country's economic development. Ghanaians were happy to be part of this process and became actively involved in the developmental projects that Rawlings initiated (The

Guardian, 2000). A documentary by Faces of Africa (2014) revealed Rawlings and Ghanaians working together in the construction of bridges and planting of crops such as maize and cocoa to promote Ghana's economic development. Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2015) also observed that during Rawlings' period of governance, he mobilized Ghanaians for developmental projects and civic responsibilities such as communal labour and the building and construction of old and new infrastructures such as roads, railways and bridges. Boafo-Arthur (1999) and Engmann (2020) further observed that, after the 31st December Revolution, young and able-bodied Ghanaians, mostly students from various universities, involved themselves in the development of the country. Some of the students travelled to the rural areas to help transport cocoa onto trucks and trains to the various ports for exports (Shillington, 1992). Ghanaians were happy to be part of the governing process and most importantly happy to have a leader who was concerned about their well-being and actively involved in the development of the country. According to Boafo-Arthur (1999) and Shillington (1992), the tag, "man of the people" used to describe Rawlings by several Ghanaians was due to the enthusiasm at which he worked with ordinary Ghanaians to promote Ghana's economic development.

Rawlings' second economic plan was to rely on foreign aid to achieve the developmental projects he sought to embark on. He believed that foreign aid would help resolve Ghana's economic problems. As a result, he sought to engage in relations with Ghana's external donors in order to attract foreign aid to resolve Ghana's economic problems. Several sources including Ahiakpor, 1991; Boafo -Arthur, 1999a; Adedeji, 2001; Faces of Africa Documentary, 2014 revealed Rawlings' intentions to align with international donors to attract foreign aid to resolve Ghana's economic problems. Rawlings' perception about how foreign aid could help in Ghana's economic development is discussed below.

3.3 RAWLINGS' PERCEPTION ABOUT FOREIGN AID IN GHANA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

According to Imbeah (2019), foreign aid played an essential role in the economic development of many developing countries in the 1960s. Several external donors including institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank as well as individual countries such as the USA, the UK, China, Russia, and Cuba provided foreign aid to most developing countries in the 1960s. In addressing the issue of economic development, past leaders of Ghana before Rawlings' time sought to attract foreign aid for Ghana's economic development. Tsikata (1999) and Imbeah (2019) observed that most of the governments in Ghana such as those of the Convention People's Party (CPP), the National Liberation Council (NLC), and the National Redemption Council (NRC) relied on external donors for foreign aid to resolve Ghana's economic problems. For instance, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah leader of the CPP government attracted loans from the IMF and the World Bank to fund the construction of the Akosombo hydroelectric dam in the 1960s. The NLC government also became an aid recipient and attracted assistance in the form of loans and foreign aid worth US \$90 million from Western countries and over \$20 million from the IMF and the World Bank to restructure the Ghanaian economy (Asare and Siaw, 2018; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Imbeah, 2019, Jonah-1989). Subsequent governments such as the NRC and the PNP governments under Acheampong and Limann also relied on foreign aid to resolve Ghana's economic problems.

Rawlings viewed the role of foreign aid as essential in addressing Ghana's economic problems due to the previous governments' reliance on foreign aid to address Ghana's economic problems. Hence, he believed that relying on the external donors for foreign aid was the only way to resolve the pressing economic problems that Ghana was facing (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Engmann, 2020; Siaw, 2015).

All the past governments of Ghana had relied on the external donors for foreign aid based on their ideological orientation (Boafo-Arthur, 1999). As discussed earlier, in the 1960s and 1980s, the international system was characterised by two dominant blocs, the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc, that had different ideologies (Brown, 2005; Aluko, 1975). The Eastern bloc believed in socialism and Marxism while the Western bloc believed in liberal democracy and capitalism. According to Adams (2001), due to the intense competition between these two blocs, developing countries had to align strategically with the bloc they shared the same ideological orientation with, in order to attract foreign assistance. For instance, a leader who believed in the ideology of liberalism had to align with the Western bloc while a leader who was a Marxist or socialist aligned with the Eastern bloc in order to attract foreign aid.

Due to this competition, most of the past leaders in Ghana took advantage of their ideological orientation and aligned with the bloc that shared in their ideological beliefs (Foli, 2015; Frimpong-Ansah, 1991; Aluko, 1975; Jeong, 1998). For instance, Dr. Busia, leader of the NLC government, dealt solely with the West because of his belief in liberal democracy and private enterprise. On the other hand, Acheampong, leader of the NRC government first adopted a self-reliant approach to develop Ghana but later turned to the West for assistance due to his affinity with the Western ideology (Aluko, 1975). Thus, the ideology of past government leaders of Ghana influenced their decision on which bloc to align with in order to attract foreign aid (Adams, 2001).

