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Editorial

THE BUDGET AND OUR MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

It has been known to many Ghanaians that since the mid-1970s the three major economic problems we face as a nation are spiralling inflation, crippling food shortages and a zero rate of economic growth. In the recent past, these problems were not seriously discussed, let alone tackled by governments. In the past eight years when we were under non-representative regimes, it was easy for our military leaders to pretend that these problems existed only in the imagination of 'saboteurs' and 'nation-wreckers'.

A democratically elected government, however, ignores widely recognized problems at its own peril. Since coming to power, the P.N.P. government has given every indication that it is fully aware of our pressing economic needs. Through its first budget and other fiscal and economic documents, it has given the country an idea of how it proposes to tackle these problems. It has continued to do so in the 1980-81 Budget which the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Dr. Amon Nikoi, read to Parliament on June 27, 1980.

The ultimate test of a good budget is how realistically the proposals respond to the major economic problems and challenges of the day. How does the 1980-81 Budget pass this test? It is generally known that our number one problem is inflation. It is equally well known that increased government expenditure is one of the main sources of inflation. As we have pointed out before, there does not appear to be any real hope of holding down prices within reasonable and tolerable limits until the government has learnt to curb its expenditure. It does not appear that this Budget gives us any hope that the government proposes to reduce its expenditure.

For the financial year the government proposes to spend C7,312.47 million, an increase of some C1,557.82 million over the 1979-80 financial year. The overall cash deficit is estimated at C1,602.15 million as against an estimate of C1,027.65 million last year. To finance this budgetary deficit, it is proposed to borrow C1,172.15 million from the banks. Thus, once again the executive is authorised to finance a huge budget deficit. The government has failed to curtail its expenditure, and has, therefore, missed the opportunity to break the destructive chain which links government expenditure and inflation. It is surprising to find the Minister of Finance arguing in the Budget that 'the proposed borrowing from the banking sector is consistent with the monetary programme of the government to

curb the rate of inflation and improve the balance of payments position of the country.' The government has not shown any strong political will for curbing inflation.

On food shortages the government is aware that the 'basic food problem has been one of growing imbalance between the country's food needs and its food production. Moreover food imports have had to be restricted because of increasing foreign exchange shortages'. The government proposes to improve the food situation by reallocating massive resources into agriculture. This, it hopes to do by the involvement of all sectors of the population in agricultural activity; rehabilitation of existing agricultural facilities - agricultural stations, farms etc.; provision of adequate marketing and storage facilities etc. There is little that is novel in all these, for the President made much the same points in his Sessional Address to Parliament last year, a speech echoed by the Minister of Finance in his 1979/80 Budget, as well as by the Minister of Agriculture when he launched his Two-Year Agricultural Programme this year.

Even if they are all old hat, many of the agricultural proposals are sound. But they are sound only if we assume, as the government apparently does, that a new type of farmer operating in the modern sector is going to save this country from crippling food shortages. Allocations totalling about C28.8 million have been made for the expansion of farming operations of secondary schools and training colleges, and organizations under the Ministry of Labour, Youth and Social Welfare.

It must immediately be pointed out that the bulk of local food is produced by the farmer operating in the traditional sector. The activities of this farmer call for virtually no foreign exchange expenditure, yet he generates more foreign exchange than the farmer the government appears to have in mind. If we are to increase local food supply, and thus contribute to inflation control, then, the government must give greater attention to the traditional farmer who has served us so well in the past and continues to serve us well now.

To generate economic growth the government proposes to start a number of projects - irrigation projects at Kpong, Weija and Kamba; industrial projects and the Suhum Cocoa Project etc. The emphasis here is not on projects that will yield results in the short run. It looks as if the government is still concentrating on infrastructural development. Even in this the government still proposes to use state enterprises and public corporations as instruments of economic development. The economic and financial record of these corporations is,

to say the least, a dismal one. Not only have they failed to contribute to a modest rate of growth, but also they become avenues for the reallocation of public funds and resources into private hands. If anything, the operations and activities of these corporations have been such as to force us to embark on a major reconsideration of their role in economic development.

All in all, the government has shown an awareness of the major economic problems we face as a people. But in putting forward prescriptions for our economic ills, it looks too far ahead and forgets that we stand on a ground which is likely to give way. The pressing problems are the twin ones of inflation and crippling food shortages. The budget fails to address these problems directly. Long-term solutions are offered, but it would be more fruitful to find immediate solutions to them within the framework of long-term, comprehensive fiscal and economic policies.

Economy

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE 1980/81 BUDGET

By

A. A. Aboagye

Although a great deal has already been said about the 1980/81 Budget proposal, this article attempts to contribute to the debate by examining some of the issues raised in the Budget and to consider the implications for the country.

A critical examination of the Budget Proposal for 1980-81 seems to suggest that economic policies which led to the current deteriorating state of the Ghanaian economy are still being followed.

On the basis of what is published, per capita income declined at an annual rate of 3.1% between 1974-1978, and this was characterised by considerable irregularity in the pattern of change in the GNP. There is no doubt that the downward trend may persist for a long time unless there is a clear change in direction. The Ivory Coast started off at a lower level of development, but, as a result of the policy of guided liberalism, it is currently growing at 7.4% with per capita income at 3.6% per annum.

The thesis of this article is that it is high time that alternative economic policy measures were adopted, and that Ghana needs a fresh set of principles to manage the economy, i.e. guided liberalism, instead of the orthodox interventionist policy which has generated little growth in the economy.

The current Budget proposes to increase money supply, discourage private investment, savings and increase the price of imports. The budget is very silent on many important issues, but it is proposed to expand government expenditure and increase the budget deficit by nearly C1.5 billion. It appears that, once again, our policy makers have failed to understand the nature of the relationship between fiscal policy and the consequences of overt interventionist policies.

Government Expenditure and Revenue

The rapid increase in government expenditure has been based on the false assumption that the government is expected more than ever before to play a crucial role in the revival of a shattered economy. This is rather unfortunate because it was the increasing role of the government in the past and also at the present time that has led to the present state of affairs. As a matter of fact the experience of the past has led many Ghanaians to believe that continued involvement of the government in the economy only leads to further deterioration. It is clear that the more controls the government imposes on the economy in the form of commanding more resources the less efficient the system operates.

Past experience suggests that the more the government increases its command over resources by increasing its budgetary expenditure, the less the private sector invests; and given that the public sector is less efficient than the private sector, the consequences are very obvious. In the Budget the government proposes to spend C7,312.47 million during 1980-81 financial year, an increase of 27.1%. Though inflation may partly account for this increase in expenditure, it is clear that there is a gradual attempt to command as much resources as possible through the public sector.

Rising wage and salary demands at all levels have also contributed to the rapid rise in government expenditure. Most wage demands have been based on the need to maintain previous levels of real income, and clearly the decline in real income may be attributed to the government's method of financing budget deficits.

The Budget seeks to increase government revenue by any available means. However, in spite of the large increases in taxes of all kinds, government revenue during 1980-81 is expected to increase by 14.4%, compared to a rise of 27% in government expenditure over the same period. It is generally argued that elasticity of tax in Ghana is already too high, and, in spite of this, the Budget proposes a large discretionary change in the tax

system. Tax elasticity measures the relationship between the change in tax revenue and aggregate income. Estimates of tax revenue based on the old rates show that tax revenue was going to fall by nearly 20%, and this seems to justify the introduction of discretionary measures to raise revenue. The gap between revenue and expenditure would have been much wider if the new rates had not been introduced.

Such large increases in tax rates create uncertainties and doubts about future tax measures, and even encourage evasion if it is possible, especially in a country of low tax morality. It is interesting to note that the new tax rates raise tax revenues by more than 41% above the tax revenues which are based on the old estimates.

We should add that these estimates are too optimistic and a number of questions about the assumptions which underlie these budgetary estimates have to be raised. For example, the government hopes to double the yield accruing from the imposition of taxes by doubling the price of cigarettes. The expected additional increase in revenue of C398.40 million is obviously based on the assumption that there will be little or no change in the behaviour of consumers and producers who will at a later stage respond to changes in demand for cigarettes. The large piles of cigarettes in the streets of Accra clearly show that the price mechanism is enough to alter allocation of resources in the economy.

It seems therefore that there are some fundamental problems with the processes which are used to arrive at the estimates in the budget. The author believes that most of these estimates are based on a number of guesses. At a later time, the government would have to re-examine these estimates and the rationale behind them. Otherwise the gap between revenue and expenditure would continue to grow.

The present levels of taxation are high, and although some increase in tax revenue is possible, controlling the growth of expenditure will be necessary to restore the level of current savings, else the large budget deficits would not only lead to large increases in money supply and inflation but also may lead to a decline in the growth of the economy.

Changes in the Tax Rates

The Budget raises the present level of tax exempt income from C960.00 to C1,500.00. This appears very cosmetic because only a negligible proportion of workers would benefit from this change. The tax relief for parents appears quite new, and gives

the high cost of living, it is hoped that this would be reviewed in the next budget.

