



SOME THOUGHTS ON  
**MINISTERIAL  
RESHUFFLES**  
IN GHANA



JOSEPH R.A. AYEE



Promoting Excellence in Knowledge



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## ACRONYMS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AG	Attorney General
BNI	Bureau of National Investigations
CPP	Convention People's Party
DAs	District Assemblies
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINO	Minister for Information and National Orientation
MLGRDE	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment
MOWAC	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MP	Member of Parliament
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NLC	National Liberation Council
NIA	National Identification Authority
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRC	National Redemption Council
PAC	Parliament's Appointments Committee
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
PNP	People's National Party
PP	Progress Party
PRAAD	Public Records and Archives Administration Department
PSD	Public Sector Development
PSI	Presidential Special Initiative
RCCs	Regional Coordinating Councils
SMC	Supreme Military Council



## ABSTRACT

Ministerial reshuffles, that is, the periodic changes in the composition of ministerial teams, have been legion in Ghana since independence on March 6, 1957 and part of government and politics. They have not only conveyed several images and raised several motives but also generated controversy, media speculations and leaks as well as fear and nervousness among ministers. One is intrigued by ministerial reshuffles because of (a) their effects on ministers who were dismissed and those who were still in government; (b) their use and misuse by the head of state or government; and (c) their impact on the assessment of the public policies and record of the government in office.

Against this backdrop, this paper discusses the taxonomy of ministerial reshuffles in Ghana since independence based on the explanatory variables behind the reshuffles, the length of ministerial tenure, frequency and scale of the reshuffles, their effects on the government, parliament, the ministers and heads of state and government themselves and how the ministers who were not retained cope with life as private citizens. In addition, it considers if the power to reshuffle by the appointing authority is a mixed blessing or a necessary evil and offers some lessons and their implications for public policy and governmental performance.

The paper begins with a definition of the terms ministers and ministerial reshuffles. This is followed by a discussion of the principles of allocation of functions and the concept of patronage upon which the taxonomy of ministerial reshuffles may be explained.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses attention on the phenomenon of ministerial reshuffles. It argues that irrespective of the type of regime, ideological orientations of parties in power, the historical and social circumstances, albeit the leadership style and personality, all heads of state or government from Dr Kwame Nkrumah to Mr John Kufuor had engaged in periodic changes in the composition of ministerial teams. The motives of ministerial reshuffles have been raised. Yet one interesting of this has to do with the fear and nervousness among ministers, the apparent hatred and suffering particularly on the part of those who were not re-appointed. The situation is made worse by media speculations and leaks. So important are ministerial reshuffles in every jurisdiction that they have been described as “not just about the present, but also about the future” (Alderman and Cross, 1987: 3). Ministerial reshuffles have conveyed an image of a purge of ministers, an image of a knife used either by a “butcher” or of the pruner “cutting out dead wood” and an image of the sword of Damocles, forever threatening to descend on the heads of ministers should they step out of the line dictated by the head of state or government (Alderman and Cross, 1985; Alderman and Carter, 1993).

As a student of politics and public administration, I have been intrigued by ministerial reshuffles for a number of reasons. First, is the considerable shock and distressing experience that characterised them and the effects that they had on ministers who were dismissed and those who were still in government. Secondly, and more importantly, they manifest the use or misuse of the unlimited power of the appointing authority, that is, the head of state or government. Thirdly, it is the effects of the reshuffles on the assessment of the public policies and record of the government in office.

Against this backdrop, this paper presents the taxonomy of ministerial reshuffles in Ghana since independence with a view to providing answers to the following questions:

1. What were the explanatory variables behind the reshuffles? Put differently, what was the rationale for heads of state or government to change the composition of their ministerial teams?
2. What was the length of ministerial tenure and what was the frequency and scale of the reshuffles?
3. Were there any thought through plans behind the reshuffles and their execution?
4. What were the effects of the reshuffles on the government, parliament, the ministers and the presidents themselves?
5. How did the ministers who were not retained cope with life as private citizens and what were the implications for the country?
6. Are there any discernible paradoxes in the exercise of this power by the heads of state and government? In other words, is the power to reshuffle a mixed blessing or a necessary evil?
7. What are the lessons from the reshuffles and their implications for public policy and governmental performance?

## DEFINING THE TERMS MINISTERS AND MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLES

Before I proceed to deal with these questions, it is appropriate at this juncture to define the terms minister and ministerial reshuffles. Thereafter, I will briefly discuss the principles of the allocation of functions and the concept of patronage upon which the taxonomy of ministerial reshuffles may be explained.

### Who are Ministers?

They are members of the national or central government administration either in charge of a government ministry or available to work in a variety of policy areas at the behest of the head of state or government. The number of ministers has grown throughout all countries as a result of growth in the functions of government. In Ghana, ministers comprise cabinet ministers; ministers of state; and regional ministers. Under military regimes in Ghana ministers were referred to as either commissioners under the National Liberation Council (NLC), National Redemption (NRC) and Supreme Military Council (SMC) or secretaries under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC).

### What are Ministerial Reshuffles?

They may be defined as the occasional or periodic redistribution or reassignment of sectoral responsibilities or political portfolios within the national government or government of the day by the head of state or government, usually in response to assessed demands for changes in the governance structure of the country. In short, reshuffles are periodic alterations in the composition of the central government administration by the head of state or government. Reshuffles come in various forms, from a single

new appointment perhaps to fill an unexpected vacancy caused by an accidental factor such as illness, death or sudden resignation to a major reconstruction, involving promotions, transfers and dismissals. From the foregoing, there are therefore minor and major reshuffles of ministerial positions. Reshuffles can also be presentational, that is, to give the ministerial team a fresh public image by bringing in new and particularly younger faces (Alderman and Cross, 1985; Alderman and Cross, 1986; Alderman and Cross, 1987; Alderman and Carter, 1993). According to Harold Wilson, (1976: 34) reshuffles are like “nightmarish multidimensional jigsaw puzzles, with an almost unlimited number of possible permutations and combinations”.

## ALLOCATION OF MINISTERIAL FUNCTIONS: UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The principles underlying allocation of functions was postulated by the German organisational theorist, Luther Gulick in his chapter on "Notes on the Theory of Organisation", which appeared in his co-edited book with Lyndall Urwick, Papers on the Science of Administration, which was published in 1937. According to him, work or functions of central government ministries or departments or any organisation can be classified into four principles. The principles determine the structure of central government administration and are to serve as a guide to managers developing new organisations to divide work based on the four ways. They are:

1. Purpose or functional principle: This refers to a purposive allocation of one or more activities of government to specific units (vertical organisation). For example, defence, health, education and foreign affairs which are regarded as distinct functions.
2. Process or professional principle: This refers to a process of giving responsibility to a governmental unit to carry out an activity which may serve the needs of a number of other units (horizontal organisation). A classic example is the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MFEP) which is concerned with the process of financial management that is essential to the work of every other ministry, department and agency.
3. Clientele or commodity principle: This refers to a clientelist arrangement where a governmental unit is given the responsibility for dealing with a particular group or kind of persons. In other words, it involves dividing work according to the persons served or the

things being dealt with. Examples are the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWAC), which deals with a specific target group, women and children and the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture, which deals with chiefs, traditions and customs.