Initially, Rawlings' decision was to rely on both the Eastern and Western blocs for foreign aid to resolve Ghana's economic problems. According to Boafo-Arthur (1999), Rawlings wished to engage in relations with international donors from all sides of the ideological spectrum. For instance, Asamoah (2014) and Boafo-Arthur (1999a) observed that, Rawlings

issued a directive for policy guidelines to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which would ensure that the PNDC government kept close ties and collaboration with progressive as well as advanced and capitalist countries in the world. In other words, the directive meant that Ghana would rely on both the Eastern and Western bloc countries that had the means and capacity to provide Ghana with the needed foreign assistance necessary for its economic development. Probably, Rawlings thought that dealing with both sides would attract massive foreign aid for Ghana's economic development (Foli, 2015).

However, Rawlings might have been influenced by the way previous administrations in Ghana relied on the external donors based on their ideological orientation and as a result reconsidered his decision to engage with both sides at the same time and instead chose one side of the ideological spectrum to deal with (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Siaw, 2015; Ahiakpor, 1991). According to Boafo-Arthur (1999), during the initial phase of Rawlings' administration, he aligned with the Eastern bloc due to shared ideological beliefs. Rawlings might have realized that it would be impossible to take advantage of both sides due to the intense competition between the two blocs. Besides, all the past governments in Ghana sided with the blocs which they had a common ideological belief with and succeeded in attracting the foreign aid they needed to address Ghana's economic problems (Boafo-Arthur, 1999). Hence, Rawlings believed that having a committed ideological orientation would yield him the same results needed to resolve Ghana's economic problems and also avoid been caught up in the competition between the two blocs (Boafo-Arthur (1999b).

3.3.1 Rawlings' Relations with the East

Several scholars such as Boafo-Arthur (1999), Ahiakpor (1991), Jeong (1998) and Siaw (2015), observed that during the early years of Rawlings' PNDC administration, he relied solely on the

Eastern bloc for foreign aid. Based on the evidence gathered from these sources, Rawlings' strict ideological bind towards the Eastern bloc can be attributed to a couple of factors.

Interest in the Eastern Ideology

The first factor was the interest and admiration Rawlings had for the ideology of the Eastern bloc, which was socialism and Marxism during the first phase of his administration. According to Ahiakpor (1991), after Rawlings stepped down from his first coup in 1979, he went to study Marxism at the University of Ghana in order to understand how this ideology could help him address Ghana's economic issues. His interest in Marxism and socialism stemmed from the idea that Marxism would create a just society that would ensure equity in the distribution of income and wealth among Ghanaians, which would ensure good living conditions for every Ghanaian (Adedeji, 2001; Ahiakpor, 1991). Thus, his belief in Marxism creating equality and improving the living conditions of Ghanaians motivated him to rely on the East.

Support from Party Members

The second factor which motivated Rawlings to rely on the East and adopt the socialist ideology was the massive support he received from the key members of his PNDC government who were also great admirers of the socialist and Marxist ideology. According to Ahiakpor (1991), the key advisors of Rawlings' PNDC government were all leftists and radical key players and also huge admirers of the Marxist and socialist ideology⁷. Having such great support of like-minded people who shared in the same ideology he had, Rawlings was highly motivated to align with the East (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; BBC News, 2000). Rothchild (1985) and Kumah- Abiwu (2016) argued

⁷ Some of these members prominent members included Kojo Tsikata, Chris Atim, Tsatsu Tsikata, Johnny Hansen, Ato Austin and Kwasi-Amoako Arthur.

that Rawlings and the key members of his PNDC government championed socialism as the best ideology to address Ghana's economic problems and adopted political ideas that were revolutionary and fused with a strong socialist orientation.

Rawlings and the key members of his PNDC administration perceived that relying on the East would attract foreign aid that would help alleviate the plight of the poor in Ghanaian society and improve the standard of living of every Ghanaian, especially the ordinary Ghanaians such as farmers, workers and students (Ahiakpor, 1991). As a result, they closely aligned Ghana's relations with the East in 1981 and relied solely on the Eastern bloc for foreign aid (Boafo-Arthur, 1993; Siaw, 2015; Tsikata, 1999). Their alignment with the East resulted in the adoption of populist policies that were believed to address the issues of inequality and promote economic development (Boafo-Arthur, 1993, 1999a; BBC News, 2000; Rothchild, 1985; Siaw, 2015; Tsikata, 1999). These policies included (i) confiscation of assets of entrepreneurs and take-over of some enterprises⁸, (ii) the imposition of price controls, (iii) the imposition of hefty fines on people alleged to have hoarded goods, (iv) withdrawal of higher denomination currency notes as a means of combating excess liquidity (v) the banning of selected imports (including raw materials for manufacturing industries such as timber), and (vi) reduction in house rental charges (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Ahiakpor, 1991; Jeong, 1998). Rawlings adopted these populist policies because he believed that ordinary people who felt their concerns had been disregarded by the elite in society would approve and that it would resolve the issue of inequality among Ghanaians and resolve Ghana's economic problems (Ahiakpor, 1991; Rothchild, 1985). Moreover, the adoption of the populist economic policies was a way for Rawlings to show his commitment to