The high tax rate of 50% and 30% on dividend and interest incomes respectively would clearly discourage private investment. Given the high rate of inflation and the fact that savers are earning negative real returns on their financial deposits, it is rather unfortunate that additional taxes are imposed on interest incomes to raise government revenue. Instead, the government could have hoped to attract more savings to the commercial banks and thus be able to borrow from them at the going rates. A higher interest policy on government debt instruments would make them more attractive for purchase by the general public. The higher interest policy would raise the cost of debt to the government, but it may also provide the incentive for the much needed budgetary discipline for the government — "cutting its coat according to the available cloth".

The Budget proposes to eliminate the demand for foreign exchange for the importation of unnecessary goods by levying a tax of 10% on the value of all letters of credit. Apart from raising the prices of imports by at least 10%, one wonders what the government is going to do about other imports which are essential and which therefore will have to be imported any way. This seems to give us the hint that the price of a gallon of petrol may, within the next six months, be raised raised to C8.25 or more. The consequences of such increases are well known to Ghanaians.

The tax of 75% on foreign travel and foreign exchange allocations is too high. It seems as if an attempt is being made to raise the rate of exchange between the cedi and other currencies to the prevailing market (black market, of course) value of the cedi, and it gives the impression that policy makers are gradually becoming aware of the relationship between the cedi and other currencies.

In general, apart from the revenue raising objectives of the large increases in taxes and fees at all levels, the present Budget clearly reveals some of the errors of the past. For political or other reasons, the cost of most services, especially those provided by the government, have been kept far below their real economic costs (for example the toll on Accra-Tema motorway has never been changed since it was built). Thus whenever there are tax increases they tend to be very very large in an attempt to match up the real economic cost of providing these services. New passport fees are raised from C30.00 to C100.00 — a rise of more than 200%. One hopes that at this rate passport forms will be available to those who need them.

The Budget is full of such large increases in fees and taxes.

Inflation and Monetary Policy

In very simple language, inflation in Ghana during the 1970s was caused largely by the rapid growth in money supply which was in turn the result of large government budget deficits. The experience in Ghana confirms Milton Friedman's proposition that inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon, in the sense that it is and can be produced by a more rapid increase in the quantity of money than in output.

In spite of the government's awareness of the nature of the problem and the possible effects of two or three-digit rate of inflation, it is rather surprising that the Budget begins with a large budgetary deficit of C1,470.00 million which is to be financed largely by the banking system. The large increase in the supply of money this year may take some time to affect the level of prices, but it definitely guarantees large increases in prices in the subsequent periods if it is not accompanied by considerable increases in output. But given the current policies of the present government, one can hardly expect such large increases in output to occur. Even though there are good indications that food output may increase this year, the Budget appears to thwart the efforts of the farmers.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning continues to give the impression that inflation is falling, and that it has actually fallen from 54.4% in December 1979 to 34.3% in March 1980; and that they have been able to lay a "solid foundation" for the growth of the economy. Sometimes it appears that they are not aware of the nature and extent of the problem of inflation which the economy is facing. Thus they are always giving the impression that inflation is solely a problem of production and/or distribution. This type of approach has characterised the Ghanaian system for too long, and it invariably leads to the wrong kind of prescriptions. So long as the present government believes that inflation is a structural one, and that they could expand money supply as much as possible, inflation will become part of our lives, and Ghanaians have to learn to live with it. Even if they believe that large increases in money supply could be inflationary, the Budget does not present anything concrete to restrain price rises.

Inflation cannot be stopped overnight, hence one has to begin early in order to make any progress in that direction. It requires some drastic measures and a political will to curb inflation. Rising demand for wage increases could be reduced if

real incomes were even maintained at the present level.

So far attempts to control inflation have been channelled through the system of price controls. It is clear from the evidence so far that it is a complete failure. The failure record of price controls since they were first introduced in 1962 should serve to discourage the strict adherence to the policy. Prices of goods are far above the specified prices, and goods are sold on the basis of whom you know. Ultimately, therefore, it is the poor and not the so well connected in the society who suffer from price controls — an incredible irony since the present policy makers claim to have the interest of the poor "at heart".

The Budget proposes to limit the activities of the Prices and Incomes Board to the surveillance of prices of some commodities which are listed in the Budget. Since virtually all goods and services are included in the list, one wonders which commodities do not fall under the control of the Board.

For a number of reasons, the author thinks that it is rather unfortunate that public funds should even be spent on this Board. First, since the Board alone cannot determine the equilibrium of prices for commodities, it is simply inefficient in allocating resources. To be able to do so, it requires a great deal of information from both suppliers and purchasers which cannot be furnished by the data collecting agencies. Secondly, the Board takes several weeks in determining the "appropriate" prices of goods which are usually waiting in the warehouses of the trading companies. Unnecessary queues are therefore created by the Board's delays. Thirdly, since the Board does not have to justify the price it announces to the public, it obviously casts doubts on its performance. Finally, since the Board is an agency of the government, and governments do not like accusing fingers being pointed at them, either the Board gets a lot of political interference in its price determination or it tends to play down the allocative role of prices in determining profit rates among sectors. Either way the Board becomes a political liability to government and an instrument of social waste in terms of foregone investment potential, output and employment growth.

Clearly, the recommendation should be to dismantle the Board or make it a price gathering agency, if we would prefer to duplicate part of the functions of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Agriculture

The emphasis on investment in agriculture is well appreciated. Given the declining levels of

agricultural production which can be attributed to past government interference in the distributing and marketing system, producer prices to farmers; failure of government to meet basic input demands, like cutlasses and hoes, among others, we would expect the government to take immediate steps to remove these obstacles. The lofty intentions currently contained in the Budget are so familiar to Ghanaians, and the farmers, that it is hard to expect any enthusiasm to be shown by them on these matters.

The Budget noted that the output of the cocoa industry has declined steadily over the years. The decline in production is attributed to ageing trees and farmers, relatively low producer prices and increasing scale of smuggling.

The growth of the industry in the Ivory Coast and Togo, and the large-scale smuggling of cocoa across the borders are due largely to the fact that the neighbouring countries pay at least 50% of the world price of cocoa to producers. If the smugglers find it profitable to take the risk in crossing the borders, then it suggests that something is definitely going wrong in our domestic pricing policy. It is estimated in the 1979-80 Budget that Ghana lost about C465.00 million cedis through smuggling. The producer price to Ghanaian farmers is normally less than 50% of the Accra f.o.b. price for cocoa. Without the necessary price incentive, Ghana's export earnings are certain to decline still further.

The argument that paying cocoa farmers more would be inflationary is not a valid argument. Or else the scale of any export item should be inflationary. But the truth of the matter is that cocoa export earnings which account for about 60% of the country's total export earnings, command real goods in return. Ordinarily their increased incomes should then find more goods to buy, hence little threat of inflation arises. What is probably the case is that the government has such large appetite for the foreign exchange earnings that not enough is left to meet consumer demands.

In order to raise the level of agricultural output it is essential to adopt some drastic and unorthodox measures. As far as the basic food production is concerned, the Head of State and the Members of Parliament could take a day or two off from the nice surroundings of the Parliament to engage themselves in some private farming and this will get all Ghanaians enthused about the private gardens and farms to aid food production. Ghanaians need practical examples and not nice budgetary statements.

Conclusion

In some respects, the Budget does not appear to have the proper handle on the solutions needed for our economic problems. The Minister of Finance should seek to make some changes in the Budget or brace himself up to reap chaos that economic analysis would predict from his policies. We offer the following alternative proposals!

- (1) reduce the degree of governmental intervention in the economy;
- (2) raise interest rates on government debt instruments to make them attractive;
- (3) dismantle the price control regime;
- (4) make the price of cocoa to producers fall in line with world prices;
- (5) refrain from giving more impetus to inflation by reducing new money creation;
- (6) reduce the size of government expenditure in line with revenue.

Politics

THE CONSTITUTION AND QUESTION OF VALUES — I

By
Kwamena Ahwoi

Professor Folson's three-part article in L.O. Vol. XII, numbers 6, 7, 8, cannot be allowed to pass without comment. A mysteriously argued paper, the article not only propounds the mischievous theory that there was some such document known as the Third Republican Constitution which purportedly came into force on 1st June, 1979, but also posits the further theory, bordering on incitement, that the present Constitution, promulgated on 24th September, 1979, which the President, Government, M.Ps. and all institutions of State have sworn to defend, must be discarded since it is not the Republic's Constitution.

Professor Folson propounds the following objectionable theses:—

- (i) certain sections of the transitional provisions cannot be justified in any way and must be expunged from the Constitution,
- (ii) the A.F.R.C. had no political, moral, or legal, authority to make any changes to the Constitution as passed by the Constituent Assembly.