4. Geographical or area principle: This refers to the place where the service is rendered. Examples are the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) and District Assemblies (DAs) as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and NEPAD.

### Shortcomings of the Principles

Gulick's principles have been criticised by other organisational theorists like Herbert Simon (1946; 1957) and Dwight Waldo (1948). They argue that the structure of central government administration is not solely determined by the application of the principles put forward by Gulick. The problem in them is not to select one of the four principles but to find the appropriate principle for each class of activities. In this regard, three specific criticisms need to be highlighted. First, no single principle can be applied to advantage. Sometimes the purpose may be better served by accepting one or more principles. At other times, it may be necessary to combine two or more principles. Secondly, the principles are not exact or absolute. For instance, it is difficult to say whether finance is a process or a purpose of administrative organisation; nor can public works department be classified as a process or function. Thirdly, the process, clientele and geographical principles seem only of marginal importance. Simon (1946; 1957) and Waldo (1948) argued that the uni-functional principle admits of universal applicability to governmental organisation and it should be treated with the marginal help of the other three principles.

Indeed, organisational theorists have indicated that apart from the four principles, the structure of central government administration is also influenced by patronage (Shafritz, 1992; Harmon et.al. 1986; Golembiewski, 1985; Denhardt, 1993; Ostrom and Ostrom, 1971). In this respect, attention needs to be focused on the concept of patronage.



## THE CONCEPT OF PATRONAGE

The term patronage is derived from the Latin word, *patronus*, meaning “protector” or “defender”. Patronage in political science refers to the distribution of favours or largesse such as personal gain, political sinecures, contracts and welfare packages by political leaders to their supporters in return for votes or sources of legitimacy (McLean, 2000).

To maintain themselves in power, most political leaders, and clearly in the African context, have had to construct stronger bases of social and political support. Given the virtual monopolisation of scarce economic resources, the answer lies in the discretionary distribution of patronage and the development of clientelistic ties to key individuals and groups.

Social scientists generally refer to the political process in which government office is bestowed in return for political support and personal loyalty and service as patrimonialism (Bendix, 1962: 334-335). The core element of patrimonial rule is the personalisation of power by a country's ruler (Gordon, 2001).

The new form of patrimonialism is neo-patrimonialism. Neopatrimonial policies involve corruption, nepotism, ethnicity, factionalism and patronage and have provided substance for networks with competing elites. According to Englebort (2000: 104):

What is crucial about African neopatrimonialism is that it does not operate in the margins of state institutions, as an illegal and repressed vice, but actually attaches itself to formal political structures, parties and bureaucracies in order to link the centrifugal components of the state with its new core. In essence, it transforms the nature of these institutions, turning them from their original

purposes of representation, management, enforcement, or conflict resolution, into instruments of distribution, co-optation, or reward.

Maintaining patronage networks requires a huge amount of money. African leaders have found that to keep clients secure and the system stable, governments have to commit increasingly large amounts of money to patronage or allow increasing opportunities for those in government to use their positions for personal gain. Thus, reshuffles offer presidents the opportunity to exercise the most important resources available to them, that is, patronage. As a result or outcome of this power resource, two governmental systems have emerged. They are the (a) parliamentary system of government; and (b) the presidential system of government. Under the parliamentary system of government, ministers are individually and collectively, responsible for all governmental functions. This means that the areas of individual responsibility have to be fairly clearly defined. The tendency is to emphasise the functional principle.

By contrast, under the presidential system, the chief executive is really the only person responsible, in the final analysis, for the exercise of executive powers. The tendency is to personalise politics, whereby the public associates more readily identify with a person than they do with a political institution such as a cabinet or political party (Heywood, 2000). This has resulted in the establishment of several governmental units within the Office of the President that have combined two or more of the four principles. The idea of “big” government which meant government policy is increasingly complex and intricate has in turn placed a higher premium not only on expertise but also the creation of several ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), which makes operating the central machinery of government a costly venture.

Some scholars have pointed out that the presidential system of government unlike the parliamentary system has the tendency to promote patronage and therefore the principles of allocating functions may not be followed in the creation of ministries and appointing ministers (Heywood, 2000). Rather political convenience and judgment are taken into account by the head of state, who decides at any given point in time the particular number of ministers he/she wants. In other words, it is sometimes difficult to take a decision on the principles of allocating functions as a guide to the determination of the number of ministers and how they are appointed and reshuffled (Adamolekun, 1983).

### The Principles of Allocation of Functions versus the Concept of Patronage

In spite of their weaknesses, the principles of allocation of functions and the concept of patronage assist us to identify and explain the various factors that influenced ministerial reshuffles in Ghana, their length, frequency, scale and costs as well as the use and misuse of executive authority. They have emphasised the use of power and authority in organising the work of governments in both positive and negative ways.

## MOTIVATIONS FOR MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLES

It is difficult to determine precisely the reasons behind ministerial reshuffles because in most cases, the reasons may not be made public. This situation had given vent to speculations and rumours. This is amply demonstrated in the dismissal of Francis Poku as Minister for National Security in January 2008. According to Oboshie Sai-Cofie, the then Minister for Information and National Orientation (MINO):

... if it became necessary for reasons to be given for Mr Poku's removal, the President would do so. We cannot force the President to give the substantive reasons for his action. The President is strict and demands high standards from his officers" (Daily Graphic, 2008: 24).

Typical of all Ghanaian leaders, the President to date has not publicly given any reason or reasons for the removal of his Minister of National Security.

Notwithstanding the lack of courage on the part of successive Ghanaian heads of state and government to give reasons for ministerial reshuffles, there are several motivations. These motivations can be grouped under the following sub-headings and they may be a combination of two or more of the reasons:

***i. Promotion of government effectiveness and efficiency:*** One of the main reasons for reshuffles is to make the government more effective and efficient by either dropping non-performing ministers or preventing some of them from becoming stale in their positions. In other words, reshuffles were based on correcting errors or dealing with perceived ministerial incompetence. Usually, non-performing ministers were demoted from high profile positions to lesser ones, which may or may not be cabinet positions, or are dropped from the list of

ministers altogether. An example is the reshuffle of September 30, 1981 under the Limann government. In this reshuffle, Mr Joe Reindorf, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, one of the most brilliant and successful lawyers in the country then, was sent to the Ministry of Local Government and Cooperatives because in the words of Ohene (2006: 199-200).

... the brilliant lawyer couldn't be transformed into a successful Minister" ... It is sad to see Joe Reindorf go out of the Cabinet but he himself must surely have been expecting it, the problem with brilliant people is that they tend not to be good team players and their personal eccentricities must be nurtured and tolerated or not all.

Other examples of demotion of ministers through reshuffles include the so-called Phase II reshuffle of President J.A. Kufuor in May 2006 in which Elizabeth Ohene and Charles Bintin who were Ministers of State for Tertiary Education and Minister for Local Government and Rural Development respectively were reassigned responsibilities at the Presidency as Ministers of State (Daily Graphic, May 13, 2006: 482).