⁸ Rawlings confiscated assets and goods of corrupt government officials and businessmen which they hoarded and sold them at lower prices to Ghanaians. In addition, he threatened to take over foreign owned commercial and manufacturing enterprises that engage in irrational pricing of goods above their normal pricing (Ahiakpor, 1991; Ayee, 1989).

the East, which would aid in the attraction of foreign aid. Rothchild (1985) argued that the populist policies Rawlings implemented were similar to that of other radically inclined Eastern bloc countries such as Cuba, Libya, the USSR and Ethiopia. As expected, his alignment with the East and the implementation of the populist policies of the socialist countries attracted some foreign aid from Eastern bloc countries such as Cuba, the USSR, Libya and China. A delegation that was sent by Rawlings to Libya, Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other Eastern European countries to discuss pertinent issues returned with positive results (Agyeman-Dua and Daddieh, 1994). For instance, Ghana was able to secure barrels of petroleum worth \$20 million to support its petroleum needs for easy transportation in March 1982 from Libya. In addition, Ghana received considerable assistance (in monetary form) from Russia, Libya, Cuba and Burkina Faso, which Rawlings used in the development of Ghana's economic sectors such as agriculture, health, industry and finance (Siaw, 2015). It is believed that the economic development that occurred during the early years of Rawlings' PNDC administration including the rehabilitation of old roads and construction of new roads, bridges, railways, provision of electrification, development in the health sector etc. were possible due to the assistance he received from the Eastern bloc.

Dislike for Western Ideology

Finally, it is worth noting that during the early years of Rawlings' PNDC rule, Ghana did not align with the West due to Rawlings' dislike for the Western ideology. His dislike for Western relations stemmed from the fact that he and radical members of his PNDC government blamed the West for Ghana's economic woes (Adedeji, 2001; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; CIA Document, 2008 and Rothchild, 1985). According to these sources, Rawlings and radical members of his

administration believed that the Western ideology of imperialism and capitalism were responsible for Ghana's economic woes because the ideology of imperialism allowed the West to extend its rule over other countries thus interfering in their political and economic affairs. On the other hand, capitalism was a system which allowed the West to take control of the market of Third World Countries including their means of production for profit (Jahan and Mahmud, 2015). As a result, Rawlings and the key government officials of his PNDC government believed that the interference of the Western countries in the political and economic affairs of Third World Countries and the incorporation of Third World countries (including Ghana) into the international economy of the Western countries had resulted in the economic downfall of Third World countries (Boafo-Arthur, 1999).

A report by Government of Ghana (1982) revealed that the Secretary for Finance and Economic Planning for the PNDC government, Dr. Kwesi Botchwey blamed the West for Ghana's underdevelopment over the previous years. According to Dr Kwesi Botchwey, the interference of the West especially its institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank in Ghana's economic affairs, had resulted in Ghana's economic crises due to the "unfair" conditions⁹ that were introduced to most of these countries (Government of Ghana, 1982). For instance, in an interview, Rawlings recalled how as a leader, one had to be mindful of what you say or else you will be refused aid or assistance (Jerry John Rawlings, 2012).¹⁰ Although the West had provided foreign aid to previous governments in Ghana, Rawlings believed that the

⁹ By this, he was referring to the neoliberal policies such as economic and trade liberalization that the West introduced which required Third World Countries to adopt before assistance can be granted. However, these policies had created imbalance between the developed (West) and developing countries. For instance, some of these policies restricted the intervention of developing countries in their own food and agricultural sectors, preventing them from coming up with their own strategies that can be used to improve their food production. Another policy which was trade liberalization also allowed the Western countries to import their used products to Third World countries thereby making Third World countries a dumping site for these Western countries (Clapp, 2012)

¹⁰ Interview with Diane Sawyer, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ9EWWdiYLI>

West was not the best to align with because of its strict policies and unfair conditions which they imposed on Third World Countries (Adedeji, 2001; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; CIA Document, 2008; Kumah-Abiwu, 2016; Rothchild, 1985; Shillington, 1992). Therefore, Rawlings and the radical members of his PNDC government engaged in anti-West propaganda using Ghana's media to oppose Western capitalist ideas and portrayed the Western ideology as bad for Ghana's economy and the idea of socialism and Marxism as the best means to resolve Ghana's economic problems (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Mubarak, 2020; Tsikata, 1999). For instance, the CIA document (2008) revealed that during the early years of Rawlings' administration, he identified various acts of Western capitalism that portrayed its exploitation of other countries and thus discredited Ghana's reliance on the West.

3.4 CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is evident that Rawlings' perception about relating with the East or the West was very much influenced by his ideology. From the discussion, it can be seen that Rawlings' ideological preference for socialism and Marxism and his dislike for Western imperialism and capitalism influenced his decision to align Ghana's relations with the East instead of the West during the early years of his administration.