- (iii) at the time of the June 4th "mutiny", there existed in the country a Constitution which was exactly 36 hours old,
- (iv) because the Constituent Assembly challenged the S.M.C's 'right' to promulgate the Constitution, (which challenge the Professor implies was ignored), therefore the Constituent Assembly had the right to promulgate a Constitution for Ghana,
- (v) the Constituent Assembly was the legitimate body to promulgate the Constitution,
- (vi) the validity of the Constitution cannot be traced to any other Law since the Constitution validates all other Laws.
- (vii) In 1969, 'good sense' prevailed and the N.L.C. permitted the Constitution to be promulgated by the Constituent Assembly.
- (viii) whoever advised the amendments must have done so out of bad faith. In any case, it may be that the A.F.R.C. is being unjustly blamed because "it is clear that the corporals and sergeants and their junior officers who constituted the A.F.R.C. knew and know nothing about Constitutions..... other people who possibly had an interest in these changes pushed the A.F.R.C. making them",
- (ix) "if we do not abrogate their (that is, the so-called AFRC) Constitution, we shall be announcing to any military adventurist that once he succeeds in imposing himself by force of arms, he can legitimise his rule by further imposing a Constitution on the country."

It is unfortunate that the constitutional debate since the handover to civilian administration has turned on the rights and wrongs of the AFRC era. This is because the very persons who are having fits of apoplexy at the very mention of the AFRC were the ones who preached from political pulpits that such a cataclysm as 4th June was inevitable, in the light of the society that was being created between 1974-79. If therefore 4th June occurred to vindicate the predictions of the political pundits, it is more important that we try to find out its causes in a bid to prevent its future recurrence.

Such an exercise will lead to an inquiry into how a whole nation could be led, like sheep to the slaughter-house, to the point of committing economic suicide? What kind of society made it possible for the rate of inflation to run so high as to place Gha-

na second in the world-wide inflation competition, and reduce to nothingness the incomes of Ghanaians and the standard of living to abysmally low levels never before experienced? What kind of society could have caused such diaspora of its children that we are living witnesses to today?

What kind of society made it possible for education to become so degraded that her teachers and lecturers were looked down upon as "the men who could not make it"? What kind of society made it possible for poor peasants' lands to be expropriated by nameless civil and public servants and their military overlords: absentee farmers who exploited the peasants' toils, yet whose produce quickly found their way across the border through smuggling where they fetched convertible currencies for these unpatriotic citizens? At the same time, these same persons were preaching sermons to humble cocoa and coffee farmers to be patriotic and to sell their goods in Ghana, so that the foreign exchange generated by their toil could be used to import Range Rovers, interior decorating furnishings, bacon and ham for these thieves and rogues in the society? In other words, what institutional support made it possible for the malevolent dictatorships of Acheampong/Akuffo to last for so long?

An examination of the causes of 4th June should be much more important than any goings-on about its effects, otherwise, if these causes are not identified and removed, 4th June may recur in an even worse form, and it might not even involve soldiers. It is in this belief, that it is the causes rather than the effects of 4th June which must be sought for that the writer feels obliged to respond to Prof. Folson's article.

After reading the article in question, one is left with the irresistible impression that unlike other critics of the AFRC, Prof. Folson does not only object to the methods of the AFRC, but has a more fundamental objection to the AFRC intervention. Nevertheless, he also tries to create the impression that his objection is to what he calls "military adventurism" in general. This is the biggest fallacy in Prof. Folson's article which must be exposed.

Expunging the Transitional Provisions

The argument against the retention of the Transitional Provisions in the 1979 Constitution has proceeded on the unexamined assumption that the sole purpose of a Constitution is the protection of so-called 'individual liberties', that this concept is absolute, and therefore any infringement thereof renders the infringing provisions null and void.

But a constitution is also a political document, which is supposed to be rooted in the political

and social reality of the society it is to serve. The Ghanaian reality of 1979 was one of economic deprivation and strangulation by a small class of unproductive, greedy, bandits who plundered the State shamelessly. The failure of the 'Constituent Assembly's Constitution' (C.A.) was not to have reached to this reality which the legal institutions of the day had proved completely incapable of dealing with.

The 1979 Constitution, without the Transitional Provisions, is simply a document which would seem to have been drafted for a stable, democratic utopia, economically viable and socially at peace. But is this really the situation in Ghana? Prof. Folson's pet 1969 Constitution had itself recognised this need to react to real conditions when in its preamble, it recognised this reality and took steps to forestall its future recurrence by stating:-

"... we the chiefs and people of Ghana

**Having experienced a regime of tyranny
Remembering with gratitude the heroic struggle
against oppression having solemnly resolved
never again to allow ourselves to be subjected to
a like regime.**

... give to ourselves this Constitution."

It inserted clauses against one-party rule as a specific reaction to the one party system of the CPP. It also validated the disqualification of certain CPP members, some of whom had been exonerated by Committee of Inquiry, thus indicating a rejection of the political system in which those individuals participated.

One looked in vain through the 1979 Draft Constituent Assembly's Constitution to see a similar reaction to the economic nightmare that this nation went through between 1974-79. There is none. The Constituent Assembly thus underscored, by its acts of omission, its impotence to deal, within the limits of constitutionality, with the problem of the 'cheats' and there seemed to be a tacit acceptance by all, including the aspiring politicians, that extra-legal and extra-constitutional methods were needed to deal with them. At least, this was the writer's definite impression after hosting the pre-election 'Meet Your Presidential Candidate' G.B.C. T.V. programme. It was inevitable, after 4th June therefore, that what had been accomplished by extra-legal means be 'protected' within the limits of the Constitution. In this way, therefore, the AFRC attempted to fill in a vacuum which the Constituent Assembly had proved incapable of dealing with.

Prof. Folson argues that by removing Part 1 of the Constituent Assembly draft Transitional Provisions, the AFRC made it possible for Forces personnel who held civilian appointments during the period of military rule to continue to hold service appointments after holding supreme political power, and that this decision is not compatible with the type of stability we need for our development.

The fallacy of this argument lies in the implied assumption that it is this category of service personnel who are most likely to disturb the stability. The truth of the matter however is that coups have not been staged by service personnel who have tasted supreme political power. If anything the initial action of a military intervention in 1966 contained within itself the mechanism for a repetition, whether or not the participants in the action return to barracks. In fact, the removal of Part 1 of of the Constituent Assembly draft Transitional Provisions has the positive impact of the 'political-soldiers' exercising a moderating influence on the other members of the forces whilst they remain in service.

Section 15 of the Transitional Provisions of the 'AFRC Constitution', Prof. Folson argues, extends the immunities granted to the coup-makers of 1966, 1972, 1975 and 1978 by the Draft Constitution to the "mutineers-trained-coup-makers" of June 1979. What is objectionable about the phraseology here adopted is in its implication that there was something proper about the 1966, 1972, 1975 and 1978 actions which need to be indemnified, as against the actors of June, 1979. Prof. Folson curiously ignores the fact that revolt by senior Army Officers is treason, if a similar revolt by other ranks and junior officers is a mutiny. These earlier actors had committed treason and/or subversion in terms of the Constitutions or Proclamations which they were overthrowing. So why not describe them as "treasonable-officers-turned-coup-makers?" And in any case, coup-making is as objectionable as mutiny, if not more so. So why the attempt to accord it a new sense of Constitutional respectability?

Prof. Folson's 'suspicions' about S.15(2) of the Transitional Provisions are understandable, since they simply reveal a certain non-familiarity with legal drafting. S.15(2) is a near-perfect example of what is called in law 'ouster-clauses', which are used all over the common-law world to put a tight lid on certain situations which it is thought desirable ought not to be reopened. It is an attempt, no doubt to oust the jurisdiction of the Courts in matters relating to certain decisions taken by the AFRC, but it is not without precedent.

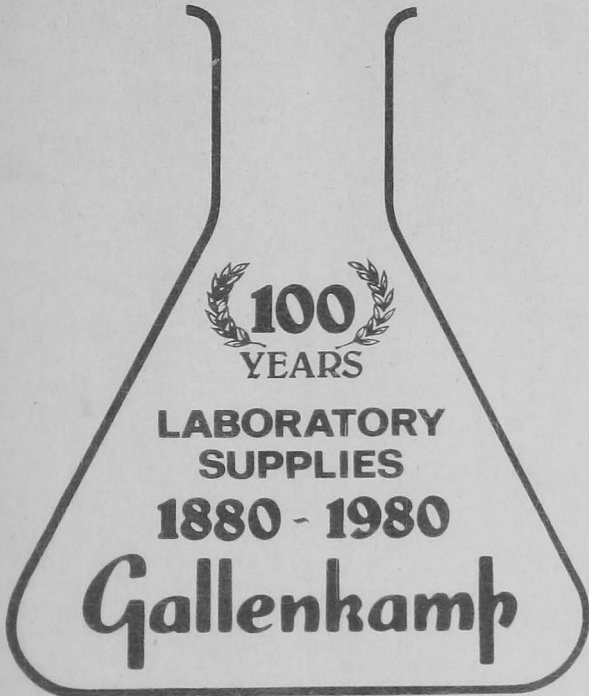
In one English case, the House of Lords approved an ouster clause which had the effect of detaining without trial an individual who was believed to be of German extraction. This was during the Second World War when extraordinary measures were considered necessary to aid the war effort. Again after the Second World War, International Criminal jurisprudence sanctioned the most draconian laws, most with retroactive effectiveness, besides bending the traditional rules of evidence, in order to deal with Nazi war criminals.

