

# **TANGAZA COLLEGE**

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

## **HOSPITALITY: THE STRENGTH OF GHANA'S PAST, HOW IT COULD PROMOTE HARMONY AND HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**



*This is a long paper submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for a*

*Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Studies*

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## STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflections. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

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## **DEDICATION.**

I dedicate this work to my parents, the late *Mr. John Kwabena Mensah Akumah* and the late *Mrs. Agnes Ama Adamah Akumah*, who were my first teachers. Their life of generosity to people taught me about hospitality. May they rest in perfect peace. Amen.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

I thank God for the opportunity to study in Tangaza college. I thank God also for the strength given to me to write this paper about a beautiful Ghanaian heritage, which is gradually dying away. I am profoundly grateful to my tutor, Dr. Mary Getui, whose motherly affection and care has guided me throughout the time I was writing this paper. May God richly bless all her work.

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Last, but not the least, my sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the success of this paper, especially those I interviewed. May the good God, bless all of you.

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## PREFACE.

There is an Akan maxim, that it takes two heads to decide, but in the Ghanaian society today, it takes only one head to decide in most of the communities. Individualistic approach of doing things is the order of the day for many Ghanaians. Hospitality which was a virtue for almost all the communities, is dying so fast. For example, it is very difficult for a neighbour to go to a neighbour's house to ask for some help in the contemporary Ghanaian situation.

Forty-one years that I have lived in Ghana, community way of living was highly expressed in all forms. Many people who have lived in Ghana for the past ten years testified to the drastic changes that are taking place in Ghana now. Many indigenous and foreigners who experienced the hospitality of Ghanaians in the past, are now questioning about the falling standards in the country; individualism, bribery and corruption, low morality and division among the same community members. Some communities have lost the sense of where they belong.

This paper would attempt to underline what used to be the Ghanaian virtue of hospitality, which every community in Ghana cherished most and was acknowledged by many other countries. The inner cover of this paper has a "stool", a symbol of hospitality in Ghana. If a person enters a home or a community and the person is given a stool to sit on, that person feels accepted in that home or community. That means, he or she is accorded hospitality.

Chapter one would attempt to explain what hospitality is and how it was practised in some of the communities. Our reference point would be the Akan communities in Ghana, who are in the majority and have great influence on the other communities. Our objectives and methodology shall be within this chapter.

In chapter two, we shall deal with the historical perspective of Ghana; how the indigenous people promoted hospitality in their communities through their festivals, the strangers and visitors that just appeared in their homes. We shall also attempt to show how they were in communion with their ancestors, who were the model of hospitality for them. We shall also see how Ghana was being developed because of the generosity and hospitality of the indigenous people.

There were many factors that were hindrances in the way of the Ghanaian people to be hospitable. In our current situation, some of these hindrances are the major factors for the dwindling hospitality and individualistic life-style in most Ghanaian communities. Chapter three will help us to know and understand some of these hindrances that are crippling the contemporary Ghanaian society. Some of the recent hindrances are technology and the many African-Americans residing in Ghana and influencing the Ghanaian youth especially with their own culture and life-style.

Scripture has a lot to teach about hospitality. In chapter four, we shall reflect on how people practised hospitality from scriptural point of view and also from the Apostolic times, and in the individual Christians. Most of the people gave themselves up completely in the service of others who were in need. Christian hospitality has been a teaching in the Catholic Church as a model for all Ghanaians. We shall suggest some ways that people may follow in order to go back to what Christ Himself came to do; to serve and not to be served, and that is hospitality.

Chapter five deals with personal reflection on hospitality, some humble recommendations that will help many Ghanaians to return to their roots, and general conclusion. In the preamble which begins this chapter, we tried to use the central word for

this paper, “hospitality” to give some information on how God expects us to deal with people when it comes to hospitality.

In the general conclusion, there is one symbol that most (if not every) Ghanaian is aware of its importance; that is ‘Sankofa.’ This symbol is found in many places in Ghana and at the back of many books. It literally means, go back and take. It reminds most Ghanaians who have forgotten the past deeds of our fore-fathers and mothers, to go back to their roots and pick up what is gradually fading out: hospitality and community living.

## CHAPTER ONE.

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

#### 1.1. WHAT IS HOSPITALITY?

The Webster's Encyclopaedia defines hospitality as: "The friendly reception and treatment of guests or strangers. The quality of disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm friendly generous way."<sup>1</sup> Hospitality is showing kindness to other people. It is a responsibility that has moral values and social acknowledgements. On hospitality, Gyekye writes that it is:

An ethic of responsibility which is social morality, generated and fashioned by the imperatives of social life, is oriented toward concern for the interests of others, though not necessarily to the detriment of the interest of the individual. ...A caring attitude or conduct that one feels one ought to adopt with respect to the well-being of another person or other persons.<sup>2</sup>

Hospitality is the ability to respond to the needs of others generally. It is the responsibility one takes upon oneself, or a group of people or even the whole nation, to show concern for the welfare and needs of others. It is also the responsibility of the individual, the community or the nation not to harm others, whether they are strangers or "nationals." It is the activity of a person or group of persons to make others feel at home wherever they find themselves. It is also the ability of any nation to show her concern for others. Practising hospitality is bringing humanity closer to oneself.

#### 1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The fast changing Ghanaian heritage is gradually making some Ghanaian values like hospitality, an individual affair. The community that seeks to welcome people is fading away very fast. Different cultures and values have been embraced now in Ghana, giving those

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<sup>1</sup> Webster's Encyclopaedia, Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.

<sup>2</sup> Kwame Gyekye, African Cultural Values: An Introduction, (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 1996), p. 63.

cultures the chance to overshadow the Ghanaian culture and values. Many people are asking the reason for these sudden changes of values that have been preserved for years. This is what has awakened our consciousness to discuss the fading away of hospitality that brought Ghana into the recognition of many countries around the world.

Ghanaians love their culture which is rooted in their religious beliefs. They strongly believe that, if a neighbour is assisted, their ancestors will surely reward them. Therefore, this sudden change, should be a matter of concern.

### **1.3. INTRODUCTION OF GHANA IN GENERAL AND THE AKAN IN PARTICULAR.**

#### **(A). GHANA.**

Ghana was known as the Gold Coast before she gained her independence from the British in 1957. Gold Coast was a name given by the colonial rulers. Ghana is rich in gold which is mostly found around the coastal towns and the forest areas. The colonial powers, traders and missionaries who came to Ghana settled first in the coastal towns like Elmina, Cape Coast, Saltpond and Takoradi. They saw the amount of gold being dug and sold to the gold dealers. Hence, the colonial authorities renamed the country and gave it the name, Gold Coast. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah led the people of the Gold Coast to gain their independence from the colonial rule. The country was re-named Ghana. Current census shows that the population in the country stands at eighteen million, four hundred and twelve thousand, two hundred and forty-seven (18,412,247).<sup>3</sup> About seventy-five languages are spoken in Ghana, and the country is geographically one of the smallest in Africa. Ghana is noted for her rich culture, spearheaded by the Akans who are the majority ethnic group. They form forty percent (40%) of the entire population. Another thirty-five percent (35%) who are not Akans,

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<sup>3</sup> Daily Graphic of Ghana, (Friday, July 28, 2000, Number 147972), p. 1.

can understand the Akan language but may not be able to speak it.<sup>4</sup> The map on page 51, appendix I, shows various communities in Ghana.

The history of Ghana teaches that Ghanaians were strangers themselves (especially the Akan people), who migrated to the present-day land they occupy. It was their nomadic life that brought them from the Shanghai Empire, which is the present day Mali. Jan Knappert acknowledges:

The ancient city of Ghana bordered the North of the present republic of Ghana - Ghana was the Arab spelling of the African name *Gana*, the meaning of which is unknown. In vain have archaeologists searched the vast space of West Africa for its site.<sup>5</sup>

### **(B). THE AKANS.**

The term *AKAN* refers to all the *TWI* speaking people of Ghana. We shall be referring to the Akan, since their concept of generosity is rooted deeply in their tradition and culture, and also it has influence on their daily lives. They can be compared to the Israelites. The Israelites have similarities to the Akan because, the Israelites also were in a foreign land for so long. They were in exile in Babylon and also in Egypt, working hard for their survival. In their exile, the majority of the Israelites showed hospitality to one another. When we consider the case of the Hebrew midwives among them, when these midwives, who feared God, were asked by the king of Egypt to kill all the male born to the Israelite during childbirth, they refused.

The king of Egypt told the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was called Shiphrah and the other Puah, 'when you act as midwives for the Hebrew women and see them giving birth, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she may live.' The midwives, however, feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt had ordered them, but let the boys live.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Knappert, *The Aquarian Guide to African Mythology*. (UK: Willingborough, 1990), p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 1: 15-19. (All quotations are from the African Bible).

The Akan also recalled how they had to live on the generosity of others, while on their pilgrimage. Therefore, the Akan took delight in the history of the Israelites and were told by their leaders, like Moses told the Israelites not to go over their harvest twice so that the stranger may have something to gather and eat.

The Akan comprises the following groups of people: Akuapim, Agona, Fante, Denkyira, Brong/Ahafo, Akyem, Kwahu, Sefwi, Wassa, Ashanti, Akwamu, Guan, Efutu, Ahanta, and Asin. As already noted, the Akan community is the largest in Ghana. Nukunya writes about the migration of some Ghanaian communities:

As far as Ghana is concerned, it is instructive to remember that many societies have histories of migration which tell of their places of abode prior to arrival at their present location. ...Similar stories of migration can be told of many others including the Adangbe, the Akwamu and other Akan groups.<sup>7</sup>

The Akan first settlement was in the Gonjaland, the present day Northern Ghana. They eventually moved southwards to the forest along the river banks in search of fertile land. The Akan were mainly agriculturists. They kept on moving within Ghana because of wars. They were classified as good traders. "The Akan communities were popular, much influential and very friendly" says Elder Kofi Kyei. "We are people who welcomed others in those days. People came to settle among us and we all lived as brothers and sisters."<sup>8</sup> Most of the elders we talked to at different times in different places, expressed the same sentiment about how some people are becoming more and more individualistic in the Ghanaian society in this contemporary world.

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<sup>7</sup> G. K. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*, (Accra: Ghana University Press, 1992), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Elder Kofi Kyei, (86 years old), an interview I made on June 18, 2000.

#### 1.4. HOSPITALITY IN INDIGENOUS GHANA.

In the past, hospitality was considered as a duty. If one ignores it, he or she loses face in the community and also among the ancestors. Every member of the indigenous setting was his or her neighbour's keeper. Strangers were treated with dignity and honour. The Akan have a proverb: *the stranger does not lack food and a sleeping mat*. Peter Sarpong agrees and has this to say: "The abhorrence of disgrace may well be the underlying rationale for the Ghanaian's sense of generosity, especially to strangers."<sup>9</sup> This Ghanaian concept had much influence on the entire society. It was a nation-wide concern to make things work out for the good of all citizens and visitors.