Despite Rawlings' initial dislike for the Western ideology, several scholars such as (Boafo-Arthur (1999), Siaw (2015) and Jeong (1998) have observed that in April 1983, not long after Rawlings' strict ideological bind for socialism and Marxism and his strict dealings with the Eastern bloc during the early years of his PNDC administration, he committed an "ideological suicide" and turned to the Western bloc for economic assistance. Committing an ideological suicide meant that Rawlings abandoned his previous Marxist ideology and instead adopted the Western ideology he had previously disliked, thus embracing Western imperialism and

capitalism. This sudden and unexpected shift has been attributed to several factors including domestic and external factors. (Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Jeong, 1998; Siaw, 2015). The next chapter provides an in-depth analysis and explanation to why Rawlings decided to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF RAWLINGS' DECISION TO REALIGN GHANA'S RELATIONS FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST IN APRIL 1983

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an analysis of why Rawlings decided to realign Ghana's relations from the Eastern to the Western bloc in April 1983. The chapter is organized into two main sections. The first section will examine the trigger that influenced Rawlings to arrive at this decision. The second section will focus on the decision-making process.

4.2 THE TRIGGER

Upon assuming office in 1981, Rawlings inherited Ghana's economic problems, which included an external debt that stood at over \$1 billion, inflation of about 116 percent, decline in the production of cocoa, which was Ghana's leading foreign exchange earner, due to the limited transportation to move the harvest from the villages to the port. There were also severe food shortages and price controls (CIA Document, 2008b; English, 1999; Gwailkolo, 2005; Tsikata, 1999). Rawlings tried his best to address these economic issues during the early years of his administration through the implementation of the populist policies copied from those of the Eastern bloc. For instance, Rawlings set up a Defence Committee that was responsible for promoting productivity among farmers and industrial workers (Boafo-Arthur, 1999). Also, Rawlings introduced rent and price controls as well as the reinstatement of employees that had been laid off by previous administrations and declared a freeze on further layoffs (English, 1999). All these actions were aimed at addressing the persistent economic problems that Ghana faced.

The economy, however, could not recover as quickly as Rawlings expected. Hence, throughout 1982, the popularity of Rawlings and the PNDC government greatly declined due to poor performance of the populist policies that the government had adopted in addressing Ghana's economic issues and in 1983, the economy fared far worse than had previously been the case (Anderson, 2020; Boafo- Arthur, 1999; Engmann, 2020; Jeong, 1998; Gwaikolo, 2005; Kraus, 1991; Tsikata, 1999). Hence, the first trigger of Rawlings' shift to the West was domestic, specifically Ghana's bad economy which seemed to worsen by the day. Because of it, Rawlings expected Ghana's Eastern allies to provide continuous support. However, Ghana's Eastern allies were unable to assist Ghana with the economic support it needed (Engmann, 2020; Anderson, 2020; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Anaman, 2006). Therefore, the second trigger for Rawlings' decision was external i.e., the inability of Ghana's Eastern allies to support Ghana to address the persistent economic problems it was facing. As a result, Rawlings had to make a quick decision, which led him to shift from the East to the West, despite his previous dislike for Western ideology. These two triggers are examined further below.

4.2.1 The Domestic Factor - Ghana's Economic Crises

Despite Rawlings' alignment with the Eastern bloc to resolve Ghana's economic issues, the economic situation in Ghana could not get any better. Several sources argue that in the late 1982 and early 1983, Ghana witnessed a severe economic crisis which led the country down to economic ruins (Engmann, 2020; Kraus, 1991; Gwaikolo, 2005; Jeong, 1994; Siaw, 2015; Boafo-Arthur, 1993; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; English, 1999; Foli, 2015; Tsikata, 1999). This economic crisis resulted from the failure of the socialist populist policies that Rawlings and his PNDC government adopted and implemented, which severely reduced incentives for production

and led to a decline in savings and consequently domestic, but also foreign investments in Ghana (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2015; Ahiakpor, 1985); Siaw and Asare, 2015; Kraus, 1991; Tsikata, 1999).

In addition to the economic hardships that resulted from the failed populist policies, Ghana experienced severe drought, famine and bush fires between 1982 and 1983, which burned about one-third of Ghana's cocoa areas leading to a low harvest (Kraus 1991; Gwaikolo, 2005; Panford, 1994). The bush fires affected agriculture and food crop production leading to severe food shortages and famine in various parts of the country. Engmann (2020) noted that Ghanaians had to queue for basic essential food commodities such as sugar, bread and maize in order to get something to survive on. Furthermore, due to the drought, Ghana's hydroelectric facility at Akosombo Dam ran out of water making the power plant operate under capacity and creating power shortages in the country leading to low productivity in various manufacturing industries (Azindow, 2005; Jeong, 1994; Siaw, 2015; Boafo-Arthur, 1993; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a, 1999b; English, 1999; Foli, 2015; Tsikata, 1999). Another economic crisis that happened in 1983 was the expulsion of about one million Ghanaians from Nigeria,¹¹ which brought intense economic pressure on Ghana and added to its economic hardships (Azindow, 2005; Engmann, 2020; Ahiakpor, 1985). In brief, Ghana faced a severe economic crisis and Rawlings' government was therefore faced with extreme pressure from Ghanaians to resolve it while, at the same time, lacking the resources needed to do it (Engmann, 2020; Anderson, 2020).