In the same way, equally hard-working junior ministers were promoted ministers while others were transferred to more appropriate portfolios to broaden their experience. For example, C.T. Nylander, E.K. Asare and E.K. Bensah, ministerial secretaries (deputy ministers) at the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Housing and Ministry Finance respectively became substantive ministers for Education, Labour, Cooperatives and Social Welfare and Works respectively in a general ministerial reshuffle in May 1957. Similarly, Mr Kofi Baako, a minister without portfolio became the substantive Minister for Information and Broadcasting when the new ministry was created in July 1957. In April 2006, Joe Ghartey as Deputy Attorney General and Minister of Justice was elevated to the position of Attorney General and Minister of Justice when

his boss, Ayikoi Otoo was dropped in a major reshuffle, which also affected J.H. Mensah, Yaw Osafo-Mafo, Dan Botwe, Kofi Konadu Apraku, Christine Churcher, Charles Bintim and Isaac Edumadze as Senior Minister and ministers of Education and Sports, Information, Regional Cooperation and NEPAD, Environment and Science, Local Government and Rural Development and Central Regional Minister respectively (Daily Graphic, April 28, 2006: 480).

**ii. Redemption and enhancement of the public image of the government:** Over the years reshuffles had become the antidote for redeeming and enhancing the public image of the government after a scandal. Examples include the revocation of the appointment of Mr Krobo Edusei as Minister of Industries in April 1962 over his new residence, Asante House, which was taken over by the government and the purchase of a 3,000 gold bed by the wife. The contractor who built the house, Mr E. Borio was given a deportation order on grounds that his presence in Ghana was not conducive to public good (Daily Graphic, April 4, 1962: 63). Krobo Edusei was however reinstated as Minister for Agriculture in September the same year. No reasons were given for his reinstatement (Daily Graphic September 4, 1967).

**iii. Change in policy and policy differences:** Some reshuffles were seen to have been the result of policy differences between the head of state or government and some ministers. They had the effect of drawing public attention to divisions within the machinery of government. The resignation of K.A. Gbedemah, Kojo Botsio and S.W. Yeboah in September 1961 was due to a shift in the policy and ideology of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) and government. In May 1961, Nkrumah declared that the CPP would no longer be a marriage of convenience between the "old guard opportunist self-seekers and the socialist faithfuls" (Amonoo, 1981: 54). He declared socialism as the "second revolution".

In the Dawn Broadcast in April 1961, Nkrumah “attacked many of the foundation leaders of the CPP, who were also senior cabinet ministers, as being out of step with the new order” (Amonoo, 1981: 55). Indeed, according to Awoonor (2008), Nkrumah wanted the party to control the government and not the other way round. Consequently, most of the reshuffles which were made from 1961 favoured ideologically prepared cadres who were loyal to the party. In addition, the major reconstruction of government with the creation of 12 non-cabinet ministries in January 1965 was to give momentum to the one-party state idea which was approved in a referendum in February 1964. Similarly, the major reshuffle of the Busia government in January 1971 especially moving Victor Owusu from the Ministry of External Affairs to Attorney General and Ministry of Justice was attributable to the differences over Busia's foreign policy on dialogue with South Africa. Earlier on in April 1969, Victor Owusu resigned as Commissioner for External Affairs under the National Liberation Council over his new portfolio (he was Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice) and the dismissal of U.V. Campbell, who refused to take up the position of Attorney General (AG) due to a newspaper editorial about him (Daily Graphic, 1969: 2).

In addition, Acheampong's Supreme Military Council's ministerial reshuffle in 1977 which included the appointment of Dr G. Koranteng-Addow (an ardent supporter of the Unigov idea) as Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, was seen as a move to promote and enhance his “Unigov” idea (Debrah, 2007). Similarly, in 1983, Rawlings' Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) undertook a major reshuffle because of differences over the implementation of the IMF/World Bank's Economic Recovery Programme (ERP).

***iv. Ethnic and group interests:*** Ghana is a country of ethnic and group passion. Accordingly, some reshuffles were based on

satisfying ethnic, regional and group interests. Writing on the Committee of Secretaries under the PNDC, Emmanuel Hansen the First Secretary to the PNDC from 1982-1983 persuasively argued that the Committee:

... did not share collective responsibility, a fact which hindered its political cohesiveness. Another problem was the need to represent various areas and ethnic groups in the country. This meant that the final body which emerged was more ideologically diverse and unwieldy than the PNDC. This affected not only its capacity to develop coherent programmes but the Committee itself often became the scene of intense ideological struggles as different members sought to bring into being programmes which represented their ideological perspectives or groups to which they were identified and which they represented. An attempt to rectify the situation by bringing out Policy Guidelines by which Secretaries were to act ended in a deadlock (Hansen, 1991:27).

Ministerial reshuffles were also influenced by striking a balance between old and young party members with pressure always coming from the party hierarchy. For example, Limann's reshuffle of September 1980 was also an effort to bring on board the "old guard" of the CPP (such as the appointment of A.S.D. Abban as Minister for Education and B.K. Senkyire as Minister for Local Government) who were thought to have been marginalised in the ministerial team by the Council of Elders.

Pressure had also come from the NDC and NPP to their governments to take into account the various constituents of the party in ministerial appointments. There had always been tension between the "elders" and the youth in parties over ministerial appointments. In addition to this, parties in power



had felt that their members deserved to be given ministerial appointments before the so-called “outsiders. For example, the appointment of Paa Kwesi Nduom as a minister under the NPP government was resented in certain quarters of the NPP who felt strongly that his position should have gone to one of its members.

Gender balance has also featured prominently in the reshuffles. There is evidence, however, that since independence in 1957, women representation in ministerial list has been exceptionally low (see Table 1). The table shows that the NPP had the highest number of women ministers, 9 as against 6 by the NDC. This may be due to the more gender sensitivity of the NPP government, which created a separate Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs.

*v. Health:* Some portfolios (such as finance, foreign affairs, education and agriculture, attorney general and justice) are particularly onerous and stressful and therefore demand mental and physical rigour. Accordingly, some reshuffles were based on health grounds. Some ministers were either relieved of their positions or transferred to less stressful portfolios. For example, in the September 30, 1980 Limann government reshuffle, F.K. Buah was appointed High Commissioner to Canada after being dropped from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports on health grounds (Addae-Mensah, 2007).