#### 1.5. HOSPITALITY IN GHANA TODAY.

The unique hospitality that some communities extended to people no matter where the person came from, has run into wide-spread problems due to cultural influence from other countries, the changing values of some of the indigenous people and the emphasis of the individual's privacy. Ghana's image is fast changing in the international community because Ghana cannot afford the kind of co-operation and sense of community that is for everybody, both indigenous and foreign. Human relationships, even at the village level have changed drastically. Elder Kofi Kyei laments:

Now, I do not know where we are going as Ghanaians and as Asin people in particular. I cannot even ask in the village here about those people living in those walled houses. I do not know who gave them the land and how they acquired the land. Before when a stranger or visitor comes into the village, they were *'Our visitors'*. If the one wants to live among us, *'We'* are the community to give that person a place to settle among us. Now it is the affair of the individuals, who claim those people to be his or her visitor(s).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Sarpong, Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture, (Accra-Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), p. 66.

<sup>10</sup> Elder Kofi Kyei, op. cit.

The Ghanaian system which promoted harmony and order in the country, is thus, fast giving rise to disharmony.

#### **1.6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.**

One of the aims of our study is to bring our readers attention to the role Ghana played in the past. For example, the struggle to gain political freedom or the role Ghana played for other African countries or Ghana allowing herself to be used by other nations for their independence struggles, peace and stability among nations and the various communities, and security for many people who found themselves in Ghana.

Our other objective is to conscientize Ghanaians about the way Ghana is changing fast and leaving behind her belief systems. We shall also suggest ways that can help Ghana to go back to her roots in order to rethink about her rich community life that is gradually giving way to an individualistic life-style. This could apply to other countries in Africa, and even beyond.

We shall also attempt to make some recommendations that will help revive the rich Ghanaian culture, values and norms that seem to be fading away. For example, we shall touch on two issues that are currently causing untold hardships for many Ghanaians, namely gender issues and homelessness. How to deal with these issues will feature in our recommendations.

#### **1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.**

In our research work, we relied on three renowned Ghanaian writers, who have written books about Ghanaian traditional values, culture and religion. These are Rt. Rev. Dr. Peter Akwasi Sarpong, Prof. Kwame Gyekye, and Prof. G.K. Nukunya. We also made good use of interviews with three African-Americans, who are now citizens of Ghana and some of

the African-Americans who had just visited Ghana to take part in the “emancipation”<sup>11</sup> day celebration. We spoke with three chiefs from different ethnic groups in Ghana. We also interviewed Ghanaian citizens, both young and old, but in a special way, an 86 years old man. We had the opportunity to interact with some third and fourth year students of the University of Ghana and ask them about their views concerning our topic, hospitality.

We also consulted other books both written by Ghanaians and foreigners, whose works were relevant to our study. Books, like Encyclopaedias, Church documents and the Bible, were also used in this essay. Indeed, other materials that were relevant to our work, were consulted.

Most of the indigenous people we spoke with, used their native language and we translated them into English. We also tried to analyse what most of the people we interviewed said and put them together, since most of those interviewed had common sentiments about the issue of the dwindling hospitality in most of the communities in Ghana.

## 1.8. CONCLUSION.

When we think of the past and what our fore-fathers and mothers did to bring the sense of hospitality to the Ghanaian people, all we can do is to be grateful to them. The question remains: can the contemporary Ghanaian take up that challenge of self-giving by being hospitable? We shall note in Chapter Two, how charity and hospitality were practiced in most of the communities of Ghana in the past. We shall also see how Ghana’s hospitality, contributed to the independence of other nations in Africa.

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<sup>11</sup> Emancipation is an annual celebration in Ghana for the remembrance of those who lost their lives during the slave trade, and also those who were taken as slaves to other countries.

## CHAPTER TWO.

### GHANA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

#### 2.1. THE TRADITIONAL SET UP.

##### (A). THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES.

The virtue of hospitality promoted good and cordial relationship among the various groups in Ghana for many centuries. Though Ghanaians were aware of their different ethnic groupings, when it came to service to one another they forgot about them. For example in the 1960s, when two Ghanaians residing abroad met one another (even though they had not met one another before), they tried their best to help one another feel at home. Whenever they met in Ghana, they both had that good relation. Most of the time, their friendship developed to the point that one would think they were from the same ethnic group.

Ghanaian people accepted challenges that helped them to bring out their talents. They loved to be acknowledged by others for their ability to do things. For this reason Peter Sarpong says: "Within each Ghanaian tribe, the individual tries to do great things; he wants to be acknowledged as being capable of doing wonders."<sup>12</sup> That is how the Ghanaian people felt about how to care for others in simple but impressive ways, which the whole community appreciated.

##### (B). FESTIVALS.

Festivals and ceremonies were used for reconciliation. Those were not occasions to harm people, even one's enemy or a tribe with which there was conflict. Ghanaian hospitality demanded that one person cared for the other. The occasion was always used as a time for peace making.

The Akan annual yam festival, which is a purificatory ceremony lasting one to two weeks usually in September or October, is called *Odwira*, meaning 'purity/cleanse' ... It

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<sup>12</sup> Peter Sarpong, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

is a festival involving remembrance of the dead, harvest, and thanksgiving. It is also an occasion for the settlement of disputes so as to bring back harmony into the community.<sup>13</sup>

During those festivals in the past, the individuals and families came forward to confess publicly the good they were not able to execute toward somebody. In their common solidarity, and to show how peaceful and united they were, Ghanaians travelled all over the country. Some went home, while others travelled to other towns and villages to participate in festivals. This attitude of being a united people, brought harmony among them.

### **(C). STRANGERS / VISITORS.**

It is said, that one good turn deserves another. It is also true, that when hospitality is rendered in the atmosphere of true love and service to humanity, it could promote unity, love and co-operation among nations and the individuals. Ghana in the 1960s, hosted many people from many parts of the world, and those people were accorded good hospitality among the indigenous Ghanaians. Charity towards such foreigners was a great source of income for Ghana in terms of taxes and job creation for the youth and Ghanaians in general, especially in the hotel industry.

Tourism is becoming a great venture for Ghana because Ghanaians in the past had an open hand to care for visitors and strangers. This was how an Ethiopian Airline magazine described Ghana's tourism. "Tourism is the fastest-growing sector of the Ghanaian economy - now ranked third after gold and cocoa. Accra, Ghana's capital extends a golden welcome to all visitors to this hospitable West African country."<sup>14</sup>

Comfort of visitors, either Ghanaians or foreigners, was a priority for many of the people. Indigenous people or foreigners moving from one end of Ghana to the other, did not experience any difficulty unlike today. When people showed hospitality by giving even a

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<sup>13</sup> G. K. Nukunya, *op. cit.*, p.64.

<sup>14</sup> Ethiopian Airlines, *Selamta*, Vol. XVII, Number 2, April-June, 2000, p. 7.

small gift like a carving or a piece of *kente* cloth (the indigenous weaved cloth) to a visitor, it reminded the person of a gift he or she also enjoyed somewhere. It was for the indigenous people a way of saying we want your friendship. The indigenous Ghanaian attached much value to giving and receiving gifts. Such gifts showed love and concern that people attached to the individual or the community. "Gifts are a sign of affectionate friendship."<sup>15</sup> The indigenous people did not attach any strings to gifts or to their service to others. That was what brought them closer to one another in the community or outside the community. They gave the visitor or stranger a sense of welcome into their communities.

#### **(D). ANCESTORS.**

The indigenous Ghanaian could not cook food just for their family members alone. They may not have enough to eat themselves, but they always made sure something was left until the following morning (normally the children of the house warmed that left-over food in the morning for their breakfast). The various communities' culture taught them that the ancestors come home at night to eat, therefore, some food had to be left for them. The fact was that they anticipated there may be a visitor or a stranger coming that night. Their strong belief was that their ancestors would feel happy when a stranger or visitor was taken care of. The indigenous people had the belief that they received more blessings from the ancestors if they were able to cater for somebody they did not know. It could have been their own ancestor they were caring for. Sarpong says of this: "Even though the living cannot go to the world of ancestors, they believe that the ancestors keep a close and constant contact with the living members of their lineage. They are sometimes supposed to visit the living."<sup>16</sup>

The ancestors were venerated in all spheres of life. The indigenous Ghanaian could not meet another person and pass by without stopping to greet, whether he or she knew the

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Sarpong, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

person or not. He or she will not feel at ease, since it might be an ancestor who has been neglected. They had the impression that the ancestor may be bringing them some unexpected message of good will from the ancestral world, therefore, not to engage that person through greetings and conversation could take his or her blessing away. Regarding this aspect Fisher tells us about how the Ashanti's were keen about greeting and conversation:

At the village, the Ashanti man or woman meets each other on a path and engage in the rituals of conversation... The two neighbours are actually oiling the wheels of their social relationship. Conversational conventions keep village life running smoothly.<sup>17</sup>

On the same issue of ancestral assistance, Sarpong also shows how the ancestors were said to be helping their relatives in diverse ways:

The ancestors are said to send help to their relatives. One ancestor may indicate to one of his own people the remedy to an illness in his dream. Another may send material things, such as money, clothing, etc. Another may see to it that the girls of his lineage are endowed with fecundity - The greatest blessing for the Ghanaian woman.<sup>18</sup>

## 2.2. DEVELOPMENT OF GHANA.

As we have mentioned already, all the festivals that were celebrated in Ghana annually in most of the communities were geared towards unity, harmony, peace and development. During such occasions, foreign investments were promoted for the communities and many people had that atmosphere of welcome to do business. (If the youth of Ghana today will have jobs to do, it will depend on how much Ghana is preparing her people to welcome investors as was done before). There is an Akan saying, that if the elder is the primary source of their hospitality, then the elder who lived before him or her, the ancestor was the elder's source. It means that if there was a development going on in Ghana, it was our ancestors who led the way. If the current generation wants development to

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<sup>17</sup> Robert B. Fisher, West African Religious Traditions: Focus on the Akans of Ghana. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), p. 66.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Sarpong, op. cit., p. 41.

continue for the younger generation to come and continue, then, Ghanaians need to open up as those before them did, rather than become self-centred, selfish and individualistic.

The foreigners who visit Ghana should be able to go back to their countries with a good impression of the Ghanaian sense of friendship, openness and hard work. That would encourage other foreigners to visit Ghana to do business in order to improve Ghana's economy. Trade links between Ghana and other countries should be fostered as was done in the past. As Badu-Addo wrote: "Ghana's hospitality is legendary, visitors are received with warmth and sincerity, regardless of their race, religion, nationality, sex or the colour of their skin."<sup>19</sup> If this could be true of the modern Ghanaian, then what Sarpong wrote about the hard working Ghanaian of the past would be justified in the life of the Ghanaian. He said:

The Ghanaian, being this world-centred, wants to see the fruits of his labours here and now. He expects visible results of what he does to others, and if these will come to him in the form of praise, reciprocal rewards, health, escape from danger, riches, he is contended.<sup>20</sup>

But the current question is, how can the modern Ghanaian have access to all these good things he or she wants or the development he or she wants to see, if they are neglecting the basic things like giving a warm welcome to visitors, processing their papers fast for them without demanding any bribes, and not taking advantage of them by charging them exorbitant prices? What some section of the Ghanaian people have to realise is that, the above mentioned are the real issues that will bring or discourage others to the country to do business.

