



The Kwatriot

By Kwesi Yankah

Whoever decided that the best slogan a patriotic party needed to unseat the Umbrella was that of earthquake, must be salivating by now.

For even if the meteo did not record this recent one because their Richter scale was out of batteries, the security agencies may have done it in ink: for this is probably the third coup attempt in 10 weeks; and it could even be said, if the ballot fails, use earthquake!!

Not until then, one would think our armed forces were battle ready. As it turned out, the muscled men themselves, including those guarding His Jerryship, Farrakhan and all, must have run for their dear lives, leaving their bosses in the hands of night watchmen.

But earthquakes happen so often these days you wonder if you shouldn't revise your notes on national stability, and also begin discussing what to do in case another small boy gets up one of these dawns and begins singing the national anthem on Joy FM.

In that case, what to do is probably the same as what you will do in case of an earthquake. Hide under the nearest table, with your head bowed (and your ears blocked) ignoring the crooked voice for the time being.

If there are no tables to hide underneath, or ears to block, move unto plain grounds, and avoid standing close to windows or pillars, for you may be hit by a stray bullet, or a blow from the coup maker.

In any case, do not panic even if your heart is beating. Stay in a safe position until the national anthem or rumbling is over, after which you may do a roll call of various parts of your body, checking who is missing, and who has been restored by the grace of the

Ghana Police.

What all this means, of course, is that we as a nation are so much in crisis, we have no plans for disasters. No earthquake drills for children, and no coup drills to protect the constitution.

We seem to have reserved all our drills for 6th March parades and gymnastic displays. We have even

done something much more striking in recent times.

The front page of the Graphic early last week proudly displayed the picture of a school girl being trained to pull the trigger, military drill presumably to herald our 40th anniversary. It was easy to presume that it was an editorial oversight, perhaps quietly inserted when the editor was taking a nap.

But you are wrong to think so. Last Thursday on the parade grounds, our school children confirmed

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our fears.

They staged a play before His Jerryship, Julius Nyerere and other dignitaries, narrating the story of Ghana's independence. It was the story of a national jigsaw puzzle, which could not be fully solved until a trigger finally happened on a 31st, and behold the nation restored its coherence.

Before then, all mortals had miserably flopped. Among all attempts to solve the puzzle, it was probably Busia & Co. that looked the clumsiest.

With encyclopedias in hand, they looked sufficiently confused to need a rescue mission. Hilla Lee

suffered the same confusion, but still managed to leave something behind, according to the story. (The script writer may have decided to be kinder to Hilla Lee since he, unlike the late Professor, was capable of a rejoinder.)

The lesson the school children sent home was that it pays to pull the trigger, rather than the pink book. Thereafter, all problems cease.

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His Jerryship himself must have been very disappointed in the story, particularly since good old

that Fathia found herself seated next to the man who may have made her homeless.

Indeed, when I saw the hallowed parliamentary speaker chatting with Fathia on camera, my only

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conclusion was they were probably discussing when he would hand over Nkrumah's house at Cantonments, to the former First lady.

It's otherwise hard to tell what else could be the

subject of a chat between tenant and landlady, particularly these days when 'My children are returning from London.'

'Mr. Speaker, remember one of Nkrumah's sons is currently 'perching' at

somebody's boys quarters at Kaneshie.

Fathia herself must be very courageous to have returned home, considering the bad gossip about her within the camp of the progressive allians.

The gossip was so bad her presence in any shopping centre at Osu, should easily raise a security alert!

But the parade was not too bad, except that the sad faces of the opposition were missing. The last time they appeared together with their 'enemies' was at an installation ceremony where they were met with taunts and anti-opposition choruses.

And they must have learned their lessons, that they belong only to history. As this parade turned out, I did see thirty-firsters marching with their oversized red berets, and umbrella people swinging arms (without the opposition), all as if the Big Six were made under the umbrella.

It should then not be surprising if on such a great anniversary of our national independence, a small earth kukurudu should remind one and all, that everything went wrong on our birthday.

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