*vi. Resignations:* Some reshuffles occurred as a result of resignations by individual ministers. They are referred to as accidental factors precipitating reshuffles. Reshuffles based on resignations include that of K.G. Osei-Bonsu, Commissioner of Information in the National Liberation Council (NLC), who resigned from the government in January 1968 over the dismissal by the government of four senior editors, namely, J.K. Dumoga, Supervising Editor of the Daily Graphic, and Sunday

Mirror, Oscar Tsedze, Editor of the Daily Graphic, Moses Danquah, Editor-in-Chief of the Guinea Press Group of Newspapers and Henry Thompson, Editor of the Evening News (Daily Graphic January 15, 1968: 122). Similarly, N.Y.B. Adade, Richard Quarshie, J.H. Mensah and Issifu Ali resigned in July 1969 as Attorney General, commissioners for Trade and Industries, Finance and Information respectively under the NLC in order to enter politics (Daily Graphic August 1, 1969: 138). Colonel Kodjo Barnabas Agbo resigned as Commissioner for Local Government in 1975 because he considered his posting to the Ministry as "incompatible with his former status as a member of the National Redemption Council" (Daily Graphic, October 11, 1975: 3). In the September 30, 1981 reshuffle by Hilla Limann, Joe Reindorf and Ekow Daniels resigned because they did not see themselves working at the ministries to which they were posted. Joe Reindorf who was moved from the position of Attorney General and Minister of Justice did not reconcile his profession as a renowned lawyer with his new position as Minister of Local Government and Cooperatives while Ekow Daniels was not able to work at the Ministry of Education (Daily Graphic, October 2, 1981: 246). This is what is referred to as "constructive dismissal", that is, when a minister leaves office having refused the offer of an alternative post (Alderman and Cross, 1985). Sometimes in order to provoke a final departure from government, Heads of State or Governments deliberately offered an alternative which they expected would be rejected. In the view of Ohene (2006: 200):

... the resignation of Dr Ekow Daniels is not... a surprise. His big ambition has been the post of the Attorney General and it was said in 1979 that he wanted that or no other. When he settled for the Interior position it was only second best and it was obvious he would move only to be AG. To move him to the Education Ministry must have sounded to him like leaving him with no choice but to quit.

The resignation of Kwesi Botchwey as Minister of Finance under the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government in June 1995 resulted in a minor reshuffle when Mr Kwame Peprah, who was then the Minister for Mines and Energy was appointed to replace him while Edward Salia, Minister for Transport and Communications was given additional responsibility of the Ministry of Mines and Energy (Daily Graphic, July 27, 1995: 358).

The biggest en masse resignation of ministers in Ghana since independence was the one by nine ministers with presidential ambitions under the Kufuor government in June 2007. They are Nana Akufo-Addo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and NEPAD, Alan Kyerematen, Minister for Trade, Private Sector and PSI, Kwame Addo-Kufuor, Minister for Defence, Papa Owusu-Ankomah, Minister for Education, Science and Sports, Mike Oquaye, Minister for Communications, Jake Obetsebi-Lampsey, Minister for Tourism and Diasporan Relations, Felix Owusu-Adjepong, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Hackman Owusu-Agyemang, Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing and Paa Kwesi Nduom, Minister for Public Sector Reform.

**vii. Creation of new ministries:** In line with the principles of allocation of functions, the major re-organisation of ministries also formed the basis for ministerial reshuffles. For instance in January 1965, the Nkrumah government created 12 new ministries of non-cabinet ranks and appointed new ministers through realignment. The 12 new ministries were Information and Party Propaganda Secretary, Pensions and National Insurance, Housing, Labour, Social Welfare, Local Government, Lands, Art and Culture, Cooperatives, Food and Nutrition, Fuel and Power and Parks and Gardens. This is in addition to the cabinet ministries of Justice, Interior, Defence, Works, Communications, Education, Industries, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Trade, Finance, Mines and Mineral Resources, Attorney

General (Daily Graphic, January 25, 1965: 91). This brought the number to 32 ministries. However, the ministries were reduced as a result of realignment, to 17 in March 1966 when the National Liberation Council took over power on February 24, 1966. The new ministries were Finance, Health, Information, Agriculture, Forestry, Labour and Social Welfare, External Affairs, Works and Housing, Industries, Trade, Lands and Mineral Resources, Local Government, Interior, Communications, Defence and Development and Planning (Daily Graphic, March 21, 1966: 104).

Similarly, under the NPP government, reshuffles were made when either new ministries such as Women's and Children Affairs, Chieftaincy and Culture and Public Sector Reform were created or "Ministers of State" were appointed and assigned to the Office of the President and some specific ministries such as Education, Interior and Justice and Attorney General.

**viii. Regime change:** Some reshuffles were based on regime changes. Any new government which came to power changed the composition of the ministerial team. Immediately after an election or change of government, it was common practice for the head of state or government to have a major reconstruction of the government. A fresh electoral mandate both enhanced the head of state or government's authority and provided the occasion for a reorganisation of personnel, especially if the head of state or government had previously deliberately refrained from making changes because of the imminence of the elections. An example is the reshuffles undertaken under the National Democratic (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) governments after they were elected and re-elected in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 respectively. There was also a major re-organisation of the Government of Ghana in October 9, 1975, which created the Supreme Military Council (SMC) to replace the National Redemption Council (NRC) as the highest legislative organ of state. In the reshuffle that followed, 11 commissioners

including the Attorney General E.N. Moore (who held the post since January 13, 1972) lost their jobs (Daily Graphic, October 10, 1975: 195).

*ix. Alleged criminal offences:* Some reshuffles were made because of alleged criminal offences. For example, in August 1962, President Kwame Nkrumah revoked the appointment of Ako Adjei and Tawia Adamafio as ministers of Foreign Affairs and Information and Broadcasting respectively. They were also detained “in the interest of the security of the state” (Daily Graphic, August 30, 1962: 66) as a result of their alleged complicity in the bomb blast at the border village of Kulungugu near Bawku in which Dr Kwame Nkrumah escaped unhurt on his way to Ghana from the then Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), where he met President Maurice Yameogo (Daily Graphic, July 17, 1962: 65).

Similarly, in March 2001, Mallam Yusif Issa resigned as the Minister of Youth and Sports following a scandal over the loss of his suitcase containing US\$45,000 meant for the Black Stars during a trip to the Sudan, making him the first minister under the New Patriotic Party government to do so. His resignation was viewed as a step to save himself and the government further embarrassment from events surrounding the incident (Daily Graphic, March 15, 2001: 429). Earlier on, in April 1987, the Provisional National Defence Council suspended Dr Kofi Sam as Secretary for Works and Housing pending the outcome of a cement probe (Daily Graphic, April 24, 1987: 3).

*x. “Dominant Head of State or Government” theory:* Some reshuffles show that the Head of State or Government primarily maintained and demonstrated their authority by disposing of potential rivals or awkward dissidents. Some ministers were removed from office because they stood up to the Heads of State and Government and told them that their policy or programmes

or proposals were wrong. Some reshuffles also show the unlimited power of the chief executive of the country to appoint and dismiss ministers. The power of appointing ministers is vested in the executive branch of government. For instance, Article 78 (1) of the 1992 Constitution stipulates that “Ministers of State shall be appointed by the President with the prior approval of Parliament from among members of Parliament or persons qualified to be elected as members of Parliament, except that the majority of Ministers of State shall be appointed from among members of Parliament (Republic of Ghana, 1992: 63). Section 2 of the same article gives the President the unlimited power to “appoint such number of Ministers of State as may be necessary for the efficient running of State”. Thus the power to appoint and dismiss is not in dispute.