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<sup>19</sup> Jerry Badu-Addo, *Ghana*, (Morlenbach: Strauss Druck, 1999), p. 9.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Sarpong, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

### 2.3. THE ROLE GHANA PLAYED DURING THE INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE AND HER RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

Ghana's good image could have been spread far and wide through her neighbouring countries, if Ghana had kept to her tradition of hospitality and her image as a country that welcomed others and sought to unite countries. As Nkrumah once said, "A union of African states will raise the dignity of Africa and strengthen its impact on the world affairs. It will make possible the full expression of the African personality."<sup>21</sup> With his Ghanaian mentality, Nkrumah sought to unite the whole of Africa to be at peace with each other. He and all Ghanaians fought hard to see to it that Ghana and her neighbours enjoyed peace for the common good of each country. Most of the leaders who came after Nkrumah, for example K. A. Busia and Hilla Limann, tried their best to maintain that cordial relationship of peace and harmony between Ghana and the neighbouring countries.

After Ghana's independence in 1957, Nkrumah and the people of Ghana did not relax because Ghana was free. The fighting for the independence of all other African countries was Ghana's priority. "We do not pray to have more money but to have more kinsmen. We are better than animals because we have kinsmen. An animal rubs its itching flank against a tree, a man asks his kinsmen to scratch him."<sup>22</sup> Such was the hospitality Ghana offered to many countries. Some leaders of the past like Kamuzu Banda of Malawi sought refuge in Ghana to fight for the independence of his country. Ghanaian hospitality allowed him to teach and to practise medicine in Ghana for sometime before he returned to Malawi. The President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, and that of Namibia, Sam Nujoma were among leaders who sought refuge in Ghana.

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<sup>21</sup> Kwame Arhin, (ed.), The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah, (Accra: Assemblies of God Literature Centre Ltd., 1991), p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Robert B. Fisher, op. cit., p. 28.

This is what Nujoma, the President of Namibia said when he visited Ghana in July, 1992.

The foresight and initiative of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, stimulated the freedom struggles in most parts of Africa. It was such vision that offered me my first air of freedom when I arrived in Ghana in 1960 without a passport. I left Accra with a travel document which enabled me to travel throughout the world and campaigned against the apartheid regime that occupied my country.<sup>23</sup>

The former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, used Ghana as the spring-board for his fight against the apartheid regime in his country before he was imprisoned. He formally went to Ghana after his release and as the president of South Africa, to thank the people of Ghana for their hospitality during his struggle against the apartheid regime.

In her struggle for independence, Ghana sought to have peaceful co-existence with her immediate neighbours; that is Togo, Cote d'Ivoire (formally Ivory Coast), and Burkina Faso (formally Upper Volta). All these countries also testify to the fact that Ghana had a unique way of welcoming people, because of their long history of being in the fore-front of fighting for the independence of sovereign states. Togo's president, Gnassingbe Eyadema testifies to this fact when Ghana and Togo had a border dispute in 1978. He said:

Though my country and Ghana are in dispute over the movement of our people, I still believe that there is going to be a solution very soon. Ghanaians love people, no matter where they come from, and the closure of this border will bring hardships to many people. The problem will be resolved very soon.<sup>24</sup>

The spirit of hospitality and the desire to be at peace with neighbours was a factor for the political and economic co-operation between Ghana and other countries.

To conclude this chapter, allow us to quote what Nkrumah said during his inaugural speech on Independence Day, 6th March, 1957, at the Independent Square. "The independence of Ghana is meaningless, unless it is linked with the total liberation of Africa."

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<sup>23</sup> Emmanuel Doe Ziorklui, *Ghana: Nkrumah to Rawlings*, Vol. I, (Osu-Accra: EM-Zed Books Centre, 1988), p. 626.

<sup>24</sup> *Sankofa News Paper*, (Elmina Castle Library, February, 1978. An Akan local News Paper. No more in circulation since 1980), p. 3.

## 2.4. CONCLUSION.

It is right therefore to say that it was the hospitality of Ghanaians (the first country in the sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence from colonial rule) that enabled her to open her doors to the other African countries to use Ghana in search for their own independence. It was this great gesture that brought liberation to most of the African states. We may therefore ask the reason why most of the Ghanaian communities have so soon and in a gradual manner, forgotten about hospitality. In our next chapter, we shall explore some of the hindrances that the Ghanaian is facing, hence some of the people's forgetfulness of the past solidarity that brought Ghana's unique hospitality of service to other nations.

## CHAPTER THREE.

### HINDRANCES TO HOSPITALITY IN CONTEMPORARY GHANA.

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION.

Many a time, some Ghanaians face problems in their endeavour to help someone who is in need. Hospitality that seeks to serve the needs of others, could be misunderstood. With their different cultural background and mentality, some foreigners bring into the Ghanaian society their own perception of how things should be. For example, if Ghanaians greet from right to left, the foreigner thinks he or she can do it any how, even if he or she wants to use the left hand. Most of the time, what begins as a good-will gesture, turns into an unpleasant situation. Some of the Ghanaians have also lost the sense of hospitality and in turn, they try to take advantage of those foreigners who always count on the hospitality of their hosts. Many a time, such situations bring disharmony.

A classic example is what we discovered in the *Sankofa*, a former Akan local newspaper. A foreigner visited Ghana and a family who did not know him, but for hospitality sake accepted him into their home, later on had trouble with him. This man saw how much the family helped him and decided to do something for the family. He bought roofing sheets for the family. This family called a few people (as it was done in the village) to thank the man for his kindness. This man went back to his country that is close to Ghana. He returned the following year to find an additional room constructed. He demanded that the room was for him because he had given them the money to build it for him. The whole case ended up in court. The hospitality of the family and the man's appreciation for that hospitality, turned into disagreement.<sup>25</sup> This created disharmony between the two parties.

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Another example is of a chief who gave a piece of land free to a German woman to build her house at a village called "Ankaful."<sup>26</sup> The German woman finished building her house and decided to do something for the villagers. She drilled a bore hole as a source of good drinking water for the villagers. At a point, she decided to charge the villagers for fetching water from the well. The chief and his elders went to ask her the reason for the charge. She told them she drilled the water and she can do what she wants with it. The case ended up in court and she was found guilty. Now she is in bitter confrontation with the chief who gave her the land for hospitality sake. She was seen as somebody who has come into the country for the sake of helping the leprosy patients, and so was given free land to build on.

In this chapter, we shall discuss colonisation, missionaries, conflicts in parts of Africa, influence of African-Americans in Ghana, technology, cash economy, and individualism.

### 3.2. COLONISATION.

Colonisation introduced foreign cultural values into the Ghanaian society. The colonisers thought, that Ghana (the then Gold Coast) and indeed all of Africa was going to be theirs. Roland gives witness to this when he wrote:

In British colonial Africa at least, the 1920s witnessed the crucial debate between those who believed that much of Africa was destined to be a white man's country, in which the African population would gradually diminish in the face of much more extensive European immigration...<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, we see colonial masters, bringing confusion and disharmony among the people, and forcing them to adapt to their cultural situation. They are responsible for the division of Ghana into many regions. For example, all the Akans living in the central parts of

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<sup>26</sup> Ankaful: a village well known in Ghana because both the psychiatric and leprosy hospitals are situated there. There is also a nursing school on the same area. The place is near Cape Coast in the Central Region.

<sup>27</sup> Roland Oliver, The African Experience, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), p. 210.

Ghana and those living in the coastal parts were one people. It is when the colonizers managed to separate the *Ashantis* from the *Fantes* through wars (which were in their interest because of the natural minerals of the land), that they used a river called *Pra* to divide the communities. We can also cite the example of the wars between the *Akwamu* people of the Eastern Region of Ghana and the *Ewes* in the Volta Region. These were started by the colonial masters over ownership of the *Akosombo* river. Later on the first president, Kwame Nkrumah, built a dam for generating electricity on the river and thus was used as a means for settling the conflict between the two communities.

A positive development that colonisation brought into the Ghanaian society was the establishment of primary and secondary schools. Even that positive action of the colonizers brought division in Ghana because they concentrated the building of schools in the southern parts of Ghana at Cape Coast, Accra, Akuapim, Kumasi, while they left the northern parts of Ghana with very few schools. This was due to the fact that the colonisers lived in the southern part of Ghana. This action of the colonizers created a deep rift between many communities, hence, hospitality became difficult among some of the communities, especially between north and south of Ghana.

### 3.3. THE MISSIONARIES.

The missionaries too wanted to change the African mentality overnight. They condemned everything African. Ghana was not left out as the Christian missionaries tried to change the culture, value system and norms of the people entirely.

Most colonial officials recruited in Europe for service in West, East and Central Africa were in command, and they had the solid support of all Christian missionaries, whatever their country of origin. The missionaries could defend their cause in argument from the scriptures and the doctrines they were pledged to preach.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

With this, the African did not know how to free themselves from the missionaries approach. Most Ghanaians, who were much submissive to the missionary activities, saw the conflict but could not do anything other than give in to it. Those opposed to it (like the Ashantis, who equated the missionaries to the colonizers and most of whom had already embraced Islam), had to confront the rest which at the end brought division among the indigenous people. Islam came from North Africa through Burkina Faso (the then Upper Volta) to Ghana, and so the people saw them as people of their own, unlike the missionaries who were whites and so looked like the colonial masters.

### **3.4. CONFLICT IN PARTS OF AFRICA.**

Conflicts in some parts of Africa have also brought many more people into Ghana. Each and every group carries their own country into Ghana in forms of their peculiar cultural values. These varieties of cultures are spreading all over the country and are taking root. For example, the refugees from Liberia are always in confrontation with the indigenous people about values: An example of this is the question of the removal of sandals (not shoes), before entering the chief's parlour, which has become a source of confrontation between the indigenous people and the refugees.

The Sierra Leone refugees in the Western Region of Ghana do not understand why the indigenous people should remove their sandals (not shoes), when they appear before the elders or the chief of the area. In almost all the communities in Ghana, removal of sandals before the chiefs and elders is a sign of respect. When some are in trouble and if they have to face the elders, they will refuse to take off their sandals as the local custom demands. In fact, that habit of 'no respect for the elders', as the indigenous people testify, is creeping in to the detriment of the people's respect for their chiefs. It has brought conflict between the two communities. One of them told us,

...it is not our business to remove our sandals. It is a custom for the local people who live here. We also have our culture which we follow and it is not up to anybody to change our

custom for us. After all, it is the government who brought us here and not any chief. If their people will remove their sandals, they can do so, but this is today's world and not the world of yesterday. We are not ready to compromise.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, the chief threatened to evacuate them from his land at the time we spoke with him. We can also cite an example of other countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Burkina Faso. Therefore, we can conclude, that conflicts in other parts of the world, could bring misunderstanding between the refugees who have been driven from their homeland to Ghana and the indigenous people.

Moreover, these Liberian refugees live among the *Efutu* community in the Central Region of Ghana. For the Efutus, it is not polite for one to use the left hand when giving or receiving something from another person. Whenever the indigenous people remind them about that simple cultural value that the Akans hold in high esteem, they in turn become angry and tell the people to forget about using left or right. In fact as a result the Chief of one village, threatened to evacuate them from the village if they would not comply with the values and the culture of the people.

### **3.5. INFLUENCE OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN GHANA.**

We would like to focus our attention on the African-Americans because they are now in majority in Ghana as foreigners. They have come to settle in Ghana, claiming Ghana as their ancestral home. Most of them visited Ghana first as tourists and after visiting the castles and forts in Ghana and the history of slave trade, most of them have sought citizenship of Ghana. In fact, one African-American family which happens to have the same name as the chief of Asin Foso-Odumasi, Nana Danso, has settled in the village. The government of Ghana is granting all those African-Americans, who want to stay in Ghana, a dual citizenship

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<sup>29</sup> A Sierra Leonean refugee (Western Region of Ghana) in an interview which I made on July 3, 2000.

and that has attracted many of them to have their homes in Ghana. See appendix II on page 52, for a statement from the government of Ghana on the dual citizenship of the African-Americans, which appeared in the "Daily Graphic" of Ghana.