The fact is that both political theory and legal science concede that there is a certain limit beyond which the operation of the normal rules of the system becomes impossible. The debate therefore is about whether the limit had been reached in 1979 which justified the use of these extra-legal measures. Since Prof. Folson and his ilk would argue that that limit had been reached in 1966, others are entitled to argue that it was more than reached in 1979. To these, latter, any handover to a civilian administration without an accompanying attempt to clean the state would have meant that the Third Republic was going to be built on sand. The campaign against military rule was only superficially a campaign against political ineptitude; it was at base a campaign against economic mismanagement and oppression. If these could only be entrenched in the Constitution by the use of the use of the most draconian 'ouster-clauses', then it would seem to suggest that the limit for the application of 'non-law' had been reached.

Whether an ouster-clause really succeeds, depends on the skill with which it is drafted, as well as the hostility or sympathy of the judiciary towards its aims, and the present impasse in its interpretation by the Courts (which has necessitated its reference to the yet -to-be-set-up Supreme Court) shows that it is not true that S.15(2) necessarily protects "illegalities, injustices and acts, of corruption" of individual members agents or advisers of the AFRC.

Prof. Folson interprets S.19 of the Transitional Provisions to mean that even if it were proved beyond the shadow of doubt that a member of the AFRC or any individual purporting to act on its instructions was guilty of extortion, corruption, burglary or rape, no Court can touch him. Obviously it is only within the terms of the Professor's indulgence in a 'reductio ad absurdum' that acts of extortion, corruption, burglary or rape can be brought within the meaning of "decisions taken or purported to have been taken ... by any person in the name of the Council." An AFRC decision to rape indeed! I pray the Courts see to the fulfilment of Professor Folson's wish by so interpreting the provision.

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Tampering with the Constituent Assembly's (C.A.) Constitution:

Thesis (ii) and (iii) may be taken together. The fallacy in those theses lies in the assumption that there was some such thing as the Constituent Assembly's Constitution. Prof. Folson himself suggests that he does not believe his own assumption when he argues in L.O. Vol. XII No. 8 that the C.A.'s Constitution "came into force on the 1st day of June, 1979... the AFRC assumed that they had the power to make numerous amendments to Draft Constitution..." Surely if the Constitution 'came into force', then it would have ceased to be a Draft!

Constituent Assembly versus S.M.C.

Which brings us to the 4th professorial thesis. The impotence of the C.A. to deal with SMC II's "usurpation" of their so-called power, and the abrogation of the C.A. Constitution simply meant that in the contest between the SMC and the C.A., the latter hopelessly lost out. It is mischievous to conclude that because there was a contest between the two bodies, therefore the C.A.'s view of the appropriate promulgating authority was the right view. Possibly one could argue that the Courts would have been the best institution to determine the outcome of the contest. But in the absence of such determination, the positive power play that went on became decisive, and if the C.A.'s own operative date for the Constitution was ignored with such impunity by the SMC, it meant that not only had the C.A. lost out in the tussle, but that no Constitution could have come into force on 1st June which supposedly is in competition with the 24th September Constitution.

Equally mischievous is the argument that the CA was the proper body to promulgate a Constitution for the country, which is the content of thesis (v). Professor Folson's argument that "the question was repeatedly brought up as to which body was competent to draw up a Constitution for the country: the C.A. or the SMC," is a complete non sequitur because the question assumes that the C.A. itself had any authority at all to promulgate a Constitution. The answer that he gives, that the Preamble proposed by the Constitutional Commission suggested that the Assembly had the authority to draw up a final Constitution for the country, is objectionable in its implied grant of judicial authority to the Commission to decide between the Assembly and the Government.

The argument is further made that the C.A. saw its constituent authority to make a constitution

for the country as deriving, not from any Decree, but from the sovereign will of the people. This because, according to Prof. Folson, "the Assembly cold-bloodedly expunged all reference to the Decree from the preamble." As if that alone was all that was needed to resolve the issue. Does the Professor mean that any representative group of people could have met on their own volition and purported to have the authority to draw up a Constitution for the country? Of course that would have meant a power-struggle of the type that took place in Uganda recently, and the outcome of such power-struggles is not determined by political or moral strictures but by the power of the gun.

Of course, this is not to suggest that the power of the gun is solely decisive. The allegiance of the people is especially important, because without popular support, not even the most ideological revolutionary can succeed. The victory of the AFRC over the C.A. depended more on the expression of popular support for the Council, which must have been obvious to even the most casual observer, than on their command and control of force. If the C.A. ever was the embodiment of the popular will, then it became obvious that that popular will was immediately transferred to the AFRC. That was why 1st June passed without the C.A. itself remembering that its operative date for the Constitution had passed. But, as will be argued later, the very narrow base and unrepresentative nature of the C.A. prevented it ever becoming the embodiment of the popular will.

As between the C.A. and the AFRC, there is no dispute who the people considered to be representing more their wishes and aspirations. One will only dispute it by either relegating the people to the arena of constitutional ignoramuses, as Prof. Folson does with the corporals and sergeants, or by arguing that the people do not understand what is good for them. But I have a lot of respect for the good sense of the people. However, if by the 'sovereign' will of the people' is meant simply the will of the class interest represented in the C.A., then I have no dispute with Prof. Folson. But Prof. Folson of course knows that legitimacy does not spring solely from a section of people casting their vote.

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Notebook

OUR AMBASSADORS

After nearly a year of hard searching the President has appointed ambassadors to represent the country abroad. We extend our heartiest congratulations to our ambassadors. While doing so, however, we have a few pertinent questions we would like the country as a whole and the political parties in particular to reflect upon. Firstly, before the new ambassadors settle down, the new ones at the job will need some time to study the files. Before these new ambassadors have acquired the hang of it all, some of them will be returning home if in 1983 President Limann is not re-elected and the new Head of State does not confirm them. Even if President Limann is re-elected for a second term of office it is just possible that he may not confirm all of them. At the most, therefore, those new appointees can serve for only three years, possibly less and they can hardly be expected to represent the country effectively within such a short period, especially if they are new to the job. Given the exigencies of the situation and the delicate nature of diplomacy, would it not have been better had the President chosen more experienced personnel from his original list?

Secondly, we know from the proceedings of the Parliamentary Appointments Committee that some of the people named by the President were not considered good enough for inclusion in the President's Cabinet. Surely the Council of State considered each of the President's nominee before endorsing the appointment. For a variety of reasons, however, the public was kept out of the chambers of the Council and is uninformed of its proceedings. It will be interesting to hear that after much consideration, the Council advised the President to drop one or two, or even more of his nominees. While this may raise a number of constitutional issues, it is our contention that such a move on the part of the Council will go a long way to engender public confidence in that body. If this is not done, a number of people are likely to pose the question of whether people who do not meet the requirements for appointment as Ministers at home qualify to be appointed as Ministers abroad. In addition, a section of the populace will begin to see the Council of State as a mere rubber stamp of the President's decisions. One wished that persons nominated for ambassadorial posts could be vetted as the constitution requires of Ministers and their deputies. This will ensure that persons of

doubtful integrity do not press claims for appointment, knowing fairly well that they cannot defend those claims in public. Perhaps the Council of State can do a lot of service to the nation by opening its doors to the public during consideration of certain appointments which do not involve issues of national security if such appointments are not required to go through Parliament. In lieu of this, it may be of much help if a Parliamentary sub-committee could be created to help the Council of State vet any such appointments. Of course, we are quite aware of the fact that a number of the members of Council of State do not belong to the P.N.P., but the general public may be happier if their elected Members of Parliament who do not necessarily share the ideological beliefs of the government in power have a say in such appointments. For one thing this may save the government from coming to defend its position in such delicate matters.

Thirdly, following the promise in the President's inaugural address, the Minister of Foreign Affairs assured Parliament some time ago that there was to be a review of the country's overseas representation to make for savings. This was endorsed by the President in his broadcast to the nation on 28th July, 1980 when he announced that the pruning exercise was under way and that it would save the country about 5.4 million cedis. Laudable as this may be, there are a few other pertinent issues we would like the government to consider. Firstly, where are the savings going to be made from? Secondly, we must begin to assess the importance of all our embassies in Europe, North America and the Far East. Since economics has taken precedence over politics in international affairs, perhaps it would be economical to have only about two embassies in Europe, one in North America and one in the Far East. The rest of our representation should be purely economic. This may enable us to concentrate on Africa and the Middle East where we are likely to develop strong economic ties within the next two decades.

We have raised some general points about the new ambassadorial appointments but we will specifically point out that there is a disturbing feature about these appointments. It would appear that the President attaches very little importance to the calibre of people appointed as ambassadors to countries we have traditionally perceived as important: namely, countries like the United States, Russia, West Germany and Britain. These

are still our important trading partners, and most Ghanaians expected men of stature to be sent to these countries. Instead, compared with past ambassadors to these countries, the new ones appear to be lightweight. It would have been in keeping with established practice in this country as well as with our economic interests if men of some achievement, political or otherwise, had been chosen to represent us in these four important countries. It is about timewere realised that we have been wasting talent in simply failing to acknowledge the existence of fairly distinguished people who are willing to serve their country abroad. It is our belief that we have in this country now distinguished ex-Vice-Chancellors, ex-civil servants, trade unionist career diplomats, politicians and businessmen who are still active enough to serve their country creditably abroad in this crucial period of our history. Political considerations are important in these appointments, but we should not attach over-mighty importance to them.