4.2.2 The External Factor - Inability of the Eastern Allies to Help

Due to the support Ghana had received from its Eastern allies in the past to resolve its economic problems, Rawlings expected them to support him resolve this pressing economic crisis as they

¹¹ In 1983, the Nigerian President, Shehu Shagari, issued an executive order mandating all immigrants without proper immigration documents to leave Nigeria or be arrested according to the law. About two million people were deported. Half of these immigrants were Ghanaians who were deported back to Ghana (Ahiakpor, 1985).

had previously done, however, there was no assistance from the Eastern allies (Anderson, 2020; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Engmann, 2020; English, 1999; Tsikata, 1999). None of the Eastern countries or Cuba or Libya, offered to provide assistance to Ghana. Anaman (2006), Boafo-Arthur (1999), Hansen (1987), and Tsikata (1999) revealed that some delegations from the PNDC government that were sent to countries such as Libya, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Cuba for economic assistance came back with little financial support, or in some cases, with no support at all.

The inability of the Eastern allies to support Ghana with foreign aid during this period was due to the fact that they too were undergoing severe economic problems.¹² (Boafo-Arthur, 1993; Anderson, 2020; Siaw and Asare (2015). Azindow (2005) reports that the Soviet Union because of its economic problems had little choice but reduce external financial and material assistance to its allies. Although the Eastern bloc could not provide Ghana with the assistance it needed, they expected Rawlings to still hold on to his socialist orientation if he decided to seek help elsewhere. For instance, while Russian leaders sympathized with Ghana about its economic woes, pointing out to their own economic problems that constrained their ability to assist Ghana financially, they advised the Ghanaian delegation to go to the IMF and the World Bank for help while still holding on to their socialist principle¹³ (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Agyeman-Dua, 1987). In the end, with Ghana's rising economic problems and the inability of its Eastern allies to provide the foreign aid it needed, Rawlings had to make a quick decision and chose the best alternative to address the economic situation at hand.

¹² In the 1980s, the Soviet Union was faced with economic problems such as lack of incentives for productivity and decline in agricultural production which prevented it from offering economic assistance <https://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/sovietcollapse.htm>. Its economic crisis was due also to heavy investment in technology and arms just to keep on a par with the US (Azindow, 2005).

¹³ Russia gave this advice because the West were offering assistance to non-democratic/ communist countries then, and so they might have thought Rawlings could take advantage of that and still hold on to his revolutionary ideas. (Boafo Arthur, 1999a).

4.3 THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The negative outcome of the trip to their Eastern allies to obtain financial assistance to resolve the economic problems had a great effect on Rawlings and the members of his PNDC government as they were pressured by Ghanaians to resolve the pressing economic issues and restore economic stability. Hence, with no support coming from the Eastern allies, Rawlings and members of his government, especially the radicals, had to come up with the best alternative to address the issue at hand. The most appealing option available was to reconsider their relations with the East and approach the West, specifically the IMF and the World Bank, for assistance and reach an agreement with them, irrespective of their previous socialist/Marxist posture and their attacks on the Western ideology (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Ray, 1986-Foli, 2015, Siaw, 2015). Fortunately for Ghana, the West was in a position to assist. Due to the competition between the Eastern and Western blocs, the Western bloc was seeking to gain dominance over the Eastern bloc and as a result was offering support to both democratic and non-democratic states¹⁴ (Boafo-Arthur (1999b). The Western bloc countries were willing to support any country including countries that were allies of the Eastern bloc so long as these countries were willing to adopt and pursue the neoliberal economic policies that the West recommended (Imbeah, 2019; Mubarak, 2020). Hence, Rawlings had the chance to approach the West for assistance as far as he was willing to adopt these neoliberal economic policies (Boafo-Arthur, 1999b).

¹⁴ The main plan of the West was to expand democracy to socialist states and put an end to socialism and communism through the provision of foreign aid to countries that were willing to side with them. Hence, providing foreign aid to both democratic and non-democratic countries (Boafo-Arthur, 1999b).

However, the members of the PNDC government¹⁵ were divided on Rawlings' decision to approach the West and realign Ghana's relations (Azindow, 2005; English, 1999). The first group, which was composed of neo-marxists¹⁶ believed that there was no need to realign Ghana's relations (Azindow, 2005). They argued that the decision to implement neoliberal policies would contradict the PNDC government's initial ideological posture, which was their belief in socialism and Marxism (Hutchful, 2002). The second group, which was composed of pragmatists¹⁷ and economic reformers, believed that the realignment to the West was the only solution to the economic problems Ghana was facing (Anaman, 2006; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a). They contended that the country's economic problems needed to be addressed and that the longer they waited, the more difficult it would be (Ahiakpor, 1991-598; Shillington, 1992-111).