Ghanaians are facing the fastest changes in their cultural values simply because their hospitality has been over emphasised. When we asked one of the African-Americans living in Ghana regarding the reason why they have put up walls on their buildings in the town, while the rest of the community have no walls, he answered, "We want to protect our families and property. We are also afraid that people may intrude, and also thieves may come to attack us." When we tried to find out about his views on the reason why the indigenous people are not worried about the thieves that he spoke about, he said, "This is our culture. We need to protect our property."<sup>30</sup>

We had the opportunity to sit down with the chief of one of the towns where the African-Americans live to ask him some questions about the situation in the town with regard to the foreigners. We asked him the reason why he had allowed the African-Americans to put up walls and not to be integrated into the society as everybody in the community. He said, "You should know better how they live their lives. They like their privacy, and live their individual lives." When we probed further about the communal aspect of the town and how their individualism will affect the community, he said, "There is nothing I can do now."<sup>31</sup> We already saw the tension that was looming between the African-Americans, who have been shown such great hospitality by the chief and his people. Putting up walls around buildings even in the villages in Ghana is gradually becoming a new fashion. No wonder many Ghanaians are becoming private in their approach to many things in Ghana now.

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<sup>30</sup> Mr. Coleman, (An African-American, residence in Ghana at Asin Foso) in an interview which I made on June 16, 2000.

<sup>31</sup> Nana Danquah, (Chief of Asin Foso). Interviewed, June 20, 2000.

“We heard about Ghana’s hospitality and we decided to come and experience it. After our two previous visits to Ghana, we decided to come and live among the Akans, who first welcomed us.”<sup>32</sup> This statement from two of the African-Americans, acknowledged Ghana’s hospitality. It should help build the community as one people, rather than create individual entities.

### 3.6. TECHNOLOGY.

In our contemporary world, technological advancement has come to change the knowledge that people possessed. Belief systems that were handed down through generations have faded away, leaving the current generation no placement. Though modern technology seem to have changed things for the Ghanaian society, it has also brought positive development to Ghana. For example, we can mention our hospitals in Ghana. Mortality rate, especially of infants, has gone down because of modern equipment. One can now sit in the comfort of his or her home and watch what is going on in America, Japan, China, United Kingdom, Togo, Nigeria and other parts of Ghana. Thus, technology has contributed toward Ghana’s modern development.

Thanks to the advances in science and technology, man is in a position to put an end to the age-old afflictions of poverty, disease, and ignorance. On the other hand, these very advances have let loose forces that threaten the world with the most elementary problem of its survival.<sup>33</sup>

Imported technology, especially through the media has also influenced the Ghanaian to the extent, that what was held in high esteem is gradually becoming almost of no value to the people. Some of the things that were held in high esteem were modest dressing, good moral behaviour and, most especially, non-violence in society. Some parts of Ghana are

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<sup>32</sup> Mrs. Robinson and Mr. Raymond, (African-Americans, residence in Ghana, at Asin Foso). Interviewed, June 16, 2000. Both expressed the same views.

<sup>33</sup> Rajni Kathari, Footsteps into the Future, (Tema-Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1975), p. 79.

becoming violent because of the films they watch on television. One third year student told us:

This is the order of the day. If we stay in our dormitories our friends think that we are not people of this modern world. In fact, at times my friends come to drag me with force to go to watch video. I may be studying for examinations, but I find myself following them, because this is the modern world with all its technological advancement.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.7. CASH ECONOMY.

The goal of every individual Ghanaian now is how to accumulate money. People are becoming more and more money minded because that is what makes the individual powerful. The more powerful they are, the more they drive the people away from themselves. People's vision about others and the help they can give them have been narrowed down because of personal interests and gains:

The establishment of cash economy, opened new opportunities to the individuals and drew together people from different ethnic areas into urban aggregations. ...The result was that they removed themselves from the community where status and social hierarchy had determined the individual's place in society and where the individual is counted in terms of the group to which he was free to assert, if only in a limited way, his individuality.<sup>35</sup>

In fact, the pursuit of wealth has made many people slaves and aliens to their own people. Recently, people have been killed (especially women), and their blood drained for ritual purposes in Ghana. The local papers reported many incidences of the murder of women. One of the culprits was apprehended and during interrogations by the police, he confessed to doing it on behalf of a certain rich man in Ghana. He confessed, that the man used the blood of the women to acquire more wealth through rituals performed near a river in the Accra district of Ghana. (This appeared in the *Sunday Mirror* of Ghana, a weekend magazine published by the Graphic corporation of Ghana.) From January until August 2000,

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<sup>34</sup> A third year student (University of Ghana, Legon-Accra). An interview which I made on June 22, 2000.

<sup>35</sup> Emmanuel Obiechina, *The Cultural Tradition and Society in West African Novel*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 5.

the murder cases were the talk of town, and a major news item on local radio, television and on British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B. C.).

This is happening in order that people may acquire more wealth. Accumulation of wealth has made people forget their duty towards their fellow human beings. Many Ghanaians think of how to become millionaires overnight, so that they can be powerful in the society. They want to leave a legacy behind so that the next generation will regard them as heroes. Potts and Rogers see the danger and the problem and so writes: "From a biological perspective we might judge a civilisation by its ability to meet the physical and behavioural needs of the next generation. By that criterion modern civilisation faces some serious problems."<sup>36</sup>

Many people in the Ghanaian society do not even have time to say 'hello' to their own family members in the same household. Most of them even forget the existence of other people, because they are always in a hurry. They even forget that they have children who need their attention and also to foster family ties. Some do not have time to eat in their own homes because they are chasing after money. Apart from not being able to cater well for their families, they lack spiritual nourishment because they mostly abandon God. They become spiritually dead because they try to replace God with wealth. This is why Saint Augustine wrote:

Men go abroad to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, the long course of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular notion of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Malcolm Potts and Short Rogers, Ever Since Adam and Eve, (Edinburgh: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 315.

<sup>37</sup> Jill Haak Adels, The Wisdom of the Saints, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 31.

Thinking about many things that will bring them satisfaction blinds many people from seeing the needs of their fellow human beings, be it strangers, visitors, clans-people, country, or even their own family members.

### 3.8. INDIVIDUALISM.

Disharmony comes when the Ghanaian is regarded as a weak person to be dealt with. The Ghanaian always wants to consult a family member or a friend, who can help him or her. He or she also expects the others to consult him or her before decisions are made. When the person finds out that there is no consultation on matters that affect him or her, for example stool lands (land which belongs to the entire family, because it was one of their ancestors who left it for them), then one begins to plan evil for the others. In some of the communities in Ghana today, it is very common to encounter such situations, which in the end, cause suffering for the stranger who bought the land and accepted to live on the land to earn his or her living. The circumstances that family member face, has forced him or her to go against the stranger or visitor. The person may even break ties with the family. "The interaction between the individual and the community (or group) is therefore considered basic to the development of the individual's personality as well as to the overall success and well-being of the community."<sup>38</sup> The community minded people of Ghana are gradually becoming individualistic and the care is not there any longer.

Emmanuel Obiechina says: "The process of modernisation powerfully transformed the individual life styles."<sup>39</sup> This process of modernisation has taught Ghanaians how to detach themselves from others and to live their own individual lives. Today in Ghanaian society, one could hear the words, "mind your own business." Knowledge of some foreign oriented ideas, for example medium of communication, nuclear family system, and

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<sup>38</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>39</sup> Emmanuel Obiechina, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

insurbordination of the youth, has taken the people from their good old practice of hospitality.

Modernisation is seeking to phase out completely the extended family system in favour of the nuclear family system in Ghana. It has become very difficult for members of the extended family to visit their relatives, who used to be generous to them. This indeed has brought disharmony into many groups of relatives who used to sit around the same pot to eat.

The concept of clanship or the extended family (as it is often referred to) in the African sense has engaged the attention of many social scientists who see the elaborate and complex arrangement in the clan as a sort of economic and emotional security set up in the traditional order. Indeed, the African extended family has often been described as an Insurance Corporation that caters for its members who share both sorrows and joys together. The reason is that all clansmen are kinsmen.<sup>40</sup>

Here we see how modernisation has sown the seed of disharmony in the family system by promoting the nuclear family as against the extended family.

The naming ceremony that was performed before the entire community is gradually giving way to a nuclear family naming ceremony. It was every community's understanding, that a child was born into the society and it was everybody's responsibility to help in the upbringing of the child. It is now the duty of the nuclear family to bring up their children as modern knowledge dictates.

The Ghanaian value of rural hospitality that enables a neighbour to enter into a neighbour's house to ask for salt, pepper and whatever the other person needs because the one was not able to go to the market, is gradually dying out. One cannot simply ask for anything from the other family because now he or she lives his or her private life. Even now in the villages, people are putting up walls that were not in the Ghanaian society before. The open compound that enabled people to go freely to ask for their needs, has given way to

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<sup>40</sup> E. K. Osei, Social Structure and Traditional Organization of the Akans of Ghana, (Accra: Tell Africa Communications, 1998), p. 15.

walled houses, into which nobody can enter. This is what led Gyekye to write: "Certain features of modernity, as conceived and pursued in western societies, such as secularism and extreme individualism, would not be endorsed and cherished by non-western cultures and societies."<sup>41</sup> Individualism is gradually becoming the ideal way of most Ghanaians and if measures are not taken, it will gradually break up the Ghanaian society.

### 3.9. CONCLUSION.

We can draw conclusion from the many contributing factors that have persistently hindered some Ghanaian communities from being hospitable to others, either indigenous people or foreigners. From both the indigenous and the foreigners, there should be consciousness of the needs of each other. For example, the need of being honest in dealing with one another. The care which was the binding force should be revived among the individuals and the communities. If hospitality has no place any longer in our society of today, then disharmony will tear us apart. What Ghanaians should realise is that if hospitality is well executed and no one takes advantage of the other, it will bring harmony, peace and love rather than disharmony.

In Chapter Four, we shall discuss how hospitality in the scriptures has been the source of joy for many people who saw the need of being charitable and hospitable to others. We shall also discover how some individuals were able to distinguish themselves through the works of mercy, charity and hospitality.

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<sup>41</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *op. cit.*, p. 171-172.

## CHAPTER FOUR.

### PASTORAL REFLECTION

#### 4.1. SCRIPTURAL APPROACH TO HOSPITALITY.

##### (A). INTRODUCTION.

According to Encyclopaedia Judaica, "In ancient Israel, hospitality was not merely a question of good manners, but a moral institution, which grew out of the harsh desert and nomadic existence led by the people of Israel."<sup>42</sup> The Biblical practice of welcoming travellers or strangers in one's midst was accorded the highest goal, out of which hospitality was developed into a highly esteemed virtue in Jewish tradition.

##### (B). HOSPITALITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In the Old Testament, laws were specifically given to cater for the welfare of the stranger or the traveller.