Heads of state and government since independence had exercised the power at will because it lay in their unfettered hands. According to E.M. Debrah (2007):

You become a minister because you share certain principles with the Head of State or Government. If you disagree with him, you must leave. ... If you are a minister and you think that you are better than the President, he will remove you.

Personal loyalty is therefore paramount for keeping one's job as a minister.

It is instructive to note that most reshuffles offered Heads of State and Government the opportunity to exercise one of the most important resources available to them, that is, patronage. The reshuffle undertaken by President Kufuor on April 27, 2006 in which six ministers including Yaw Osafo Mafo, Minister for Education and Sports, Ayikoi Otoo, Attorney General and Minister for Justice and Dan Botwe, Minister for Information is

largely seen as an attempt by the President to “show where power lies”. It is an open secret that most of the ministers in question had disagreed with the President at different forums either within or outside government. Furthermore, President Limann's 1980 reshuffle, given the circumstances under which he assumed the leadership of the People's National Party (PNP) and the internal wrangling, was seen as a move towards asserting his authority and being his own man. In the words of Ohene (2006:201-202):

The fact that President Limann had the guts to sack Mr Reindorf (which is what he did by moving him to the Ministry of Local Government and Co-operatives) is a sure indication of just how much Dr Limann's self-confidence has grown since the tumultuous days of June 1979. ... one hopes that the President having demonstrated that he is in control will now make things work!

Similarly, under the NDC government the President's power to appoint and drop ministers had been shown several times in its eight years' rule.

Table 1: Women Representation in Ministerial Positions, 1957-2008

Year	Regime	Party/Ministry government	Head of Government	Number of women holding ministerial positions
1957-1966	Civilian	Convention People's Party (CPP)	Prime Minister	1 (Susan Alhassan, Minister for Social Welfare and Community Development) out of 40 ministers
1966-1966	Military	National Liberation Council (NLC)	Lt. Gen. J.A. Ankrah Lt. Gen. A.A. Adifa	Nil of 19 commissioners
1966-1977	Civilian	Progressive Party (PP)	Lt. Gen. Ewe	Nil of 16 ministers
1977-1979	Military	National Redemption Council (NRC)	Gen. A.A. Aframaneh	Nil of 18 commissioners
1979-1980	Military	Supreme Military Council (SMC II)	Gen. A.A. Aframaneh	Nil of 18 commissioners





## MINISTERIAL TENURE: THE FREQUENCY AND SCALE OF THE RESHUFFLES

Ministerial tenure was determined by the Heads of State and Government. It was their personal decision since they had constitutional power to reshuffle the ministerial team.

There is considerable variation in the frequency with which ministerial reshuffles had occurred under different Heads of State and Government in Ghana (see Table 2). Of all the regimes, the PNDC, CPP, NPP and NDC governments (in this order) had the highest number of both major and minor reshuffles. This is mainly because they have had a longer span of life in government. Kufuor's NPP government is still in office and indications are that more reshuffles are in the offing and therefore the reshuffle list will go up.

The mean average tenure had rarely exceeded two years and had sometimes been substantially less especially in certain sectors such as energy, education, interior, information and local government. For example, under the NRC/SMC regimes, 1972-1979 a period of seven years - there were eight commissioners of Local Government (see Table 3). Lt. Colonel George Minyila and Major Edward Yirimanbo each spent two months as commissioners. Similarly, under the New Patriotic Party government from 2001 to 2008, there were five ministers each for the ministries of Energy (Kan Dapaah, Paa Kwesi Nduom, Mike Oquaye, Joseph Adda and Felix Owusu Agyepong) and Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (Kwadwo Baah Wiredu, Kwadwo Agyei Darko, Charles Bintin, Stephen Asamoah Boateng and Kwadwo Agyei Darko). Bintin and Asamoah-Boateng spent a year each. In contrast, the Ministry of Local Government under the NDC government, 1993-2001 had two ministers, Kwamena Ahwoi and Cecilia Johnson, with Kwamena Ahwoi serving for almost seven years in

addition to his five years served under the PNDC government, making him the longest serving Minister for Local Government in the history of the country.

Table 2: Frequency and Scale of Ministerial Reshuffles in Ghana, 1957-2008

Year	Regime(s)	Minor Scale	Major Scale	Total
1957-February 1966	Convention People's Party (CPP)	13	3 (2/2/1960, 2/5/1961, 2/11/65)	16
February 1966-October 1969	National Liberation Council (NLC)	7	0	7
October 1969-1972	Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC)	2	1 (23/11/71)	3
January 1972-1979	National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Council (SMC)	0	4 (23/4/73, 2/1/74, 7/1/75, 15/7/77)	4
June 1979-September 1979	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)	Nil	0	Nil
September 1979-December 1981	People's National Party (PNP)	2	1	3
Dec. 1981 – Jan. 6, 1982	Provisional National Defence Council	15	6 (9/1/1983, 13/6/1983, 12/6/1985, 2/4/1987, 13/1/1991, 2/2/1992)	21
Jan. 1985-1995	National Democratic Congress (NDC)	13	4 (2/3/1994, 12/8/1995, 10/1/1997, 25/1/1999)	17
Jan. 2001-2008	New Patriotic Party	14	4 (2/5/2004, 17/4/2005, 12/5/2006, 23/3/2007)	18

Sources: Data from the Daily Graphic, 1957+ date

Table 3: Ministers/Commissioners of Local Government in Ghana, 1957-2008

Regime(s)	Tenure of Regime(s)	Name(s) of Minister/Commissioner	Tenure of Minister
Convention People's Party (C.P.P)	1957-February 1966	1. Sir E.O. Asare-Adda 2. Asare Ofori-Atta 3. Kwaku Eastafo 4. M. M. B. Tejan-Sie	1957-1966 (10 years) 1966-1967 (1 year) Oct. 1967-Dec. 1968 (3 months) 1971-1966 (15 years)
National Liberation Council (NLC)	February 1966-October 1969	1. A. Y. Donkor 2. Dr. Alex Aducci 3. Ebenezer J. J. J. J.	1966-1967 (1 year) 1966-1969 (3 years)
Progressive Party (P.P)	October 1969-January 1972	1. F. F. J. J. 2. N. N. E. Aducci	1969-1971 (2 years) Jan. 1972 (1 year)
National Redemption Council (NRC) Military Council (NRC)	1972-June 1979	1. Col. Victor Osei-Appiah 2. Maj. Gen. N. N. Aducci 3. Col. F. F. Aducci 4. Col. E. K. Aducci 5. Lt. Col. George Mingila 6. Major F. F. Aducci 7. Col. K. Aducci 8. Col. Aducci	1972 (1 month) 1972-1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year) 1973 (1 year)
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (A.F.R.C)	June 1979-September 1979	1. Justice J. J. J. J.	June 1979-September 1979 (3 months)
People's National Party (P.N.P)	September 1979-December 1983	1. K. B. P. J. J. J. 2. J. J. J. J. 3. E. K. Aducci	Sept. 1979-Sept. 1981 (2 years) Sept. 80-Oct. 2, 1981 (1 year) Nov. 12, Dec. 21, Feb. 1 (2 months)
Provisional National Defence Council	Dec. 1983-Jan. 6, 1983	1. J. A. Kufuor 2. Kwame Ofori-Atta 3. F. A. J. J. J. 4. K. A. Aducci 5. Dr. J. A. Aducci 6. W. J. Aducci 7. Kwame Aducci	1983-1984 (1 year) 1983-1984 1984-1986 1986 (1 month) 1986-1987 (1 year) 1987-1988 (1 year) 1988-1989 (1 year)
National Democratic Congress (NDC)	Jan. 1983-January 2001	1. Kwame Aducci 2. J. J. J. J.	1983-2000 (17 years) 2000-2001 (1 year)
New Patriotic Party	Jan. 2001-2008	1. Kwadwo Aducci 2. Kwadwo Aducci 3. Charles Blumeh 4. Stephen Aducci 5. Kwadwo Aducci	2001-2003 (2 years) March 2003-March 2005 (2 years) April 2005-May 2006 June 2006-July 2007 August 2007 to date

## MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLES: CONSULTATION AND SECRECY

Reshuffles normally took sometime to be effected. Heads of State and Government were said to have mulled over possible changes for a considerable time – sometimes even months – before a reshuffle actually occurred. A reshuffle provoked by an unexpected resignation did not involve the whole process being foreshortened.

Heads of State varied in the extent to which they discussed their general plans for reshuffles of ministers. Some preferred to keep their cards close to their chest while others sounded out opinion on proposed changes. But the sounding of opinions of colleagues about reshuffles as a whole seemed generally to be restricted to two or three people including the Cabinet Secretary and the Minister for Presidential Affairs. For President Rawlings, however, the perception is that his wife was also involved in the reshuffles.

Presidents had numerous reasons for preferring to keep ministerial colleagues ignorant of reshuffle plans. They were reluctant, on principle, to share the prerogative of making ministerial appointments. There are also practical grounds. It was important for the Presidents not to be diverted and subjected to conflicting advice and pressures, since it was difficult to discuss the merits and demerits of one colleague with another. The risk of premature disclosure constituted a further reason for circumspection on the part of the Presidents.

Interviews with Naa Professor J.S. Nabila, Minister for Presidential Affairs under the Limann government (Nabila, 2008) and Professor Ivan Addae-Mensah, then General Secretary of the People's National Party (PNP) (Addae-Mensah, 2007) showed that President Limann discussed the September 1980 reshuffle with the ministers affected. This was corroborated by the

October 2, 1981 edition of the Daily Graphic which under the headline, “Reindorf and Daniels resign” pointed out that “Dr Ekow Daniels on being informed about the change told President Limann last Wednesday that he would not be able to work at the Education Ministry” (Daily Graphic, October 2, 1981: 246). Similarly, according to E.M. Debrah, Secretary to the Cabinet under the National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Council government, General I.K. Acheampong also informed commissioners before reshuffles were made. According to him, the commissioners were called and congratulated for a good job done before they were told that in spite of their performance changes were necessary.

In contrast, however, Presidents Nkrumah and Rawlings kept their cards close to their chest. So also is President Kufuor (Agyepong, 2008). However, this contradicts what Dan Botwe said of the April 27, 2006 reshuffle that he was called to The Castle and informed by the President “to step aside ... while other Ministers had lined up to be told of their fate” (Ghanaian Times, April 28, 2006: 1).

Elizabeth Ohene (2006: 196), however, was too sure if ministers who were dropped had the courtesy of being warned before the general announcement. According to her, “she can say with authority that many of the people who have been moved around (‘shuffle’ better describes them) first heard the news on the radio or from friends and well-wishers” (Ohene, 2006: 196). This confirms the joke during the Nkrumah period, 1957-1966, that ministers were advised not to take lunch before the one o’clock news for fear of being choked after they had heard the news of their removal from the list of ministers (Asante, 2007). The reshuffle by President Kufuor in April 2006 in which Christine Churcher, who was dropped after returning a day or two from a trip outside the country (Ephson, 2008) and the one by General Acheampong in October 1975 in which Colonel C.R. Tachie-

Menson was dropped as Commissioner for Information after returning from a foreign trip to Accra in the morning of the reshuffle are some of the examples that show that most ministers were not generally consulted (Daily Graphic, October 10, 1975: 195).

## THE EFFECTS OF THE MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLES

The effects of the ministerial reshuffles are far-reaching, especially when they are not well planned and executed.

*i. Effect on ministers:* Loss of ministerial office can be a distressing experience, not least because it often comes as a considerable shock. Reshuffles had put the “fear of God into ministers” and had ministers “shaking in their shoes”. Reshuffles served as a reminder of the vulnerability to those ministers who remained in office: “If this can happen to you, it can happen to me”. Reshuffles created a sense of fear, nervousness and insecurity among ministers. In addition, changing ministries is regarded as a stressful experience and the more frequently a minister is moved the higher the stress level. Reshuffles reminded ministers of their dependence on the President as well as their hopes of obtaining advancement or at least demotion, had created in them a sense of insecurity which had sometimes affected their behaviour. They therefore made ministers to adopt several methods (such as becoming personally loyal to the President; becoming sycophantic, blindly supporting the cause of the President even though one knew that he was wrong; and “paying homage” to the President in his house). In fact, reshuffles had become one way of building patronage for governments.

Some ministers affected by reshuffles were “broken” men. Some degree of indignity and humiliation is almost inevitably involved. Even the loss of what might on the surface, appear to be some of the more trivial perquisites of ministerial office can be a devastating experience. Above all, however, there is the public stigma of failure which reshuffles imply. Moreover, ministers whose working lives are not an end, feel a need, when they leave office, to save face, if only as a means of re-establishing themselves in some other employment.

In addition to this, the exit of some ministers was accompanied with bitterness and acrimony. Examples include the exit of K.A. Gbedemah, Health Minister under Nkrumah's CPP government in 1961, who had to go into exile, Kwesi Botchwey, Finance Minister under the NDC government in June 1995 who left the country almost immediately and Francis Poku, Minister of National Security under the NPP government in January 2008, whose house was raided by operatives of the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI) and consequently fled the country apparently for his dear life. In addition, the April 2006 reshuffle by the Kufuor government in which six ministers were dropped was also bitter even though the impression was given that the President met the ministers and informed them about the reshuffle.

This is, however, in sharp contrast to the resignations of the nine ministers under the NPP government in June 2007. Their resignations were not only accepted by the President but he also gave them a grace period up to the first week in July 2007 to wind up and leave office for new persons to be appointed to take their places. They were also commended for their invaluable contributions they made individually and collectively to enhance the fortunes of the NPP and the country as whole during their tenure (Daily Graphic, June 25, 2007:1). The grace period shows that there were no bitterness and acrimony, which characterised previous resignations. However, it shows that the President was selective in his way of responding to resignations by his ministers.