Letters

WHICH WAY, GHANA?

SIR - The P.N.P. Administration is now a year old. Admittedly, one year is not an adequate period for a shattered economy like ours to take off significantly. But within this period keen observers of the socio-political scene in the country should be able to see the direction in which the economy is moving - free exchange system or planned economy, or if you like the capitalist or the socialist approach. As a keen student of politics I am at a loss to discern the methods being adopted to resuscitate our economy.

A high-ranking member of the Limann government was reported to have said recently that Ghana is pursuing a mixed economy. May I pose a simple rhetorical question? Which economy is not mixed? Every economy is mixed. The mixture is of two elements - the capitalist and the socialist. Where the capitalist element is predominant, as in the US, South Korea, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria and Singapore, we say there is capitalism, and where the socialist element is preponderant as in Russia, China, Cuba and Tanzania, we say there is socialism. There is some public ownership of property in the USA, and there is some private ownership of property in Russia. I do not know of any country in the world where there is a fifty per cent socialist element and a fifty per cent capitalist element in the economy, to make that country qualify for

the description, mixed economy. Put another way, I am arguing that to tell the whole world that you are pursuing a mixed economy is to offer a non-starter. The mixed economy is a cowardly economic policy.

To me there are only two ways of running an economy, of getting rich, so to speak - the capitalist method and the socialist approach. The former approach is characterised by free trade, free market system; and the latter by government control and state planning. There are apologists of both systems on the international scene. The West, symbolised by the USA, is an advocate of capitalism; and the East, symbolised by the Soviet Union, is a proponent of socialism (communism). The USA and the rest of the Western countries are the natural allies of any developing country which pursues the free exchange economy; and the Soviet Union and other communist countries in the East are equally the natural allies of any developing country which pursues a planned economy. There is no via media in this. Either we are socialist and for that matter economic friends of Russia and the East, or we are capitalist and therefore economic friends of the USA, Britain and other Western countries. Some social science textbooks and intellectuals have argued that there is such a thing as the mixed economy, but my own experience refutes that position quickly.

When an individual who has seen riches goes bankrupt he seeks the assistance of friends and well-wishers to get out of the woods. When a nation finds itself in similar circumstances it will have to seek the assistance of other friendly countries and international financial institutions and organisations to get out of the rut. In the economic mess in which we find ourselves today it is only foreign aid plus hard work and a disciplined life which can help us through. We cannot expect any signi-

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ficant aid from Russia and her communist allies if we do not show conspicuously that we believe in the socialist approach to the resuscitation of our economy. And we would likewise not get any significant help from the West if we do not show by word and deed that we believe in free enterprise.

If the Limann administration is continuing from where the late Kwame Nkrumah left off, then Ghana is being run on socialist lines. Nkrumah was an African socialist before his overthrow, and a Marxist-Leninist or communist after the ouster. Why can't we make this position loud and clear and so make the rest of the world know our natural allies. We shall still get sympathisers from the West. I myself am an advocate of the FREE EXCHANGE ECONOMY. This system will also give us sympathies from the East. WHICH WAY, GHANA-Socialist or Capitalist?

Mr. President, over to you.

Resident Tutor, C. C. K. Dzakupas
Institute of Adult Education
Sunyani.
Brong-Ahafo

Volta River Project, Valco And Bauxite Development

SIR—The article in your issue dated 29th May-12 June entitled "Volta River Project, Valco and Bauxite Development" by Special Correspondent makes recommendations which are inappropriate for me to comment upon. The author does, however, make statements regarding factual matters which as Managing Director of Valco I feel I must correct.

The Master Agreement:

The Valco Agreement is categorized in the article as an example of an agreement which subjects the host to a "neo-colonial status" whereby "Ghana grants the most far reaching concessions to Valco and gets in return only pious intentions and unfulfilled promises" (emphasis added).

On June 25, 1980 Valco presented the Government of Ghana with a cheque for over 41 million cedis (over US \$15 million) for taxes on 1979 earnings. In September of this year a payment in the amount of approximately 24 million cedis (nearly US \$9 million), will be made by Valco to the Valco Fund, representing the sharing of profits, after payment of tax for 1979, with the people of Ghana. Both of these payments, of course, con-

tribute directly to Ghana's foreign exchange position, since the U.S. dollar equivalent is first transferred to the Bank of Ghana to obtain the cedis.

It is difficult to equate the above-mentioned payments of over 65 million cedis (US \$24 million) to "pious intentions and unfulfilled promises".

It is also ironic indeed that Dr. Nkrumah, who signed the Valco Agreement on behalf of the Government of Ghana and who is the author of "Neo-Colonialism - The Last Stage of Imperialism", should be accused of imposing upon Ghana a neo-colonial status.

In addition to the previously mentioned taxes and Valco Fund payments, the agreement signed by Dr. Nkrumah obtained for Ghana:

- (a) The Akosombo hydroelectric project which has provided electrical energy to both Valco and a large portion of the populace of southern Ghana. This hydropower currently saves Ghana over US \$80 million per year which would otherwise be required to import oil to generate electricity for customers other than Valco.
- (b) A modern industrial plant at Tema, with a capacity of 200,000 metric tonnes of primary aluminium annually, which provides direct employment for approximately 2,500 employees with a wide range of technical and professional skills.
- (c) Over US \$250 million in foreign exchange since the plant began, with the amount increasing by over US\$ 50 million this year, including the income tax and Valco Fund payments mentioned above.
- (d) A financially sound Volta River Authority with the resources to construct a second hydro electric plant to provide for further growth in residential, commercial and industrial uses of power in Ghana.

These, I submit, are accomplishments of great significance.

Taxes:

The Special Correspondent points out that Valco had paid no taxes from 1967 to 1978. This is correct and was the result of several factors:-

1. No taxes were due before this year because of a five-year tax holiday, which expired in 1973 and the normal allowances provided under the Income Tax Ordinance for the initial plant, the two subsequent major expansions and other capital additions.

2. Valco would have paid taxes for 1977 and 1978 operations had it not been for the two power outages which all but shut down our operations and cost Valco approximately US\$55 million in additional expenses and lost revenue.

Valco has paid income taxes for 1979 and will be making its contribution to the Valco Fund in September. The tax and Valco Fund payments are a source of gratification to the management of the company both because of the operational successes which resulted in the obligations and because of the uses to which the funds can be put in Ghana. Valco will continue making major contributions from now on as long as the operations remain profitable.

The Valco Fund:

The Valco Fund, represents an advantageous arrangements for the people of Ghana. Under its terms, Valco is committed to share its profit, after tax and specified deductions, 50/50 with the Valco Fund. The Fund is administered by an independent board of trustees appointed by the Volta River Authority, and its resources are dedicated to social and development projects which are of benefit to the people of Ghana.

The Valco Fund is in effect an additional tax on Valco. For 1979, Valco's tax payments and contribution to the Valco Fund represent an effective "tax" rate of approximately 60%. In future years this effective rate will likely increase somewhat and approach 70%.

Local Loans:

The only local loans obtained by Valco for the construction of its smelter were borrowings in cedis, and were used for a portion of the cost of the two major plant expansions. Both interest and principal on these loans (which were specifically approved by the Government of Ghana) have been paid by bringing dollars to the Bank of Ghana for conversion to cedis. The loans were made in cedis and both interest and principal were repaid in dollars. This is not an arrangement which goes against Ghana's interests.

Valco's Right to Most Favoured Purchaser Status:

The Observer's Special Correspondent is concerned that the agreement with Valco precludes the VRA from selling power to other industrial users at a rate lower than applicable to Valco without also reducing Valco's rate. I do not think this provision is unreasonable or unfair. Valco, whose guarantee to purchase power from the VRA

made the construction of Akosombo possible, in fairness should be entitled to any preferential rates which might be offered to other industrial users. **It is surprising that Special Correspondent who has previously advised his view that Valco's power price is the lowest in the world (which it is not) should now want the VRA to be free to sell power to others at an even lower price.**

U.S. Duties:

Special Correspondent states that the United States imposes a duty of US\$10 per ton on imported alumina. In fact, alumina is admitted duty free to the United States. Further, U.S. laws provide that any duties paid on imported materials used for the manufacture of items which are subsequently exported, are remitted under drawback provisions applicable in the United States and many other countries; duty-free imports are by no means unique or unusual for export-oriented industries in many countries.