You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the native born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt", and "the law shall be the same for the resident alien as for the native."<sup>43</sup>

Both quotations above give the stranger a space in the house of the Jewish people. The stranger or traveller, though not protected by any law (Deut. 15:3), had the confidence that he or she could count on the hospitality of the house or any place they enter. It was the duty of the elders to give protection to any stranger who appears in the city.

The Prophet Isaiah chapter 58:7 states, "Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own." Thus, the Prophet warns those who have refused to take

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<sup>42</sup> Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. VIII. (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), Section on Hospitality.

<sup>43</sup> Leviticus 19:34; Exodus 12:49.

care of the stranger, the widowed, the orphaned and their own people. He advocates that hospitality should be a concern for all people more than sacrifices.

In the Old Testament, we also read and learn from it the many examples of hospitality shown to different peoples in different times. In Genesis 18, we read about Abraham, showing a pious hospitality. When he saw the three men of Mamre from afar, he hurried to invite them into his house. He took care of their physical needs and served them as best as he could. He and his spouse, Sarah did not hide their feelings of joy as they served the strangers. Genesis 24:28-32 also tells about how eager Laban was, when he saw Abraham's servants. He showed them hospitality. Exodus 2:20, speaks about how Jethro was really disappointed at being deprived of the opportunity to show hospitality to Moses. Genesis 19:1-3 reads,

The two angels reached Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he got up to greet them; and bowing down with his face to the ground, he said, 'Please, gentlemen, come inside into your servant's house for the night, and bathe your feet; you can get up early to continue your journey.' But they replied, 'No, we shall pass the night in the town square.' He urged them so strongly, however, that they turned aside to his place and entered his house. He prepared for them, baking cakes without leaven, and they dined.

The hospitality of Lot brought him and his family a special reward. When other people wanted to misuse the visitors, Lot stood his ground to protect them.

John McKenzie, based on the Old Testament wrote about the cordial relationship there should be between hosts and stranger or visitor:

Should hosts and guests be at enmity, the acceptance of hospitality involves a reconciliation. The guest, once the host has accepted him, must be protected from any danger at the cost of the life of members of the family. ...In return the guest is bound to commit no offence against any one which bring odium upon his host, who is bound to protect him."<sup>4</sup>

We can think of the classic example of Rahab (Joshua 2:1-22). The hospitality she accorded Joshua's two spies, brought her household relief from the fall of Jericho.

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<sup>4</sup> John L. McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1965), p. 374.

We read in the Old Testament again about how hospitality was abused. The rape-murder of the concubine by some Benjaminites, depicts abuse of hospitality that should call down the wrath of God (Judges 19:16-30). The old man's hospitality, which was to serve a good purpose to bring comfort to the stranger, brought disharmony among them.

These and many more are recorded in the Old Testament to show how hospitality to people can bring blessings to the individuals and the community. The latter example about the abuse of hospitality teaches us how abused charity could bring disaster. We shall consider one specific case of hospitality in the Old Testament, that really brings out the point we are establishing about hospitality.

In 1Kings 17:7-16, the story about the Prophet Elijah and the widow, shows how the hospitality of the widow reinforces our case for hospitality. We quote the passage in full:

After some time, however, the brook ran dry, because no rain had fallen in the land. So the Lord said to him: 'Move on to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have designated a widow there to provide for you.' He left and went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the entrance of the city, a widow was collecting sticks there; he called out to her, 'Please bring me a small cupful of water to drink.' She left to get it, and he called out after her, 'Please bring along a bit of bread.' 'As the Lord, your God, lives,' she answered, 'I have nothing baked; there is only a handful of flour in my jar and a little oil in my jug. Just now I was collecting a couple of sticks, to go and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die.' 'Do not be afraid,' Elijah said to her. 'Go and do as you propose. But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Then you can prepare something for yourself and your son. For the Lord, the God of Israel says, 'The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the Lord sends rain upon the earth.' She left and did as Elijah had said. She was able to eat for a year, and he and her son as well; the jar of flour did not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, as the Lord had foretold through Elijah.

This indeed is one of the greatest incidents of hospitality one could think of. To empty one's whole pot for the sake of an unknown visitor or stranger at the expense of one's own family! When one considers how strangeness can produce mutual tension between the host and the foreigner, then one could understand the care that the widow had, for emptying her last jar of flour and a jug of oil. Though the alien had no right to the food of the widow and her son, hospitality made it possible for the widow to provide for him.

What actually made the widow special in her hospitality was that she shared of her last meal. There was no hesitation on her side, though she did not know where exactly the flour and the oil were going to come from. She never doubted that her hospitality would be rewarded. Her hospitality spared her son and herself from dying. The fact is that they were going to eat their last bit of food and then die. The widow is a classic example of hospitality that could be seen as a call to make sacrifices without hesitation.

### **(C). HOSPITALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.**

The New Testament also offers many instances of hospitality. Jesus Christ Himself was shown hospitality from His incarnation to His death. Jesus was aided when He was born through the hospitality of an inn keeper who gave Mary and Joseph his manger for the child to be born there (Lk.2:1-7). When Jesus was born He was shown hospitality by the magi from the east. They opened their treasures and offered Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Mt. 2:1-12). In His public ministry, Jesus was shown hospitality especially by women. In Luke chapter 10:38-42, we read about how Martha and her sister Mary welcomed Jesus into their home. When Jesus died, it was Joseph of Arimathea, who showed hospitality to Jesus' body by laying it on his own tomb (Mt. 27:57-60). Jesus Himself showed hospitality to all humanity, fed many physically, cured their infirmities, and at the end, gave up His very life for the salvation of all.

As much as we could write about hospitality in the New Testament as in the Old Testament, we would like to concentrate on one specific case. This act of charity came from Jesus to Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus' response to Jesus, that became a lesson for many people (Lk.19:1-10). Zacchaeus being a tax collector is definitely not liked by his own people. Jesus, who is kind to all people could not just watch this man being cast out. A rich man like Zacchaeus did not need to climb a tree in order to see Jesus despite his stature. Because of his reputation in the town, nobody was willing to show any pity to him in his desire to see Jesus.

Jesus extended His welcoming hand to him and asked him to come down from the tree. Jesus told him, that He (Jesus) wants to be with him and stay with him in his house. In other words, Jesus was asking Zacchaeus to take care of Him and His followers that day. Zacchaeus did not hesitate at all, but hurried down from the tree to welcome Jesus and His people into his home. Zacchaeus was converted and realised what he had been doing to other people. His hospitality to Jesus brought about a change of heart in him and therefore, salvation. A commentary on the Jesus-Zacchaeus encounter, sums up the whole episode of Jesus' hospitality to Zacchaeus by saying, "Human values are reversed by God not for the destruction of the wicked but for the saving of the lost."<sup>45</sup> Thus, Jesus, through His teaching, has shown charity, not only to Zacchaeus, but to all people. This is how another commentary on Luke 19:1-10, from the same Bible puts it:

All nations stand to be judged. The criterion is how 'the least', the most vulnerable, were treated. Jesus, as judge, identifies himself with the poor and needy. To stay awake waiting for the Lord is possible through charity; which is the beginning of the Kingdom of God.<sup>46</sup>

Hospitality open to God's grace definitely brings life and love to others. The classic example is what Jesus told the people in Matthew 25:31-46, about the last judgement: "... 'Come you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me...'"

Saint Paul's idea of charity is the early Christian practice of hospitality. From the many admonitions coming from him in the New Testament, we see that hospitality is one of the most striking features of the early Church. Christians travelling abroad would invariably seek out the Christian Community in any city they visited while travelling. They were

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<sup>45</sup> The African Bible, (Commentary on Luke 19:1-10).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., Luke 19:1-10.

greeted warmly, even at crossroad towns like Corinth, which already had its crowds of tourists. Hospitality is one of the features that marked out the Apostolic Church in the New Testament. Christian love that Saint Ignatius of Antioch described as “agape”, that is “united love”, is what was realised by Christians who shared their resources, created that fellowship, and helped them to share their goods along with their faith. In the Acts of the Apostles (4:32-35), they showed hospitality to one another through the way they lived.

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favour was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

Reflecting on Saint Paul’s actions, we find out that his collections to the needy Churches were not only a sacrifice and a symbol of unity, but they were themselves an act of homage to Jesus Christ Himself. Hence, he called his collection a sacred function (2Cor. 9:1-15). The Christian faithful brought their gifts to the needy as to Christ whom they honoured in the poor, the hungry, the sick and the orphaned. The generosity of Christians was a form of adoration and worship of Christ, therefore, a sacred function. Saint Paul appealed for the needy and urged all of us to participate in charitable acts. He tells Timothy (1Tim.5:9-10), “Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years old, married once, with a reputation for good works, namely, that she has raised children, practised hospitality, washed the feet of the holy ones, helped those in distress, involved herself in every good work.”

## 4.2. HOSPITALITY AS A CHRISTIAN DUTY IN THE CATHOLIC TEACHING.

In his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: *Ecclesia in Africa*, Pope John Paul II had this to say, "...Above all, these communities are to be committed to living Christ's love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups."<sup>47</sup> This shows the Christians' obligation not to discriminate against people on the basis of tribal affiliation, clan or colour. Every Christian is called to practice charity towards the individuals and the community as a whole. As Christians, our Lord Jesus Christ admonishes us about what we ought to do in order to enter into the Kingdom of God. What Ghanaian Christians, and for that matter Catholics, need to do to earn their salvation is to do the ordinary small things in life that a Christian does. For example, it is the duty of every Ghanaian Christian to promote community life rather than an individualistic and selfish life. This is a life that brings a new togetherness in the Gospel, a share in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Christian life should be sealed by their very sharing in the life of Christ. It is also the duty of every Christian to use their faith in Jesus Christ to build up and bind together the entire Christian community of believers. Each Christian should know, that he or she has a duty towards one another.

Love, too, goes beyond our brothers and sisters of the same faith since everybody is my brother or sister! In each individual, especially in the poor, the weak and those who suffer or are unjustly treated, love knows how to discover the face of Christ and discover a fellow human being to be loved and served.<sup>48</sup>

For Ghanaians to realise their potentialities as true and genuine Christians, their acts of charity should go beyond Christian circles. Hospitality of every Christian should be

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<sup>47</sup> John Paul II, *The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: Ecclesia in Africa*, (Nairobi: Kolbe Press, 1995), p. 69.

<sup>48</sup> John Paul II, *The Family in the Modern World*, (Nairobi: Kolbe Press, 1982), p. 77.

modelled on Christ Himself who came not to be served but to serve. Christ's service to humanity was for everybody and not only for His own people.

Another example of hospitality is how Ghanaian Christians go about their worship. When the Christians distinguish between the rich and poor and make the poor feel like second class citizens in the assembly, the Christians are not being hospitable to them. These poor people will come into the community assembly as strangers who are not taken care off. Hospitality could be in the form of the Ghanaian Christian's contribution of money, food or clothes to take care of the needy in the society. Ghanaian Christians who have the means, should not just accumulate wealth, but should be generous towards those who do not have. Every Ghanaian Christian needs the courage to act now and not later. We need love to respond to the needs of others when we know we can afford to help them. The Scriptures have many examples of hospitality that we can follow as Christians.

In the Apostolic era, Christians looked up to the Apostles for their services. For quality services to the people, the Apostles chose people (Deacons) from among the Christians to take care of the needy in their midst. They showed the way, that even in the face of persecution, hospitality was possible for them.