**ii. Administrative effect:** Some civil servants interviewed pointed out that new ministers appointed, unfamiliar with their ministries were at least at the beginning of their terms, "managed" by them (Sai, 2007; Debrah, 2007). While a new minister was "learning the ropes" of his/her ministry, his/her general effectiveness was generally reduced. Ministers need to be able to stay sufficiently long in their ministries to master the



details of governance and see their policy proposals through. The rapid turnover of ministers in some sectors had not only led the ministers to the temptation to win an “instant reputation” with ill-thought out policies, or alternatively, reluctance to embark on projects which would mature after the minister had left the ministry (Sai, 2007). There is evidence to suggest that some ministers who were changed in midstream in the Nkrumah, Rawlings and Kufuor governments led to additional difficulties because their successors sought to alter, even reverse, some of their policies. This obviously had not only implications for officials in the ministries but also caused dissension in the Cabinet, where the previous incumbents (still in the Cabinet) resisted changes made by their successors.

The reshuffle of April 2006 that involved Yaw Osafo-Maafa and five others was seen as weakening the administrative capacity of the Kufuor government to deliver. According to Cameron Duodu, “the current reshuffle has, without doubt, started off on the wrong foot. Osafo-Maafa's alleged presidential ambitions have been bandied about for so long that no one is surprised that he's finally left the government. But what about the Attorney General, Mr J. Ayikoi Otoo and the Information Minister, Mr Dan Botwe? Your guess is as good as mine. But that's not good enough for an efficiently-run presidency” (Duodu, 2006: 6). Similarly, P.C. Appiah-Ofori, Member of Parliament (MP) for Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa lamented that:

There are five ministers whose replacements have been really felt. I do not know what mistakes they may have committed. However, if they did commit any unpardonable mistakes behind the scenes then it is better that they go, and in this case it is the President who has the prerogative. Remember, he is the Chief Executive of the State (The Mirror, May 20, 2006: 29).

**iii. Policy effect:** The rapid turnover of ministers has had a disruptive effect on policies and programmes in the sectors, namely, energy, local government, education, interior and information. This has led to a general high proportion of inexperienced ministerial team members. Consequently, there were knee-jerk and ad hoc responses to issues and challenges which confronted the sectors rather than the pursuit of comprehensive and long-term policies and programmes.

It has also been indicated that the turnover of ministers is also due to the size and complexity of the sectors and several ministers become vulnerable to them. For example, the mandate of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE) is to coordinate the activities of the District Assemblies (DAs) and Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs), and improve governance at the local level, rural and urban development, environmental sanitation as well as provision of green environment while that of the Ministry of Energy is to develop and sustain an efficient and financially viable energy sector that provides, secure, safe and reliable supply of energy to meet Ghana's developmental needs in a competitive manner (Republic of Ghana, 2007). Their operations do not only involve a large number of actors and stakeholders but also straddle other ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), which made the coordination and achievement of their objectives almost impossible.

**iv. Effect on government's public standing:** Dismissals for error or incompetence, as opposed to policy or personal clashes and personal loyalty, seemed to give the public the impression of general governmental incompetence. This is why when ministers resigned or were dismissed, the reason given will seldom be because he/she was incompetent or because there was a failure in his Ministry. Over-frequent reshuffles also made thoroughly bad impression on the Ghanaian public since they suggest that

“politicians don't really know anything about anything and just shoved around as part of a political game” (Crossman, 1976). At the same time, some of them were regarded as in the case of the Limann's September 1980 reshuffle an attempt to improve and “freshen the public image” of the regimes and to show that the Heads of State and Government were in control of affairs.

***v. Effect on the standing of Parliament:*** Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution states that “Ministers of State shall be appointed by the President with the prior approval of Parliament”. Parliament's Appointments Committee (PAC) vets the nominees based on qualifications, competence and other criteria publicly and makes recommendations to the whole House for approval. It is therefore a bit strange that a year or less after being in office, the nominees vetted and approved by Parliament, had been dropped from the ministerial team. According to K.B. Asante (2006:7):

The President selects those he believes can assist him to carry out policies as formulated by the Constitution and his promises in election. For four years he says this is the man or woman who can help me do what I promised. His selection is endorsed by Parliament. Then he comes back half way through his term and says, 'I have made a mistake. This man is no good. I will rather have this other man'. Can you then trust his judgement? Worse still, he makes other changes. A pantomime of cabinet musical chairs is a bit too much.

This serious reservation on the judgement of the President is equally true of Parliament.

The composition of its Appointments Committee sometimes included minister-designates who were themselves going to be vetted. This is attributed to the hybrid or mixed executive

presidential system of government under the 1992 Constitution. Consequently, the rigour and fairness one expected from the Committee in the vetting of ministers were undermined. The oversight role then of Parliament is therefore under the searchlight and compromised when ministerial reshuffles were made. In the words of Yaw Saffu (2007: 35) “But how can the legislature perform its oversight function effectively when the cream (presumably) on the majority side are poached and the rest of the majority are also (presumably) lobbying to be poached, by the same Chief Executive they are supposed to be keeping an eye on, and holding to account? ... Thus, in a mixed system, we have a presidential system with a crippled, hobbled parliament”.

**vi. Effect on the Presidents:** We have already indicated that Heads of State and Government mulled over reshuffles for sometime before executing them. This shows that reshuffles are not easy to be made. Reshuffles either by dismissals or demotions were not simply about impersonal offices or posts. Their incumbents were people with whom the Presidents had relationships, even close relationship stretching back over many years. The Presidents were not always at the top; they had worked their way up. In the process, they would have made both friends and enemies. But in reshuffles, Presidents had lost their friends, people who had worked with them to get to their present position or to achieve their policy objectives. This had placed emotional constraints on some of them. There is evidence from the interviews conducted that Presidents had found reshuffles as the most distasteful and grievous of all the tasks they had to perform. Like Harold Wilson (1976: 34), they had been subjected to “psychosomatic stomach pains”.

## THE COPING STRATEGIES OF DISMISSED MINISTERS

As we have already pointed out loss of ministerial power is not only a distressing and harrowing experience but often comes as a considerable shock. As some ministers have pointed out, some degree of indignity and humiliation is inevitable in reshuffles. Even the loss of some of the more trivial perquisites of ministerial office can be very devastating. Above all, there is sometimes the public stigma of failure which dismissal implies. Moreover, ministers whose working lives were not at an end felt a need, when they left office, to save face, if only as a means of re-establishing themselves in some other employment. It had not always been possible for most of the ministers to depart with honour, but efforts had been made to avoid departure, in most instances, with ignominy. Particular attention had thus been usually paid to the manner of dismissal and its presentation to both the ministers concerned and the general public.

When ministers were dropped, there had not been any compensation, resettlement or rehabilitation package for most of them. Coping with life therefore became problematic especially when they had lost perquisites of office. A few of them who were professionals went back to their professions. A few also were offered some employment outside ministerial ranks such as ambassadorships, or even the hope of a future return to ministerial office. For the majority, however, life had been tough. Coping with life was therefore difficult.