With Ghana's bad economy and the inability of the East to help Ghana, the two groups had two options to choose from: (i) to continue their alignment with the East and get no foreign aid to address the economic crises or (ii) turn to the West and get the support they needed to address the situation at hand. Looking at the situation Ghana was in, Rawlings and his government had to choose the option necessary to address the situation at hand. After weighing out the options, Rawlings and the other pragmatists decided that aligning with the West would be the best alternative (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Jeong, 1998; Ray, 1986; Siaw, 2015; Gyimah-Boadi, 1990; Jonah, 1989; Agyemang-Dua, 1987; Tsikata, 1999). As Kay and Gwynne (2000) observed, turning to the West for assistance was the only optimal option for Rawlings and his PNDC government to address Ghana's declining economic situation. In the end, Rawlings and the other

¹⁵ The members of the PNDC government involved in the decision-making were Dr. Kwesi Botchwey, Dr. Ammisah-Arthur, Kojo Tsikata, and Dr. Joseph Abbey Brig. Mensah-Nunoo, Zaya Yeebo, Chris Bukari Atim, Sgt. Alolga Akatapore, Akwasi Adu, and Taata Ofosu (Azindow, 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 1999; Ahiakpor, 1991).

¹⁶ The neo-marxist were the group who still believed in the Eastern ideology and wanted to hold on to their socialist principles. They included Brig. Mensah-Nunoo, Zaya Yeebo, Chris Bukari Atim, Sgt. Alolga Akatapore, Akwasi Adu, and Taata Ofosu

¹⁷ The pragmatists believed in finding quicker solutions to deal with the economic situation at hand. The pragmatists included Rawlings, Dr. Kwesi Botchwey, Dr. Ammisah-Arthur, Dr. Joseph Abbey.

pragmatists won in the decision to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West (Azindow, 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Ray, 1986-Foli, 2015, Siaw, 2015). With Rawlings as the leader of the PNDC government and also leader of the pragmatists, it is understandable that the pragmatists won the discussion.

After the decision was taken, Rawlings took full control over the PNDC government and presented the neo-Marxist group members with two options, either to (1) commit an "ideological suicide," which is to neglect their Marxist orientation and support his decision to engage in relations with the West or (2) resign from the government (Boafo-Arthur, 1999a, 1999b; Anaman, 2006). Most of the neo-Marxist members chose the first option and agreed with Rawling's decision to realign Ghana's relations. Others chose the second option and resigned (Anaman, 2006; Boafo Arthur, 1999a).

After the PNDC government agreed on this decision, Rawlings had to convince the Western donors that his regime had changed its ideological, political and economic orientation (Boafo-Arthur, 1999b). In proving his new allegiance to the West, Rawlings made a public declaration that he had abandoned his socialist and Marxist ideology and even referred to the Eastern populist policies as "populist nonsense" because it failed to resolve Ghana's economic problems (Ahiakpor, 1991; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a). Furthermore, the members who agreed to the decision to realign Ghana's relations to the West joined Rawlings in discrediting the Eastern ideology and engaged in overt and covert attacks on the socialist approaches they had previously adopted. For instance, the Deputy Chairman of the PNDC government, Justice D.F. Annan stated that "the PNDC's initial alliance with Marxism did the PNDC government a great amount of harm ..." He also confessed about the inappropriateness of Marxist and socialist policies previously adopted (West Africa, 1985:1987; Boafo-Arthur, 1999b).

To show his commitment to the Western donors, Rawlings broke off his relationship with some socialist countries, especially his friendship with Gadhafi of Libya (Boafo-Artur, 1999b).¹⁸ This was hard for him to do because of the massive support he had received from Libya, especially with Gadhafi aiding him with his military-take over by supplying him with arms to stage his coups. However, for the sake of Ghana's economic survival, Rawlings was willing to cut ties with any socialist countries, including Libya, to prove to his new allies, the West, that he was fully committed to them.

4.3.1 The Shift

In April 1983, Rawlings finally realigned Ghana's relations to the Western bloc and embraced the Western ideology (Boafo Arthur, 1999; Jeong, 1998). In line with this new alignment Rawlings and the PNDC government engaged in an arrangement with the IMF and the World Bank to secure economic assistance (Engmann, 2020). The arrangement led to several negotiations between Ghana and these two institutions. The terms of the negotiations included some conditionalities requiring Rawlings to adopt neoliberal economic policies which were believed to help address Ghana's economic problems (Anaman, 2006; Boafo-Arthur, 1999a; Siaw and Asare, 2015). The adoption and implementation of these economic reforms would guarantee foreign aid from other Western donors, which would help Ghana resolve its economic issues (Gwaikolo, 2005; Engmann, 2020). Thus, the survival of Ghana's economy relied on the acceptance of these neoliberal economic policies.