The Ghanaian Catholic in particular should look to Catholic ancestors like Saints Francis of Assisi, Martin de Porres, Vincent de Paul and Clare of Assisi, who did their best to care for people who needed different kinds of help. Their hospitality has been acclaimed all over Christendom, hence their proclamation as "Saints" by the Catholic Church.

In our Ghanaian contemporary world today, we can still look up to one Christian personality who brought the message of hospitality and love to bear fruit. She was Mother Teresa of Calcutta who has been acclaimed by many people from different religious beliefs. Her Christian charity knew no bounds. She said, "People sometimes ask me how I can clean the stinking wound of a leprosy patient. They say to me, 'we cannot do it for love of all the

money in the world.' I tell them, nor can I. But we do it for love of Him."<sup>49</sup> In the slums, she saw Christ in the distressing disguise of the poor, in the broken bodies, in the children and in the dying. Her love for the poor and the dying brought many people to understand how Christian hospitality or Christian charity is a Christian duty. She says, "When they come in touch with the poor, they realise how beautiful they are and how wonderful our God is. Many people of all faiths come to me, not merely to give donations, but to do work with their hands."<sup>50</sup> Her Christian charity touched many people to get themselves involved in the work of charity and no longer stand idly by.

#### 4.3. CONCLUSION.

In conclusion to this chapter, we can say, that Christians in our modern world, especially those in the Ghanaian society, can bring the message of Christ's love through their charitable acts and their hospitality to every citizen, who is in need of their services.

The readiness to meet the supreme test by dying in patient endurance so that the good may be realised does not include the willingness to fight and attack. Indeed, it is from this readiness that the spring of action in the Christian receives that detachment and freedom which, in the last analysis, are denied to every sort of tense and strained activism.<sup>51</sup>

The Christian's patient endurance when it comes to charity, should bring into the contemporary Ghanaian's mind the message of peace and love that the Gospel carries. The Ghanaian Christian is called to be prudent in whatever he or she does, especially when it comes to welcoming strangers or visitors. When Ghanaians are able to receive people into their homes because of hospitality and love of God's image and likeness, who is humanity, the person receives Jesus Christ Himself and attends to Him.

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<sup>49</sup> Navin Chawla, Mother Teresa: The Authorised Biography, (Rockport, Mass.: Edward Brothers, Inc., 1996), p. XIV.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>51</sup> Josef Pieper, The Four Cardinal Virtues, (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 133.

Christians could survive in the face of persecution because they had concern for each other. They could receive others into their homes and from there, spread the message of the Good News. Hospitality therefore, is one of the major factors that gave the Christians strength to move forward in their faith. The contemporary Ghanaian Christian is called to do the same.

We have seen how hospitality was part of the Christians' life and the way they practiced it among peoples in the past. We will now move on to our next chapter which will deal with some personal reflections, some humble recommendations, and the general conclusion of this paper.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

### PERSONAL REFLECTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

#### 5.1. PREAMBLE.

This is how we describe hospitality (by using the letters that spells hospitality) as a way of educating one another about what we can do to revive the dying spirit in the Ghanaian society.

*Humble service we render to people day by day in our little ways.*

*Observing the human needs of others and helping them if we can.*

*Spending a little time to bring comfort to the one who knocks at the door.*

*Performing a charitable deed that brings a smile to the stranger or the visitor.*

*Illustrating God's love through our hospitable acts of love and care.*

*Total surrender to God through our works of mercy and concern for others.*

*Always doing things for the love of God and neighbour.*

*Love of God is what compels us to open our doors to others.*

*Inviting the homeless, the poor, the orphaned, and the stranger, is inviting Christ.*

*Turning our attention to the one who needs a cup of water from us.*

*You and I can touch someone out there, who needs God's gentle touch.*

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As we try to use the word, "hospitality" to express God's love, care and how we human beings can rely on that to help others, one can easily identify one's self in the above illustration. One can also question one's attitude towards others after reading through to see if one is progressing or retrogressing in God's love.

## **5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

### **(A). PRESERVATION OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL VALUES.**

As Ghanaian cultural values and religious beliefs are gradually being misunderstood by both foreign and the indigenous people, many Ghanaians have turned themselves into preachers. Most of these preachers are using the Bible, not because they believe in it, but because it is their source of livelihood. One example of this is of the indigenous and foreign preachers who were caught at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra. They were caught by the security agencies in Ghana at the airport for possessing diamonds illegally. Later on, it came to light that they were the preachers who had duped many of their followers of huge sums of money. Many of these preachers preach against the values and cultures that Ghanaians have held in high esteem for long. A typical example of what some of these pastors preach against is the festivals of the individual communities. Their claim is that these festivals are not in the Bible, therefore celebrating them is pagan. What they do not know or refuse to understand is that these festivals serve as healing moments for most of the communities. They really help the communities to go down into themselves and reflect on the past. One of the most important points the communities always reflect on is hospitality. Most of them do think about the way that year brought them blessings for what they were able to do to help people who were in need of their service. What most of the ethnic groups in Ghana have to know is that, they need to understand their own cultures and why certain things are done in order to promote unity, peace, stability and harmony among people. That is why Gyekye said that:

To be born into the African society is to be born into a culture that is intensely and pervasively religious and that means, and requires, participating in the religious beliefs and rituals of the community. One cannot detach oneself from the religion of the

community, for to do so would be to isolate oneself from the group and to disrupt one's sense of communal membership and security and lose much of the meaning of life.<sup>52</sup>

## (B). EDUCATION.

What is needed in the Ghanaian society is education. Both citizens and foreigners need to be educated on the cultural and religious aspects of the life of the community. Most of the people who need such education are those who have to stay permanently in Ghana like the African-Americans, the refugees who seem to be settling permanently in Ghana, and the indigenous youth, especially those who seem to copy blindly from their foreign counterparts. There should be a cultural study centre that can teach cultural exchange programmes from the various countries who have their people in Ghana, so that good integration of cultures could be fostered.

We agree, that some aspects of the culture that conflicts with religious beliefs should be changed or modified, but not to abandon the whole culture. For example, we believe the carrying of chiefs in a "palanquin"<sup>53</sup> should be abolished. During festivals in most parts of Ghana, a chief is carried to symbolise his authority. It also symbolises, that the land belongs to him and he is a kind of a god whom all people should bow before. It makes the chief feels like a little god, who is the owner of the land. To preserve that aspect of the culture for people to know the importance of the chief, they should be carried in an open car or truck, whereby it is not human beings carrying them on their heads. The cultural reason for the carrying of the chief by human beings was to show the supremacy of the chief and the total surrender of the citizens to the will of the chief.

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<sup>52</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *op.cit.*, p.4.

<sup>53</sup> Palanquin: a stool, carved in the shape of a canoe with a flat bottom for four people to carry.

Religious personnel should not discourage culture that seeks to promote unity among the people. They should help also to preserve the culture and religious beliefs of the people.

The religiosity of the African implies a recognition of the limitations and inadequacies of humankind and the need for dependence on God. The awareness of human limitations leads to humility, which is a religious value but which has implications also for relationships among human beings.<sup>54</sup>

Pope John Paul II also had this to say when he visited Ghana in May, 1980:

Culture is an expression of communication, of shared thought and collaboration by human beings. It is born of service of the common good and becomes an essential good of human communities. I therefore say to Ghana and Africa: Preserve your culture.<sup>55</sup>

What some Ghanaians need is a balanced faith in order to appreciate the culture and religion, which sustained the ancestors in all their sojourns and in their settlements.

An aspect which has contributed to the uncaring attitude of some of the people is the low moral standards of some Ghanaians. For example, some Ghanaians do not mind robbing a stranger who is searching for a place to sleep or looking for somebody. Parents also used to bring up their children in a manner that a child had a kind of good morality he or she grew up with. Osei Pare has this to say about the moral life of the people. "Moral education is necessary to create the right attitude to life and help to transform the poor mentality of our people to a healthy one."<sup>56</sup> If morality is taught to the people it will lead to a change in how hospitality, charity and love are expressed and could bring good relationship, friendship and harmony among the people of Ghana and also those who visit Ghana.

The new insights and beliefs should rather affirm what Ghanaians inherited from their fore-fathers and mothers, rather than destroying them.

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<sup>54</sup> Kwame Gyekye, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>55</sup> *Africa: Apostolic Pilgrimage*, (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1980), p. 265.

<sup>56</sup> Osei Pare, *Towards a Better Ghana*, (Accra: Presbyterian Press, 1988), p. 42.

### (C). GENDER SENSITIVITY.

As we mentioned in chapter one, gender has become a very big issue in Ghana, destroying the basis of Ghana's hospitality. It is destroying hospitality in the sense that, women who are the custodians of safe guarding the hospitable image of the home, most of the time are not regarded by their men partners. At times too, some of the men are even afraid to go home after work to take care of a friend who has visited, because the wife is not allowing the husband to entertain any friend in the house. A famous reason the women always give is that they are protecting their husbands from bad friends.

We are in the age of gender sensitivity. How many of our men are hospitable to our women counterparts? Most of the times, the Ghanaian men try to show how much power they possess over the women. Most men do not see the equality between the women and themselves. Schreiter sees this from the Biblical point of view and writes:

In the Gospels, Jesus' attitude towards women is very clearly documented. Jesus bears the message of liberation for all, especially for the disadvantaged. ...The original relationship between women and men first established by God at creation was restored in Jesus Christ.<sup>57</sup>

It is the duty of Christian men to show hospitality to the women, especially their own wives.

It is also the duty of the women to show hospitality to their men counterparts most especially their husbands. Some of the women's attitude, for example those who are agitating strongly for nuclear family system, whereby every family member of the man is a potential enemy, can drive away all the people in the household. We can say that the family inheritance of some of the Ghanaian communities, is the contributing factor to some of the Ghanaian women being aggressive. Nevertheless, showing charity to others is not part of their daily lives. Some find it difficult to extend a helping hand to people, especially to their

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<sup>57</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, (ed.), Faces of Jesus in Africa. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991). p. 73.

husband's people. A woman who poured hot water on her husband's brother told us, "This useless man is always here in the house at every month ending. My husband claims he is looking after his job in the village for him, but I know he is lying. This man comes here for money and I do not want to see him again. He should leave us alone."<sup>58</sup> There was divided opinion about this case, when we interviewed some of the parishioners of Saint Kizito Catholic church. We urge both men and women to show God's love that could be manifested through hospitality. This will enhance the household to think about the dwindling hospitality in the Ghanaian society.

#### **(D). WORKS OF MERCY.**

We urge all Ghanaians that in their works of mercy, they should be convinced of what they are doing. Hospitality can attract many negative reactions as well as positive reactions. Mother Teresa of Calcutta was aware of what some people said about her hospitable work towards the poor and the destitute. She said: "If we are convinced of what we are doing, we should not be afraid of what people say, Whatever we are doing, provided it is for the glory and love of God, we should do it."<sup>59</sup> Many Ghanaians and especially those who are selfish in the society, may be angry with what people may be able to do to help others. Ghanaians should always let the love of God come first, so that they may realise the fruits of hospitality.

Ghanaians should be convinced by the Gospel value of hospitality. There are many people in our midst; the family members we have cast out, the children and parents in the streets, the poor who knock at the doors, and those people despised. These and many more need a Ghanaian hospitality in their lives in order to have a smile or to encounter Jesus in their lives.

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<sup>58</sup> Mrs. Boatemah, (A house wife in Accra), We interviewed her after she narrated her part of the story to the Parish Priest of St. Kizito at Nima on July 10, 2000.