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Exchange Rate:-

As was specifically stated in the 1978-79 Budget Statement, page 18: "The institution of the export bonus, which in effect amounts to a multiple exchange rate regime, was to act as an incentive to exporters" (emphasis added). The budget statement recognized the overvaluation of the cedi and the high rate of domestic inflation as the justification for the export bonus. These forces have particular impact upon Valco as all of its output is currently exported and foreign exchange is brought to Ghana to cover its cedi costs. Both the contract language as well as fair play and equity require that Valco., as a major earner of foreign exchange for Ghana, should not be discriminated against in its exchange rate.

Any benefits derived from a more favourable exchange rate provision are shared with the Government of Ghana and the Valco Fund through Valco's income tax payments and payments to the Fund.

Development of Ghana's Bauxite Deposits:

The negotiations with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah were very specific upon the question of developing Ghana's bauxite deposits. Under the agreement, there is a provision which imposes a substantial penalty to Valco's shareholders should all the alumina processed at the Tema plant not be obtained from Ghanaian bauxite by April 25, 1977. This was clearly understood by all parties to the negotiations and it is completely false to indicate that the Ghanaian negotiators, including Dr. Nkrumah, were under any illusion to the contrary.

As Special Correspondent points out, the Valco shareholders can make a saving of U.S. \$6million

per year by utilizing Ghanaian bauxite. This is a substantial amount and does give the shareholders an incentive to obtain their alumina from Ghanaian bauxite. The fact of the matter is that Ghanaian bauxite cannot be used at Tema without processing into alumina and the cost of such a conversion is indeed colossal - at least U.S. \$600 million in 1980 dollars. A feasibility study has shown that the project would have a negative cash flow for the first seven years. Because of this, it is not the type of project which can be financed at present.

Several potential participants in the project have been involved in the studies but have elected not to proceed. Despite Special Correspondent's fears, continuing efforts will go forward. When the project is economically sound with positive cash flows the project can proceed.

The allegation that there is a conspiracy which precludes the building of integrated facilities in Third World countries is false and ridiculous. Both India and Brazil are Third World countries with bauxite, alumina, primary aluminium and aluminium fabrication involving participation by the aluminium multi nationals. Venezuela will join that group as soon as an alumina plant, now under construction, is in operation.

Let me close by quoting Dr. Nkrumah on the negotiations which resulted in the Valco agreement:

"... I wish to emphasize that in all our negotiations with the management of Valco they have always demonstrated a genuine desire to arrange this company in a way which would be fair and equitable to both them and to Ghana. An example of this good faith of Valco is their initiative in creating a Special (Valco) Fund which will guarantee to Ghana

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IT IS GREATLY REGRETTED THAT, OWING TO AN ACUTE NEWSPRINT SHORTAGE IN THE PAST SIX WEEKS IN THE COUNTRY, IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO PUBLISH THE LEGON OBSERVER DURING THIS PERIOD.

EDITOR

more revenue from the project than could be expected under normal conditions . . ."

The Volta River Project, including the Valco plant, has made and will continue to make a significant contribution to Ghana's economy in the years to come.

I appreciate your courtesy in allowing me to reply to Special Correspondent.

Valco Ltd.
Tema.

Ward B. Saunders, Jr.
Managing Director

Miscellaneous Report

TO THE ROOTS AND BACK

By

Kojo Yankah

It would have been ideal if I had driven the 53 mile journey, but I decided to go by public transportation. I had been warned by a kind friend who was used to travelling on the same route - Accra to Agona Duakwa - that if I ever wanted to get to my destination on time my safest bet was to be at the lorry station, near the Kaneshie market, latest by 6.00 a.m.

It was a Saturday morning. I can't remember exactly if I had breakfast, but it is clear in my memory that I was at the lorry station by 5.30 a.m. Only about 15 other persons were in the queue going to Agona Swedru where I would connect the final ride. So I followed the line.

A Datsun pick-up came empty. There was a semblance of tickets being issued. Behind me, the queue was lengthening. All the same I was convinced that even if all the 15 ahead of me got place in the lorry, I would be among the first to be served in the next round. In no time, the driver had started his engine. The vehicle was filled up - 14 at the back, two in front. Ahead of me, I counted 10 people. I counted again to be sure. I was going to ask the bookman a question, but I was quickly pre-empted by a woman.

"E-bei, how long are we going to stay here? "Hei, woman," a male voice in the window groaned, "don't ask that question, there were people here before you came." I heard grumbings, but I kept mute for fear of being blacklisted by the authorities there.

A Nissan 22-seater bus showed up and parked. "Yes, yes, get on board. Those who have luggage should come this way." "What!" I exclaimed to myself. Tickets and money exchanged hands, and the number of persons in front of me was decrea-

sing. With five more people to go, it was loudly announced that the bus was full.

When the vehicle took off, I looked at my watch - it was 8.15 a.m. - and then gathered courage to get nearer the window. "Gentlemen," I was quite polite. "Do you think what we are doing is fair? Some of us have -"

"My friend," another polite voice interrupted, "this is our office. We do what we like here, just as you also do in your office." Two other women made efforts to support my case but they got worst blastings. I recoiled to think of another strategy. Just then, I heard someone shout in my direction: "Oh, manager, are you also in the line?"

I looked up. It was one of the junior clerks in my office who lived very close to the lorry station and therefore was acquainted with the bookmen. I explained my plight to him and he sympathized with me. I saw him walk towards the kiosk and whisper something into the ear of one of the bookmen. When he came back, he told me, "you will be alright," and then disappeared.

The next vehicle came at 9.30 a.m. and this time I saw the queue moving fast. When it came to my turn, the ticket-seller said: "Manager, if it were not our friend, you wouldn't leave here today. Here, we are not dictated to." I waited till my ticket was firmly in my grasp and replied: "It is not your fault."

By the time I reached the village, where I was going to attend a burial, time was 11.45 a.m. My "old lady" was delighted to see me. Her first question was: "Have you eaten?" When I said no, she rushed to the kitchen. While waiting for my brunch, I got involved in a conversation with my 70 year-old grandmother.

She began: "How are your wife and the children?"

I replied: "They are doing well."

"Ei, I hear you people in Accra are suffering." "That is true, but we are making the best out of the situation."

"But Kojo, we have large tracts of land lying fallow here. Why don't you bring down your family to come and stay here. I hear that in the city you queue every morning before you eat.

Before I could answer, my attention was drawn by a three year old son of my aunt urinating less than one foot away from where I sat. "Get off Kwesi," I heard my grandmum shout. "Don't you know you will spoil your brother's dress? If you spoil this dress what will he leave for you?"

I knew she was referring to the occasional presents of worn-out cloths which my older uncles had periodically benefitted from. But I saw she was still waiting for an answer to her last suggestion.

Again, I was interrupted by the noise of a wailing woman who was passing by. The dead person whose burial I was attending had worked at Tema for 10 years and had been the bread-winner all these years. The woman wailing was an elder sister and she was chanting - - -

"Oh Yaw, so are you gone?"

Oh, Yaw, what did you leave behind for me?

Oh, didn't you leave me even one cedi?

Oh - - - -"

When the noise was out of hearing, my grandmother commented: "Ei, so this boy is dead and has left behind older relatives? Himm!"

I realised she had forgotten about the question which she had asked before, for in the next minute she was shouting, on top of her voice:

"Yaa!" she was calling my mother. 'Look under the bed. The black box must have one or two tins of tinapin in it.' I quickly reacted:

"Nana, you must be very lucky here to get mackerel to buy." "Don't say Kojo. Our U.A.C. store is hopeless." "I knew she was referring to that retail store which is housed in the former U.A.C. shop)." "Do you remember you brought this mackerel to this house?"

I reserved my surprise to myself. That mackerel must not have been less than nine months old in the old woman's box.

"Don't you worry, Nana. Things will improve," I said. "When? Can anything be better when our people do not love one another? Even at the time I was at the prime of my youth, which I remember vividly, one shilling was too much for this big family we had. Now, see, when that man in that shop gets this mackerel, we shall have to pay about thirty shillings for a tin."

My meal of plantain and "nkontomire" stew with mackerel was soon ready. Two children and an uncle who appeared in the doorway joined hands with me to eat from the same pan. Occasionally, my grandmum would yawn and I could see her toothless cavity. At one point, I suggested to her that she take some rest. She obliged.

The crowd following the corpse to the church for the burial service was quite large. From the staggering footsteps of those who were carrying the coffin, one could reasonably conclude that some amount of alcohol was working on some human beings. Even at the entrance to the church, I saw one of the men spit heavily on the floor. No one seemed to care.

If there were incense burning in the church, the alcohol fumes would have been drowned but - - -

All the same the priest did his best. Within the space of one hour he had directed the service in as solemn a mood as possible. Both in the church and at the cemetery, he had given every impression that the dead friend was an honest, hard-working man who had lived a life, "worthy of emulation." (Secretly, I knew that my friend's relationship with the church was limited to his paying his dues in the village church regularly). He was a smoker and a drinker, but the church was "not" expected to say all these at his burial service. I only hoped that my friend "repented" before he died, or else, he was only responding to "the wages of sin is death."