¹⁸ Gadhafi was seen as an enemy to the West because of his anti-imperialism and also because he was providing funding and support to encourage anti-imperialism in other countries mostly authoritarian countries. With Gadhafi providing support to these countries, the plan of the West to expand democracy to such countries would be thwarted, hence viewing him as an enemy and threat to the West (Boafo-Arthur, 1999b). As a result, with Rawlings hoping to please the West, he had to end Ghana's relations with Libya.

With the benefits of attracting foreign aid from almost all the Western donors that was associated with the adoption of the neoliberal economic policies of the West, Rawlings and his PNDC government examined the IMF conditionalities and adopted the required neoliberal economic policies (Engmann, 2020; Kumah-Abiwu, 2016; and Jeong, 1998). These consisted of two sets of policies or reform programs: (i) the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) and (ii) the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). The aim of the ERP was to reverse the decline of the economy and re-establish growth and development in Ghana (Gymah-Boadi-1993). It included policies such as elimination of subsidies on food and other necessities, reduced spending on social policies, devaluation of the national currency, all of which reduced disposable income especially for low-income classes. The Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) involved implementing a set of free-market economic policies in exchange for loans from the IMF and the World Bank (Jeong, 1998; Imbeah, 2019). Some of the economic measures that were to be pursued under the Structural Adjustment Program included labour retrenchment, trade liberalization and devaluation, subsidy withdrawal, and an increase in user fees for public services (Boafo-Arthur, 1999). These measures were meant to stimulate production, especially export production, discourage rent, improve budgetary and balance-of-payment problems as well as penalize urban middle and working classes (Gyamfi-Boadi, 1990). According to English (1999), Rawlings was reluctant to implement some of these measures because of the negative impact previous administrations had experienced. For instance, devaluation of the Ghana Cedis had been a sensitive topic in Ghana and previous administrations had been overturned because of opposition from the general public. However, the economists in Rawlings' administration convinced him that currency devaluation would be the best way to put an end to the corruption, smuggling and profiteering that he so much disliked. Rawlings was also convinced that the

currency devaluation could eliminate foreign exchange controls and import licenses, which had given more advantage to well-connected allies of the previous administrations to get rich while Ghana's economy kept deteriorating. Hence, Rawlings thought it was a good idea to go ahead with the implementation of these policies (English, 1999).

After deliberating about the Western economic policies that had to be implemented, Rawlings and his government asked for a revision of some aspects of the economic programs,¹⁹ which the IMF accepted (Siaw and Asare, 2015). Some aspects that were revised included trade liberalization and privatization which was limited to non-performing enterprises in non-strategic sectors (Azindow, 2005; Aryee, 1989). The IMF agreed to this revision and re-examined these aspects to suit Ghana's demands. After the revision, Rawlings and his government went over the terms and conditions again and agreed to implement the economic reform programs. Based on the discussion above, it is evident that, both sides sought to gain from the arrangement and negotiations made thus, the IMF and World Bank would have their neoliberal economic policies implemented while Rawlings received the economic assistance he requested.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Rawlings' sudden shift from the East to the West can be described as a bold decision that he and the members of his PNDC government took to ensure Ghana's economic survival. As a concerned leader, Rawlings was willing to make all the necessary sacrifices needed to ensure that Ghana's economic crisis was resolved. As argued by the rational choice decision-making model, actors make choices that maximize benefits and minimize costs (Morin and Paquin, 2018). The discussion above has shown that Rawlings and his government weighed out the

¹⁹ Rawlings and the members of his government specifically asked for a revision of these aspects to limit the control of the West in these economic areas.

options available to them and chose the best option that would benefit Ghana and address its declining economic situation. Rawlings negotiated with his new allies and agreed on what was best for Ghana's economic survival.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In light of holding leaders accountable for their actions, it is important as citizens to understand the foreign policy decisions of leaders. The aim of this study has been to provide an explanation of one of the foreign policy decisions taken by one of Ghana's political leaders, Jerry John Rawlings. The study was conducted to analyse why he decided to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983. The study relied on secondary sources such as articles, books, newspapers, journals and other relevant materials. This chapter summarises the findings of the study, provide a conclusion and make some suggestions for future researchers.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study provided an analysis of why Rawlings decided to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West in April 1983 and specifically examined why this decision was taken so suddenly. The study revealed that Rawlings' concern for the welfare of Ghanaians and his desire to deliver them from the hands of the corrupt governments motivated him to assume position as Ghana's leader to address the harsh conditions Ghanaians were facing. In the course of his administration, he was willing to do everything possible to ensure Ghana's economic survival. The study also revealed Rawlings' initial ideological posture towards the East in 1981 when he assumed power due to his interest in the Eastern ideology and as a result thought it best to align Ghana's relations with the East. This alignment was believed to provide Ghana with the economic assistance it needed from its new allies to help resolve Ghana's economic problems. However, Rawlings' relations with the East did not succeed as he had hoped and not long after

he made a sudden turn and realigned Ghana's relations toward the West in April 1983, less than two years after Rawlings had showed a strict affiliation to the East.