<sup>59</sup> Catholic Messenger, (Takoradi-Ghana: St. Francis Press Ltd., November, 1997), p.14.

### (E). SHELTER FOR ALL.

In Chapter One we made mention of the homelessness situation that has crippled many Ghanaians. Though some Ghanaians can afford to help these unfortunate people, they have turned a blind eye on the plight of these people. Finding shelter for the needy ones in the Ghanaian society should be considered a noble idea. Though it looks as if it is impossible to do so, with the communal attitude of oneness, it is possible to find shelter for all people, especially in the small communities. When we go back to cite the Akan as an example in their sojourning, and movements, they were always helping themselves to find a shelter for all the community members. They made sure every family had a place to live. They occupy most of the land because they saw to it that they all have a place to live and a piece of land as their property. When some of them settled at a place, they made sure they go to assist the rest who are just coming to live among them. Community life for them was very strong and sustaining for one another.

Our suggestion is that, those political authorities, religious leaders and the general public should recognise the situation of the homeless and be hospitable to them. There should be a way of housing all people in need of shelter. To find shelter for all also needs a consistent political will, that seeks to think of every human being and not just the few. It needs the collective responsibility of all, and particularly of Christians who have to bring comfort to others. If we see ourselves as Christians and as the family of God, then we should be able to see the pressing needs of our brothers and sisters. The Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar ( SECAM), has this to say:

This image of St. Paul, which emphasises communion and solidarity among the many different members, is equally evoked in the concept of the Church-as-family. In the African family there is shared labour, each one has a role according to his or her status and capabilities. The joys and sorrows of one are the joys and sorrows of the entire family, and when honour is bestowed on one, it is for the whole family.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> SECAM, The Church as Family of God, (Accra: SECAM Publications, 1998), p. 50.

**(F). FAMILY LIFE.**

For Christians to be able to realise their duty as people who care, they should consider the importance of the family as a whole. If the Christian family supports the efforts of being hospitable to one another and, for that matter, the stranger or visitor, they fulfil what Christ commanded them to do. "In the family, individualism should have no place. The cardinal principles are all related to solidarity and the collective consciousness. There is sharing and caring..."<sup>61</sup> The collective effort of families, and more so of Ghanaian Christians, should remind the modern Ghanaian that they are called to love and to assist others through hospitality. The family of God, that is the Christian communities in Ghana, should be a place for every human being. It is the duty of every Christian and every Ghanaian to bring comfort, and not sorrow to every child of God.

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

### GENERAL CONCLUSION.

Relationships, in terms of good neighbourliness and acceptance of people indigenous and strangers, in some communities in Ghana is a matter of concern for many citizens of the country. Ghanaians who used to live harmoniously are now finding it difficult to cope with their neighbours. It is a common phenomenon in Ghana, that many people do not care if a neighbour has a home or not. Hospitality demands, that one becomes morally bound to one's conscience in order to be conscious of what will bring joy to others. We do good not because we cannot do wrong, but because the good done can go a long way to bring people together.

The natural welcome and hospitality has declined in many Ghanaian communities. There is no more that zeal of the unique Ghanaian hospitality that brought many people from far and near to Ghana. As Peter Paris says:

Because the person is an essential part of family and the larger community, each significant event in the individual's life is at one and the same time an important occasion in the life of the whole community. As the latter is affected for good or ill by the enfolding drama of the individual's life, time of happiness and grief are invariably shared by the community. Consequently it is rare for Africans to experience loneliness.<sup>62</sup>

The Akans of Ghana also have a maxim which states, that a person is not a palm-tree that should be self-complete or self-sufficient. The unity, love, concern and hospitality that aided our elders, should be the concern of the Ghanaian in our contemporary world. One cannot stand on his or her own without the help of the others.

That the human person lacks self-sufficiency is clear from the fact that our capacities and talents as human beings, are plainly limited and not adequate for the realisation of individual potential and the fulfilment of basic needs.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Peter J. Paris, The Spirituality of African People, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), p. 110.

<sup>63</sup> Kwame Gyekye, op. cit., p. 37.

We need one another as Ghanaians to boost our reputation as people who have a culture of hospitality.

Hospitality and reception, natural expressions of solidarity were exercised in the family context vis-a-vis parents and family members. In the case of a stranger, the African makes it a point of duty to practise with joy and pride hospitality and reception, which are the consequence and manifestation of voluntary kinship and openness beyond family circles. The practice of such hospitality prompts emulation of generosity of one towards the other.<sup>44</sup>

The question remains, why is it that Ghanaians so quickly have forgotten about this noble virtue of hospitality? Why is it that most Ghanaians are no more their brothers and sisters keepers?

One of the symbols in Ghana is called '*SANKOFA*', meaning literally 'go back and take'. It is a bird with a very long neck, which tries to go back and take what it left behind. This bird was said to lay its eggs not at one place for fear that people may temper with them. After it had finished laying all the eggs it then goes back to pick all of them with its beak in order to sit on them. An egg is also a significant symbol for Ghanaians. It is said that a human value such as hospitality is like an egg. If one does not handle it well, it breaks and it is very difficult to get another one back.

The significance of this symbol is that, it reminds those who have forgotten about their heritage to go back for it. Ghanaians who are fast losing their cultural identity to embrace foreign lifestyles only, are reminded to go back to their roots to pick up what they have left behind. Some Ghanaians need to rebuild their cultural values again to help Ghana gain her former status as one of the African states that could be relied on in terms of hospitality. As Ghanaians, we cannot do away with our sense of hospitality which many people, both foreigners and indigenous people once admired.

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<sup>44</sup> SECAM, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

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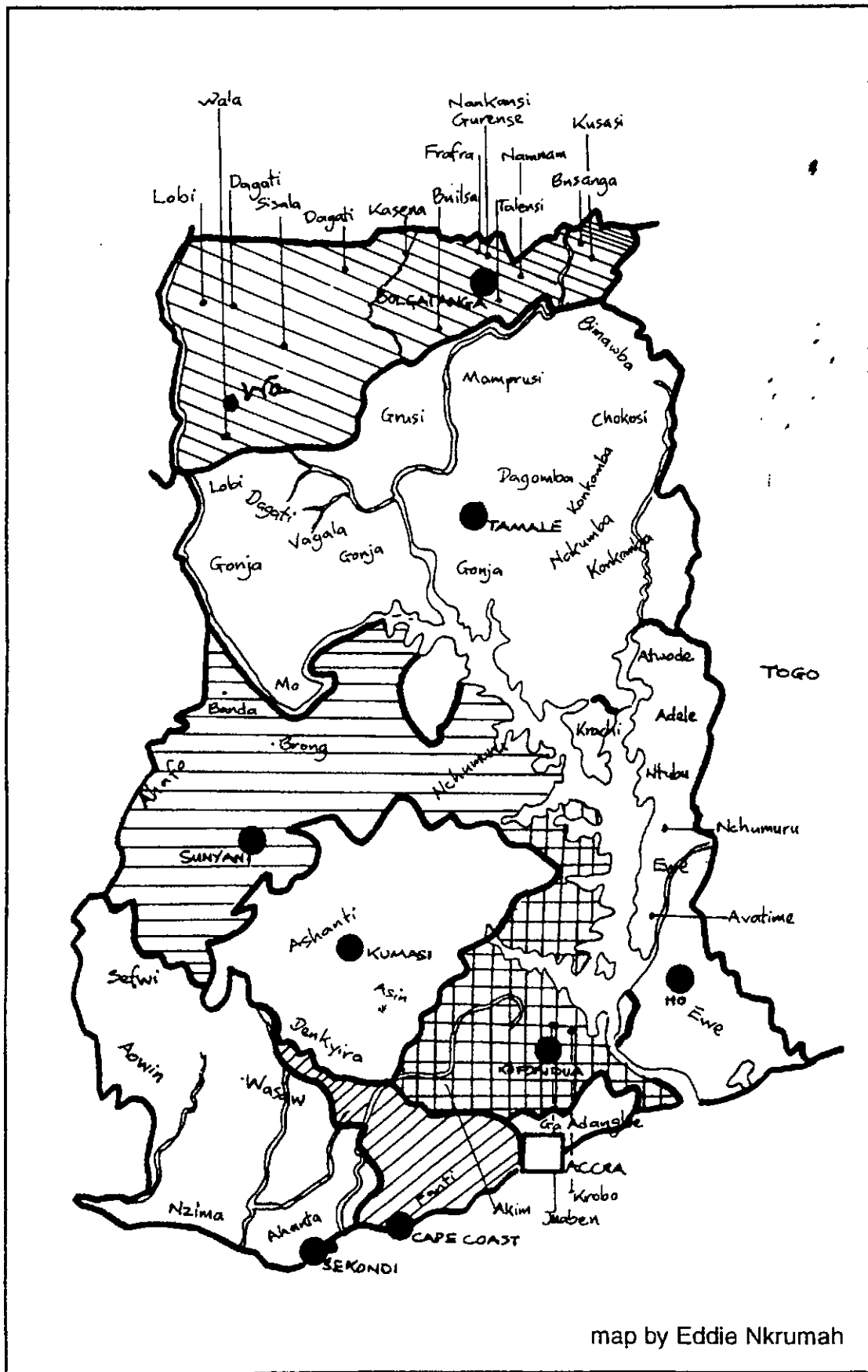
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*Mrs. Boatemah*, (A house wife in Accra). July 10, 2000.

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# **APPENDICES**

## Ghananian Ethnic Groups and Administrative Subdivisions



# Daily Graphic

GHANA'S BIGGEST SELLING NEWSPAPER

FRIDAY, JULY 28, 2000. NO. 147972. PRICE: ₵600

MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY FOB PRICE OF CRUDE OIL (BRENT)				
DATE	EXCH. RATE	\$/BBL	'000/ BBL	RELATIVE CHANGE (%)
DEC 11, '99	3,400	24.00	82	
MAR 18, '00	4,100	27.49	113	38%
APR, '00 AVG	4,351	22.64	99	-13%
MAY, '00 AVG	4,641	27.63	128	30%
JUN, '00 AVG	5,088	29.80	152	18%
JUL 12, '00	5,878	30.79	181	19%

NOTE: Percentage relative change represents difference between current crude price (in cedis) and the preceding price.

## 'Legislation on dual citizenship soon'

By Adwoa Van-Ess

THE President, Ft. Lt. J. Rawlings, yesterday assured African-American and African from the diaspora that the legislation on the dual citizenship has reached an advanced stage. He said this is in addition to the Immigration Act, which has been passed.

Continued on P. 3

## Provisional figures of census out

# POPULATION NOW OVER 18 MILLION

Nigeria probes corrupt practices among senators

Turn to Page 5

## Kofi Annan due tomorrow

THE United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, will pay a five-day official visit to the country from tomorrow to Wednesday, August 2, 2000.

He will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Nana Annan.

The visit is the first official visit since Mr. Annan's appointment as UN Secretary-General. It is in direct recognition of Ghana's distinguished leadership role at the national, regional and international levels, and its long-standing and continued commitment to multilateralism, expressed by its four decades of participation in UN and regional peacekeeping.

A statement issued in Accra by the United Nations Information Centre said among highlights of the Secretary-General's visit will be the conferment of a national honour on him by the Government and people of Ghana in recognition of his service to the nation and to humanity, and as a mark of the nation's pride in his achievements.