Back home from the cemetery, the sympathizers congregated at the deceased's family house. It had been white-washed for the occasion. There is no electricity at this village so it would have been unreasonable to expect cold drinks. Mourners there-

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Pioneer Tobacco Company Limited,
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to reach him not later than Friday, 26th September, 1980.

fore had to do with what was available. Where the "Ebusua" sat to receive donation (for the final funeral rites were all to be performed that day) I saw one bottle of beer being shared among about a dozen anxious mouths.

"Times are hard" my illiterate farmer friend whispered. "These days, you can't even buy akpeteshie" (suggesting that he would have given me a treat if circumstances were favourable).

"That is alright. We all acknowledge it," I said.

"But you people in Accra," my friend seemed to be probing, "aren't you doing anything to improve the situation?"

"What exactly do you want done?"

"There you are. This is the kind of question I would want the government people to ask those of us in the village. Instead of this, they dump anything on us. As I am speaking they say we should go and buy fertilizer (his pronunciation was a little corrupted) but that is not what we want. Our fathers never used fertilizers and I haven't used some before. But, look!" I was getting interested, so I pushed my chair nearer him. The village Brass Band had struck a tune and the free dance had began. There, they call something **Asa Bone** (Bad dance).

"You see, Kojo. The other day a van came here selling milo at C6.00 a tin. From my own calculation, two tins of Milo can buy one cutlass; and you won't believe it only a few people queued for the Milo."

My friend spat and I realized he had already had a fill of akpeteshie. When the man serving akpeteshie reached our turn, my friend shook nervously and drowned another half-glass.

"Don't think I am drunk," he warned. I shook my head to indicate I was not thinking so. And then he continued:

"You people sit there and say we should form cooperatives. You bring **Kalabule** people from Accra who don't know that we ourselves have a proper cooperative system here. Why don't you ask us?"

I was a little scared because he literally transferred his fumes into my nostrils. I mustered courage and took the rest of the complaints:

"The same people will come and say we should vote for them when the time comes."

That night, as the "natural disco" of moonlight enveloped the village, I saw the villagers trooping to the Concert Hall where the J.J.'s Concert group was dramatizing a story entitled: "How the Crab became Headless."

I understood why the other side of society is referred to as the ROOTS. Maybe our side belongs to the branches. We are back.

GHANA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: 21ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

By

Kwame Abaka Pobee

The Ghana Medical Association (GMA) held its 21st Annual Conference from Thursday April 3 to Saturday, April 5, 1980 in Accra. It is a fact that the Association born in 1958 celebrated its 21st anniversary one year after the day of its birth. It is important that this particular quirk of fate should not be left without comment. The G.M.A. became famous as a result of the historic decision of the professional bodies to take on bare faced incompetent dictatorship that was plundering Ghana and leading it into depravity.

National Politics and G.M.A.

The events of June 1977 through July 5, 1978, would stand as a memorial to a people's determination to assert its inalienable right to be free and to resist dictatorship. Let us refresh our minds about those events.

On 1st June, 1977, the Ghana Medical Association called an emergency meeting to discuss the question of the reopening of the three national Universities that had been closed as a result of student-Government confrontation. A resolution was passed asking the authorities to open the universities or face the consequences, mainly withdrawal of their services. The Government replied by sacking two Professors from the Medical Faculty of the University of Ghana, presumably for engineering the confrontation. It may be remembered that one of them was not at the decisive meeting and indeed was away examining in a postgraduate examination in London. The other attended the meeting but at the time of sacking he was also away attending a Commonwealth Conference on postgraduate education in Medicine. But the puny mind of General Acheampong could not comprehend the significance of these things. These professors were in good company. For the Governor of the Bank of Ghana, abroad at the time, almost certainly begging for money for Ghana was sacked. The Chief Justice who had been given national honours in January, 1977, for meritorious services to the state was sacked for a charge that seemed to antedate the honourable award.

The GMA reacted by withdrawing its services and this time both Government hospital doctors and private medical practitioners combined to show their contempt for a Government that could

act the way it did. Rumours had it that the Government acted on the advice of a member of the profession. If true, one could only say it was a despicable act.

On July 9, 1977, the GMA met in an emergency session and passed a resolution in line with that of the National Executive of the Association of Recognised Professional Bodies passed on 23rd June, 1977, to demand the immediate resignation of the Government of the Supreme Military Council. The harassing of medical practitioners, the low flying aeroplanes above Korle Bu and the "normal military exercises" on the campus and the exodus of doctors from Korle Bu are all history. It would be interesting to know the identity of those who flew planes so dangerously low over the roof tops. We can only hope they were not latter day revolutionaries who were only obeying orders then.

Though the objective was not realised immediately, the event of July 5, 1978, the ousting of Acheampong, must surely trace its antecedents to the determined effort of the professional bodies to give leadership to a nation in dire need of one.

It is, however, ironic, but it is also a fact that this historic act of the medical profession created divisions, bitterness and even worse, apathy amongst their ranks. The salary situation was also partly to blame. Acheampong's Government did its best to divide the profession. The professional bodies decree was repealed. The decree made membership of the Association mandatory for practising physicians. Twelve medical practitioners, nicknamed the 12 Apostles went to the Castle to offer their unstinted and unalloyed loyalty to General Acheampong. In short, the profession was in disarray and seemed to have lost its sense of direction. Historians will argue whether the profession was right to engage overtly in politics or as has been said, to be used for the gratification of other people's political ambition. This writer has no iota of doubt that the profession had to act; there was no other way. Its motive as a profession was beyond reproach. It really was selfless.

Thus it could be said that the latter years of adolescence of the Association had its problems and it was not sure whether it would ever emerge into the age of maturity or die a premature death. Indeed there was talk of the formation of a young Doctor's Association implying that the seniors had let them down. The 21st Annual conference held this year has revealed a healthy adult and a sense of unity between the old and the young, the administrators and the clinicians, the specialists and the general practitioners, and the hospital doctors and the general practitioners. This sense of unity and pur-

pose speaks for the resilience and inner strength of this ancient and noble profession and has given confidence in the future.

Health Services of Ghana

The Theme of the 21st Annual meeting was: the Health Services of Ghana. The Association in 1975 had used the same theme. The appropriateness of the theme is reflected in the fact that the 1979 constitution of the 3rd Republic of Ghana demands that a Health Service be established. In any case, in the last 5 years or so the Service as established has not met the expectations of all concerned. The patient and his relative have been dissatisfied as much as the health professional in the service. The dissatisfaction had been expressed in strikes and threats of strikes and newspaper articles and letters. The theme therefore afforded the profession once again the opportunity to have a look at the proposed Health Service that its representatives had taken part in its formulation. The profession needed to inform itself and to pronounce as a whole on the type of service it wanted for the people it served. The conference was opened by the Honourable Minister of Health, Mr. M.P. Ansah, who expressed his hopes for the kind of health service he would like to see. He emphasised the problems of exodus of doctors from Ghana and the failure to come home of others who have qualified abroad. He was concerned about the financing of the health service and stated that he would like to see some form of contributory scheme, perhaps a prepaid one, established, to finance the health service of Ghana. He was also interested to hear the views and ideas of the profession on the question of private practice.

Deteriorating Health Services

Professor C. O. Quarcoopome, the President, in a thought-provoking address, highlighted the grave concern of the GMA about the gross deterioration of health and medical facilities in Ghana. Environmental sanitation and hygiene were bad; malnutrition was not uncommon. He appreciated that the inadequacies of the practice of medicine and the delivery of health care were all the by-products of the parlous state of the economy, and that until it improved "most of our problems will be with us." Professor Quarcoopome gave some of the reasons for the brain drain and also emphasised the need for a strong cadre of competent and adequate numbers of general practitioners to be the bulwark of the health services. He reminded his listeners that to earn the respect and appreciation of society they had to give a high quality of service to the country.

There were other speakers like the Director of Medical Services who gave a brief resume of the organisational structure being proposed, the main plank of which was decentralisation and the need to increase the inputs at the primary health care level. The philosophy behind the new structure was given by Dr. Poku Nimo and the mechanics of ordering drugs and equipment were explained by Mr. Botchway, Deputy Director of the Pharmaceutical Services of the Ministry of Health of Ghana. It would appear from all the contributions that if the new service got off the ground we could get value for our money and the greater part of the whole population of Ghana would receive some health care, an aspiration denied them by the present health care service.

Exodus of Medical Practitioners

From other contributions particularly from the medical practitioners it was quite evident that all the nice plans might flounder for want of practitioners to work them. The lure of the United States Dollar or the Deutchmark or the Sterling was hard to resist. But perhaps even more galling was the complete identity of interest and fusion of minds between the professionals and the artisans and the unskilled labourers of Ghana. They have all been following the ANT - Agege Naira Trail. It is said to be unpatriotic but the professionals are part of the 10 million magicians that a commentator from a friendly country says inhabit Ghana. They would prefer to live decent lives rather than resort to magic.

