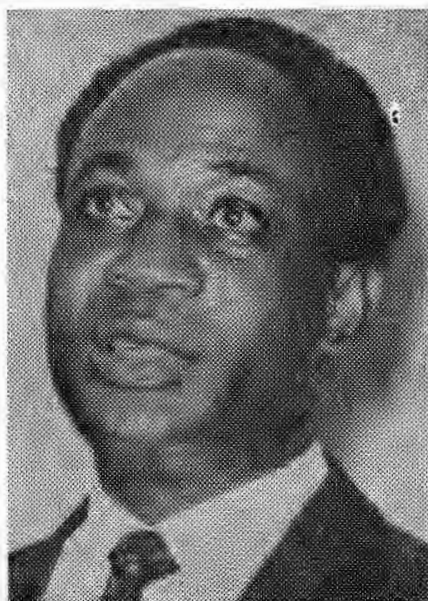

Nkrumah's Death



The biographical sketch of a famous person who has died is never a difficult work for the clever columnists of the traditional press: "Died on such and such a date, born on another, educated here or there, became known in one way or another and dropped out of the news because of such and such... may he rest in peace... with his death the people have lost this or that but probably they have also gained because the deceased had his 'bad' points... condolences to his relatives and followers in his work..." Mission accomplished.

For this kind of journalist, for example, "Kwame Nkrumah died on April 27, 1972, in Bucharest, victim of an incurable disease" (this

is how the word cancer is avoided). "He was born in 1909 in Nkroful, Ghana's western region, into a family of the Nzima tribal group. His education began in Achimota and was completed at the University of Lincoln, Pennsylvania. He was associated with the Pan-African movement between 1937 and 1945, along with DuBois, George Padmore, Kenyatta, Azikiwe and others. He was general secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) between 1947 and 1949 and then founded the Convention People's Party (CPP). He launched a campaign of positive action against the British administration which sent him to prison in 1950. But his party won the elections and set him free from James Fort prison at noon on February 12, 1951. The British governor called on him to form a "self-government" until, on March 6, 1957, the

colony of the Gold Coast changed its name to the Independent Dominion of Ghana, with Kwame Nkrumah as prime minister."

It is very possible that our columnist would add other "details" about Ghana and Nkrumah after that March 6, and would bring the account of events to its climax with the military coup of February 24, 1966, which overthrew the Ghanaian president. Perhaps adjectives with a different coloring would be used, depending on the case, to refer to the personality of the deceased, to his domestic and foreign policy, to his books.

The biographical note will be published; the readers will be informed so they can buy a sufficiently distinguished book for their libraries; and the supervisors of the consumer and subconsumer societies will continue to sleep placidly, their consciences tranquil, thanks to the "efficiency" of their mass communication media.

Fortunately, this is not the only story to be told concerning the ex-president of Ghana, nor is it the

old colonialists,
neocolonialists,
white minorities of the southern
cone,
the African bourgeoisie
(perpetuated in its role of simple
intermediary),
European monopolies of
"the six" plus "the four,"
US monopolies,
and Sandhurst graduates,
civil service functionaries,
diplomats with a British accent,
and the Ghanaian cocoa landowners.

The most important figure in
revolutionary Pan-Africanism has sent
out roots. His death on April 27,
1972, will prove no more useful to
his enemies than his overthrow was
on February 24, 1966.