He said the Secretary-General will receive an honorary doctorate degree from Ghana's foremost centre of learning, the University of Ghana, Legon.

In recognition of Ghana's historical commitment to and experience in UN peace-keeping support.

Continued on P. 3



Kofi Annan — Arrives tomorrow

By Victoria Odo

PROVISIONAL results released by the National Census Secretariat has put the population of Ghana at 18,412,247, registering an increase of 49.7 per cent over the 1984 figure of 12,396,081.

This is made up of 9,025,068 males and 9,387,278 females compared to 6,063,848 males and 8,232,233 females in 1984.

The female population has, therefore, risen from 60.7 per cent in 1984, to 51.0 per cent in 2000.

Dr. Kwaku Twum Baah, acting Government Statistician and National Census Co-ordinator, who made this known at a press briefing in Accra yesterday, said the growth rate is 2.5 per cent.

At the regional level, the population of Greater-Accra more than doubled. It increased from 1,431,099 in 1984 to 2,909,843. The male population for the region is 1,433,143 and that of females, 1,478,800.

The most densely populated region is Ashanti, which recorded 3,187,601 made up of 1,555,587 males and 1,631,014, as against 2,090,100 in 1984.

According to the results, while Northern Region remains the least populated, the Upper East experienced the least increase in population.

The total population for the rest of the regions are as follows: Western — 1,842,878 (925,708 males and 917,170 females), Central — 1,580,047 (763,053 males and 826,994 females), Volta — 1,512,299 (775,257 males and 837,042 females), Eastern — 2,108,852 (1,034,922 males and 1,073,930 females), Brong Ahafo — 1,824,822 (913,036 males and 911,787 females), Northern — 1,854,994 (921,138 males and 933,856 females), Upper East — 917,253 (437,245 males and 480,008 females).

The results indicated that the Western and Brong Ahafo regions remain the only regions where male population is higher than that of females.

The provisional results also gave the population density on regional basis. For instance, the number of persons per square kilometre in Greater-Accra has more than doubled from 441 per square kilometre in 1984 to 896.7 per square kilometre in 2000, while that of the Northern Region moved from 16.8 persons to 28.4 per square kilometre.

The results also presented the first official population figures for the 110 districts that were created in 1988.

Dr. Twum Baah explained that the preliminary report, which will be ready by the end of December 2000, will provide more details while that of demographic and economic characterisation will also be available within two years of the release of the preliminary results.

Asked whether the exercise covered every-

Continued on P. 3

## 2 Bank officials, others in ₵1 billion fraud case

By Paul Awortwi-Mensah

FIVE persons, including two officials of the Osu branch of the Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB), have appeared before an Accra Circuit Tribunal for their alleged involvement in an unauthorised transaction which cost the bank a loss of over ₵1 billion.

The two officials, Richard Tonnio Welsing, the Branch Manager, and Betty Appiah, the System Administrator of the branch, are said to have

manipulated the computers at the bank and issued various sums of monies running into several millions of cedis to three contractors.

The three contractors are: Daniel Nana Ofari Atta, Managing Director of Danieli Construction; Peter Ofori Amoah, Managing Director of Matofix Enterprise; Bebestak Enterprise and Radius Commercial; and Alhaji Sumani Zakari, Managing Director of SM6 Construction, SMS Enterprise and Nahinwayar Construction and Wood Works.

All the accused persons are facing two charges of

conspiracy and stealing. Welsing and Betty are facing additional charge of falsification of accounts.

They all pleaded not guilty and the tribunal, chaired by Mr Imoru Ziblim, granted bail to Nana Ofari Atta, Peter Amoah and Alhaji Zakari in the sum of ₵300 million each with one surety to be justified.

The tribunal, however, remanded Welsing and Betty in police custody. They are all to re-appear on

Continued on P. 3

# 'Let's curb financial losses'

By A. Kofeysa-Tobin

**PARLIAMENT** has recommended that stringent measures should be put in place immediately to curb financial malpractices in state institutions, which have led to the loss of billions of cedis to the state.

The House also commended the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) for its role in recovering substantial sums allegedly stolen by individuals for their personal use.

The MRs made these remarks after Mr George Buadi (NDC, Asofo East) had, on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee on

Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, presented the committee's report on the SFO for 1999 to the House. The report stated that in the year under review, the state lost billions of cedis through financial malpractices.

He said the SFO, in its investigation into economic and financial crimes, eliminated about 1,970 ghost names from the government payroll thus saving the state about \$255 million each month in 1999.

Mr Buadi said the committee observed that there is the need to seriously look into embezzlement of funds in district and metropolitan assemblies and cited the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, the Keta and Afrim Plains district assemblies where substantial amounts were embezzled.

With regard to the banks, he said the BOG alone gave out \$3.4 billion as loans in 1994 out of which only \$20 million was recovered by the end of 1999.

He said in the case of Barclays Bank, out of \$653 million being the audited cost of stationary supplied to it, only \$30 million had been recovered and also mentioned some rural banks which were rocked by financial scandals.

Mr Buadi praised the SFO for its role in recovering substantial sums which had

been embezzled and called on the House to provide it with more support to enable the SFO to detect all fraudulent deals that are sophisticated in nature.

Seconding the motion on the report, which was adopted, Mr Kwakye Addo (NDC, Afrim Plains South), praised the committee for a good work done.

Mr Francis Kwesi Bore (NPP, Ofofora South) said it is sad that a substantial part of state funds is now in the hands of few individuals through fraudulent deals and called for harsh punishments for all involved in shoddy deals.

He also suggested that loopholes in the financial administration of state institutions should be blocked.

Sp. Ldr. Grand Sower (NDC, Abo) in his contribution, expressed regret that while huge sums of money are embezzled, the state had decided to take a loan of \$5 million to study the causes of poverty in the country.

He also mentioned the engagement of Pentrix in the construction of the Keta Sea Defence Project, which, he said, led to the loss of huge sums of money to the state.

This brought Mr Ekwemest Kobina Fosu (NDC, Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa) to the floor. He said there was nothing criminal

## Dual citizenship

Continued from P. 1

and grants the right of abode to persons of African descent to enter, reside, invest or work in the country on the same terms as a Ghanaian citizen.

President Rawlings gave this assurance at the official opening of the third Emancipation Day celebration in Accra.

It was organised by the Ministry of Tourism on the theme: "Emancipation — Our heritage, our strength, deepening the African consciousness and the strength of our people."

He urged Africans to forge ahead and "lose the freedom which emancipation brought to make Africa and all her sons and daughters fulfil the potential of the new millennium."

The President paid glowing tributes to the giants of Emancipation and Pan-Africanism and said "these pillars of African liberation and emancipation unleashed their tremendous intellectual capabilities in the service of their peoples, the oppressed and humiliated people, rather than in the service of their people's oppressors."

He stressed the need to reflect on what the African intellectual of today is providing his people, and expressed his regret that a good number of them have today become little more than the "transmission belt" for carrying foreign and often hostile ideas to their people.

President Rawlings said "today, every African country has attained political freedom, slavery has been outlawed throughout the world and people of African descent everywhere have the same formal political and legal rights as other citizens."

He said rather than dwell on the past, Africans must critically examine their own shortcomings, mistakes and inadequacies, move ahead and focus on the future or continue to be marginalised.

President Rawlings urged Africans in the diaspora to impress on their governments to provide timely and firm pan-continental initiatives in Africa.

He also asked them to avoid dealing in ventures that provide funds to fuel conflicts and supply arms.

Reaching on the economic problems facing most African countries, President Rawlings urged Africans in the diaspora to join those on the continent to advocate bold commitment by the international community to addressing the global imbalances.

He urged those who are considering business ties with Africa to explore opportunities of mutual benefit; to them and the African countries and assist in breaking down the barriers to sustainable prosperity.

A representative of the Caribbean diaspora, Ms Mavis Howell, stressed the need for Africans to exhibit the same sense of unity that their forefathers had to really emancipate themselves. She said this is the only way they can free themselves economically and mentally, adding, "we must make as Africans and embark on a unified struggle in order to break down all barriers of nationality and ethnicity, so as to achieve true emancipation."

Dr Leonard Jeffries, a Professor of African Studies in the United States of America, commended Ghana for its initiative to bring back her brothers and sisters in the diaspora and urged Africans in the diaspora to bring home their skills and money to support the development of the continent. President Rawlings was presented with awards from various groups from the diaspora.

As part of the celebrations, the march of the enslaved was enacted from the frontage of the National Theatre to the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum.

## Armed Forces hold seminar on HIV/AIDS

By Rosemary Ardayko

GHANA's Armed Forces advised the commanding officers to take up the challenge of helping soldiers to change their behaviour towards sex to minimise the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

The Resident Advisor of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) commended the Armed Forces for the initiative.

The seminar forms part of the Ghana Armed Forces AIDS Control Programme which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with technical support from the Family Health International (FHI).

The aim of the seminar was to strengthen the capacity of the commanding officers to enable them to design and implement behaviour change messages within the Ghana Armed Forces.

Some of the major issues discussed at the two-day seminar were also discussed at the seminar.

In an address to close the seminar, Brigadier Albert B. Gyamfi, Director of Medical Services,

in the agreement between Pentrix and Ghana with regard to the Keta Sea Defence Project.

Mr Eugene Atta Aggrey (NPP, Abetifi) said fraudulent deals are on the rise because nothing concrete is being done about bringing the problem under control.

Mr C. O. Nyasor (NPP, Upper Denkyira), who chaired BOG officials for the rampant shady deals at the bank, suggested that heads of departments must be held responsible for financial losses incurred by their departments.

Others who contributed to the motion were Mr Doe Adjaho, Majority Chief Whip; Alhaji Meame Adams, Deputy Brong Ahafo Regional Minister and NDC MP for Techiman South; Mr Edward Osei-Kwakri (NPP, Aboakwa West); Mr Kasi Kadem (NDC, Hohoe South) and Mr John Akpanu Te (NDC, Talensi).

The House later adopted the report from the Committee on Roads and Transport on the State of the Trans-African Highway Bureau and report on bilateral air services agreement between Ghana and the United States.

The House also passed the State Lands (Amendment) Bill.

## 1b Fraud case

Continued from P. 1

August 3, 2000.

Superintendent Frank Adu-Poku told the tribunal that between December 1, 1998 and January 31, 2000, Welsing and Betty agreed between themselves to grant unauthorised overdraft to the other three accused persons.

The prosecutor said Welsing then asked Nana Ofori Atta, Amoah and Alhaji Zakari to issue cheques to be drawn on their accounts after which he (Welsing) suffered payments accordingly.

Superintendent Adu-Poku said during the latter part of January this year, the Ofo branch of the bank was to change from the old computer system to a new one to ensure efficiency in its services.

He said it, therefore, became necessary for the branch to have all balances of its customers and accounts verified and certified by the bank's inspectors before the change-over was effected.

The prosecutor said in the process, it was detected that Betty had manipulated

## Population now 18m

Continued from P. 1

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He, however, explained that the field workers tried to cover all areas during the mopping up exercise.

Dr Twum Baah expressed appreciation to all donors, field workers, technical staff as well as the media for the role they played in the conduct of the exercise.

He paid particular tribute to members of the public in helping the field workers to identify areas, households and individuals in order to achieve complete enumeration.

## Printer's devil

Continued from P. 1

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