The study revealed domestic and external factors as the main variables that influenced Rawlings' sudden decision to realign Ghana's relations. In the domestic context, it was revealed that Ghana's increasing economic problems, which seemed to worsen by the day due to the failure of his populist policies adopted from Ghana's Eastern allies, convinced him to make this decision. The study also focused on the external factors that influenced Rawlings to make this decision, namely the lack of support from its allies, the Eastern bloc countries, to assist Ghana with the economic aid it needed. The study revealed that when Ghana was faced with these increasing economic problems and turned to its Eastern allies for support, it received no assistance. Consequently, Rawlings decided to choose the most appealing option which was to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West. Committing "ideological suicide," as this sudden decision was described, was the best means of addressing Ghana's economic problems and ensuring economic progress for Ghana.

The personality and leadership traits of Rawlings also played a huge role in the decision-making. This is because, as it was revealed, Rawlings' concern and hopes to improve the living conditions of Ghanaians influenced him to make this decision. As a selfless leader, who was greatly concerned to see that Ghanaians enjoyed good living conditions, he thought it best to choose the decision that would address the needs of Ghanaians and ensure Ghana's economic survival. Hence, Rawlings committing an ideological suicide is justified since he was looking out for Ghana's national interest. Therefore, Rawlings' personality and leadership traits can be applauded for this great and bold decision.

The study also revealed that Rawlings and his PNDC government made a rational choice by choosing an alternative that would maximize their gains and ignored the one which would have cost them greatly. Thus, it can be said that Rawlings and his PNDC government chose the option which promised a higher utility (Levy, 1992). Moreover, the study also revealed that Rawlings and the key advisors of his PNDC government studied all the information available to them, evaluated and weighed out the options available to them and chose the optimal one that addressed the problem they faced. They engaged in rational calculations by observing the procedures involved in making a rational decision and chose the best alternative that would benefit the country. Thus, they carefully considered the problem, evaluated and weighed out the options available to them and ended up choosing the better one, which was choosing to side with the West. In brief, the study acknowledged the impact of domestic and external factors as the main variables that influenced Rawlings' sudden decision to realign Ghana's relations and generally the impact of these two factors as the main determinants of Ghana's foreign policy.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In sum, the study examined Rawlings' decision to realign Ghana's relations from the East to the West by providing an analysis of how the decision was taken and why it was taken. The decision can be described as a bold move made by Rawlings in ensuring Ghana's economic survival. As a concerned leader, Rawlings made all the necessary sacrifices needed to ensure that Ghana's economy thrived. He fought off all the challenges he faced and succeeded in making the necessary changes needed to improve Ghana's economy. Although Rawlings did not intend to initially adopt the Western ideology, he was compelled to change his plans and shift to the West due to Ghana's declining economy. This shows that, despite being an authoritarian leader, Rawlings was a flexible leader who was willing to break rules and promote the national interest

of Ghana. It is assumed that Ghana would not have achieved economic recovery if not for the decision Rawlings took. This is because following the adoption of the ERP and the SAP, which occurred after the decision was made, Ghana's economy improved rapidly. Several scholars such as Adedeji (2001) and Siaw (2015) argued that Rawlings led Ghana through a period of economic difficulty and succeeded in bringing economic development in Ghana after the adoption and implementation of the ERP and the SAP. Subsequent governments in Ghana have followed in Rawlings' footsteps and maintained Ghana's relations with the West up till now and are still enjoying great benefits. Hence, it can be argued that Rawlings decision to shift from the East to the West in April 1983 was a very reasonable and justifiable move.

5.4 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study, it is evident that the foreign policy decisions of developing countries are largely influenced by domestic factors and even more by external factors. The study highlights key factors in the foreign policy decision-making of developing countries which are often overlooked such as the influence or role of external factors in the foreign policy decision-making of developing countries. It is recommended that leaders acknowledge the external forces that influence their foreign policy and know how to operate under it. Understanding the influence of the external sources in their foreign policy decisions will help them make the right choices. However, such influence from the external environment should not override the national interest of their countries.

The study also revealed Rawlings as a selfless leader who was willing to see Ghana's economy thrive. This is a good example for leaders to follow by being concerned about the welfare of their citizens and putting the national interest of their countries above their own political ambitions. Thus, leaders might have their personal interests, but it will be good if

political leaders put the concern of their people and the interest of their countries first and also willing to do everything possible to salvage it when the need arises.

Finally, the study urges future researchers in the field of foreign policy and international relations to pay more attention to the foreign policy decisions of developing countries and conduct more studies that provide an analysis on how the foreign policy decisions of developing countries were taken.

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