What message did this send to those who remained in government? The message they got was that once you were in government you must amass wealth by hook or crook so that if you were no longer in office, you would not feel the loss of the perquisites of office. Given this, the incidence of corruption in all governments in Ghana may be traced to the insecurity of tenure of ministers and the lack of any tangible compensation after they

had left office. If there is any resettlement package at all, it was selective and based on the personal relationship between the ministers and the Presidents.

## PARADOXES OF POWER: THE PRESIDENT AND THE RESHUFFLE OF THE MINISTERIAL TEAMS

The power of the presidents to make ministerial reshuffles was not without paradoxes. One paradox is that they were blamed for either not exercising the power in certain instances or they exercised it too late. Pressure had come from several quarters or motivations. Reshuffles were made to satisfy the party in power, as a source of patronage, “freshen” the image of the government, promote ethnic balance, remove incompetent ministers and cater for accidental factors such as resignations and health problems.

Another paradox is the pressure on the presidents to make reshuffles seen as a sign of weakness rather than strength. Reshuffles have made presidents unpopular in their parties. At the same time, the paradox of the possession and exercise of power by them had contributed to their capacity to achieve their intended goals, such as making the party stronger than the government, implementing political and economic policies, building patronage and “dealing” with ministers who had differences with them or “questioned” their leadership qualities.

A further paradox is the emotional element which some presidents felt in carrying out reshuffles since they were going to lose some people who they had known and worked with for so many years. As has been rightly pointed out by Brown (1968: 37-38) “An unwillingness to lose friends and stir up resentments which could have political consequences is at least as much a characteristic of the successful President or Prime Minister as the over-rated attribute of being a ‘good butcher’”. It is therefore clear that the exercise of presidential power to reshuffle ministerial teams is indeed a mixed blessing for presidents.

## CONCLUSION: LESSONS OF MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENTAL PERFORMANCE

A number of useful lessons can be distilled from this paper. First, ministerial reshuffles are significant because they are central to policy making, a core activity of the executive branch of government. They show the power of the President to use and sometimes misuse it. There is also an aura of drama which surrounds ministerial reshuffles and their obvious impact on ministers.

Secondly, reshuffles may be viewed as a necessary evil, more or less a pre-condition for the President to dispense appointments and promotions to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Appointments, promotions and demotions through reshuffles are necessary to win and reinforce support for the President both from his party and the public. At the same time, the power of conducting reshuffles also benefits the President because he derives patronage from them. Consequently, reshuffles exhibit characteristics of the principles of allocation of functions and the concept of patronage.

Thirdly, the acrimony, shock and feeling of a sense of "brokenness" over the unceremonious termination of ministerial careers can be eased if a resettlement package is designed for the dismissed ministers and courtesies such as giving the ministers reasonable notice of their fate so that they can have time to tell family and close associates before they hear it through the media. Governments approach to rehabilitation of "reshuffled ministers" had been selective and invariably based on the personal relationship between the ministers and the Presidents existing at the time the reshuffle was being made.

Fourthly, the limited prior consultation that accompanies the



reshuffles, the secrecy surrounding the planning stage and the speed with which the changes are executed both exemplify and reinforce the power of the Presidents over ministers. Secrecy is further designed to enhance the government's political advantage by increasing the eventual publicity impact.

Fifth, it is not being suggested here that ministerial reshuffles per se are negative, rather it is their frequency, which is problematic. Indeed, reshuffles are meant to take care of ministers who become tired or stale, and lost zest to innovate, if left in the same department for long; they need to be freshened by new ministerial challenges (Alderman and Cross, 1987). Spending some time before they are reshuffled will give the ministers the opportunity to implement policies and programmes for their sectors. Consequently, ministers should be allowed to spend a reasonable period of time in a particular ministry, possible an optimum of three years as suggested by Boyle et.al. (1971).

Finally, the performance of a government is judged by the ministerial team it has put in place and how it has been able to deliver. Frequent reshuffles give one the impression that the government is not serious and stable and therefore incompetent. In addition, they affect the public policies and programmes in the sectors involved. Consequently, the costs of reshuffles must be objectively and dispassionately weighed before they are undertaken. In short, reshuffles can be counter-productive and can damage rather strengthen the power, position and legitimacy of the President and his administration.

## POSTSCRIPT

At the lecture, I hinted that since the Kufuor administration had some months more to end its term, there was the likelihood of more ministerial reshuffles and they did happen. They could be classified as minor ones. At the end of May 2008, Stephen Asamoah-Boateng and Florence Oboshie Sai-Cofie swapped positions; Asamoah-Boateng became Minister for Information and National Orientation while Sai-Cofie took over as Minister for Tourism and Diasporan Relations. In July 2008, the ministers of Interior, Aviation, Energy, Trade, Industry, Private Sector Development (PSD) and Presidential Special Initiative (PSI) in the persons of Kwamena Bartels, Gloria Akuffo, Joseph Kofi Adda and Joe Baidoo Ansah respectively lost their positions. They were replaced by Kwame Addo-Kufuor (Interior), Felix Owusu-Adjepong (Energy) and Papa Owusu-Ankomah (Trade, Industry, PSD and PSI), who resigned in June 2007 to contest for the flagbearership of the NPP and lost. Joe Baidoo Ansah was, however, reassigned as Minister for Aviation while Gloria Akuffo was appointed as Ambassador to Ireland. These two reshuffles have thus increased the number of minor ministerial reshuffles undertaken by the NPP since it came to power in January 2001 from 14 to 16.

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He was appointed lecturer at the University of Ghana in 1984, promoted Senior Lecturer in 1990, Associate Professor 1995 and Professor 1997. He was Head, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana, Legon from October 1995 to September 2000. He served as the 2001 UNESCO/United Nations University Leadership Academy (UNULA) Chair in Leadership Studies. He also lectured at the College of Administration, Polytechnic of Sokoto State, Nigeria and the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, University of Swaziland. He was Visiting Commonwealth Research Fellow, Department of Politics, University of Glasgow, Scotland from October 1993 to July 1994. He won the University of Ghana 2006 Best Teacher Award in the Humanities. He was elected Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in December 2005. He is also a Fellow of the Ghana Institute of Management. Since 2000, he is a member of the Management Committee of the Centre for the Future State, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, which allocates funds for research in some academic and research institutions in Africa, UK and Asia.

Professor Ayee is the sole author of five books, editor of four and co-editor of two. In addition to these books, he has 144 publications as articles, chapters in books and book reviews. They cover areas like policy implementation, decentralization, civil service, state enterprises, privatization, the ombudsman, public finance, human resource development, elections, code of ethics, co-production, the environment, governance, leadership and politics in Ghana. Some of the articles have appeared in journals such as African Studies Review, African Affairs, Canadian Journal of African Studies, International Review of Administrative Sciences, Public Administration and Development, Democratization, Electoral Studies, Regional and Federal Studies, Development Policy Review, Regional Development Dialogue, African Journal of Political Science, African Journal of Public Administration and Management, African Administrative Studies and Africa Development.

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He is married to Doris and they have three children, Ayite, Armah and Ayele.