Financing the Service

The GMA felt that if the government that paid those in the Civil Service could not do more than it was doing, then, the doctors should be allowed after work to engage in private practice outside the hospitals. They also felt that it was ridiculous that a patient would pay 50p for a course of treatment that costs the Government £20.00 when the patient had not made any prepaid contribution. The same went for the 50p a day paid for three main meals a day by in-patients. It is estimated that it costs the Government about £15.00 a day to keep a patient in any of the urban hospitals. The inference to be drawn from all these is quite clear. That the consumers must pay a decent sum either through a prepaid scheme or at the time of use. It may sound facetious but it is true that the rural folk (about 70% of the population) of this country who do not enjoy the benefits of scientific medicine do pay at the time to use the traditional healer either in terms of hard

earned cash and/or white sheep or white fowl. Spiritual healers get adequate remuneration "voluntarily" given by the grateful patients. These donations are not by any means paltry. In any case people pay when they attend private practitioners.

Thus from the point of view of social justice, the users of the health service must make a fair contribution either in a prepaid contributory scheme or at the time of use. The message from GMA on the occasion of its 21st Anniversary is that, firstly, the health service as we have known it is socially unjust as it benefits only 30% of the people; and, secondly, the financing of it is hapazard. It therefore called on the Government and the people to establish a health service that they would be proud of and would improve and maintain the health of all its people by the year 2000.

The Arts

LOVE BREWED IN THE AFRICAN POT

Review Article

By

Ebow Daniel.

Love Brewed in the African Pot produced in colour by Film Africa was directed by Kwaw Ansah with Kofi Yirenkyi as Assistant Director. It features Reginald, Tsioboe, Anima Misa, George Wilson and Jumoke Debayo in the principal parts. The film was shot in Ghana in 1979 processed partly in Britain and released early this year. It began showing in Accra in the third week of June. At £20, the ticket is expensive but it does not lack buyers. Cinema fans love to see feature films with a local flavour. That was how **Genesis Chapter X** made it and **Contact** before that. But **Love Brewed in the African Pot** should make it anywhere because it compares with the very best in entertainment.

The Story

Boy meets girl is a familiar theme; parents don't approve is equally familiar. Love rides high for a time and predictably flounders leaving sadness, even tragedy, in its trail. The better known elaboration of the theme is perhaps Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet**. It is the same theme choreographed for greater entertainment in **West Side Story**. And now Kwaw Ansah: Joe Quansah and Aba Appiah meet and fall for each other against the objections of parents on both sides; differences in background do not augur well for a blissful marriage; the boy is only a fitter, his parents fish-erfolk; the girl's parents are reasonably well-off;

father owns a car in the Gold Coast of 1950! Besides, Mr Appiah has ambitions of his own for her girl: she must move up on the social ladder; Counsellor Benson is already making enquiries on behalf of a lawyer-son. Mr. Appiah naturally looks forward to a church wedding, a pipe organ in the background, champagne flowing, all of which was not to be, however, because Aba marries Joe and the wedding is a traditional affair.

Aba does not want any covering up of Joe's social deficiencies: he is a fitter rather than an automobile engineer; he is not accustomed to the use of cutlery but eating with the hand will do just as well; they were to be plain Joe and Aba, she supplementing her income from dressmaking which she learnt in Cape Coast. The sign board put up by Joe to advertise his wife's skills as a dressmaker advertises his own lack of proper schooling as well: **Modern** reads **moden** and **fashion** is without the "i". Home is a one-room apartment in a rather dingy part of town and meals consist of yam and kontomire stew eaten from yaba. Dreary existence compared to what Aba had come from! Joe is all too conscious of it, but Aba assures him she could not be happier and he tries to believe her. A baby is on the way and there is so much excitement. But Lawyer Benson would not leave Aba alone, pursuing her everywhere even to the market. Aba does not miss any opportunity for telling him off. On one of those occasions, Joe witnesses the scene; he cannot read any telling-off in Aba's gestures which indeed from afar suggest something else altogether. He assumes the worst: monkeys by sizes, after all. Drained of confidence Joe looses himself in a busy drinking place; Aba discovers him late at night, inviting him to come home; he knocks her down in anger, accusing her of infidelity.

Aba ends up in hospital, the baby aborted, but she returns home determined to pick up from where they left off only to learn Joe had left town with no intention of coming back. She had had nightmares since the pregnancy: women with mask-like faces pursuing her, trying to separate her from Joe; she is in a pot being cooked; various other horrors as well. The images now recur even while she is awake and in greater intensity especially after being raped by a man from whom she accepts a ride while running away from another street encounter with Lawyer Benson. The mind seems to have become unhinged then. There is no cure, only the loved one must be found is the advice from a fetish. Joe is eventually found practising his trade miles away from home and is brought back but too late, alas! Aba is already a patient at the asylum.

Message

Theatre fans in this country love theatre that leaves them with a message or moral and there is is plenty. "I told you so" is one possible inference. Mrs. Appiah seems to represent some such position. Parents know best after all. If a child insists on playing with a knife, let go; the knife will take care of itself.. So it does: Aba comes to grief, the result of stubbornness. Yet another message is perhaps best expressed by the proverb which notes that teeth that are not good are still all one has has to lick. For the purpose of our story the proverb translates as a warning against turning our back on our cultural heritage, seeing we have no other. Mr. Appiah would not show up at important ceremonies in the larger family; he only sends money. The family is unimpressed; the money it returned. A Ghanaian audience knows without being told in the film that sooner or later the family's displeasure will manifest itself in an action which Appiah's immediate family will not find amusing.

The villains of this world are all to be found among the ranks of the high-placed in society: The Appiahs are of good social standing but they treat their daughter cruelly, not eschewing beating, by insisting that she marries a man of their preference rather than hers; eventually when they give in to the daughter, they cannot hide their contempt for the husband, instructing him on how to eat with cutlery, for example, even when he is their guest! Lawyer Benson behaves immorally pursuing a married girl; he is responsible for the ruin of Aba's marriage. The man who rapes a distressed and not-too-well Aba is an Accountant and a member of that social class. Fishermen may be simple folk but they have a heart. The elder Quansahs do not like the marriage of Joe and Aba any more than the Appiahs, but they, at least, are kind to their daughter-in-law. They bring her foodstuffs and mother and daughter embrace affectionately. When it becomes clear that the only cure for Aba's illness is the return of her husband, it is elder Quansah who boards a "tro-tro" to go looking for him. The man whose daughter is ill does not do the running around even though he is the one that has a car! But the class of which Mr. Appiah (and incidentally Kwaw Ansah too!) is a member is not doomed yet. It may yet save itself as long as it has among its ranks Aba and and her brother (Emmanuel Dadson) neither of whom is taken in by the glitter. Indeed, Mr. Appiah takes a significant step towards redemption when he begins to appreciate his own culpability in the proceedings.

There is probably more to the film's message. A study in social attitudes to marriage may be intended, for instance: the elite and culturally alienated, represented by the Appiahs, seems to regard marriage as a vehicle for social advancement: the individuals are pawns to be shifted around to satisfy the objective of keeping the family in the main stream of society: the insensitivity of the Appiahs to their daughter's marriage-preference at once becomes explicable: or ordinary folk, on the other hand, marriage ought to have value in terms of mutual happiness for the individuals at the centre of it and the duty of friends and relations is to encourage young couples to find value in their marriage. The kindness and sympathy showered on Joe and Aba by the elder Quansahs also become explicable. The difference in attitude of the old (parents on both sides) and the young (Joe and Aba) to marriage is probably intended to hint at a generation gap. The wisdom of the old acquired from experience leads to the suggestion that people should marry their own kind: in contrast with which is the idealism of the young which encourages them into adventure and experimentation. Disillusionment and tragedy are often the outcome of such adventures.

General Impressions

Discussions of the technical details of production of which the writer knows nothing is not intended. This piece is meant only to convey impression of one consumer of the products of film makers and a very satisfied consumer this time. The exercise seeks to recount those elements which added to one's enjoyment of the film. A lot of the scenes take place in the Appiah household, plausible enough surroundings, which so far have eluded identification. Aburi Garden is easy, however, so is the Ridge Hospital! the Mental Hospital too!! There are beautiful beach scenes that were shot at Senya Beraku, apparently. (Some there are indeed who hold that the best comes from Senya Beraku!). There are girls doing those intricate dances associated with the dipo custom, all essentials bared (not quite, though); and there is familiar guitar in the background, Frank Crofie's touch, unmistakably! Apart from the main characters there are familiar individuals including Frank Otchere (Uncle Frank Show), Enoch Botchway (Avenue 'A'), Sam Manu (GBC) Charles Bucknor (NAFTI), Emmanuel Dadson, Doris Kuwornu and that vivacious announcer on GBC Television, Katherine Boakye-Danquah. Some we see only fleetingly but mere identification is pleasurable enough. It is not considered

weep at theatre. It is not honest either to deny the event. One did weep and if the director intended it, he succeeded!

But it is not weepy all the way. There is nostalgia: Joe Quansah loves Aba 99 $\frac{3}{4}$ per centum, he tells Aba in a letter; Aba needs to add only $\frac{1}{4}$ per centum to make their love perfect. Hilarious scenes too: for instance the Quansahs are prevailed upon by their son to call on the Appiahs to present drinks; they are not particularly welcome but not where the junior Appiah is concerned, however. He promptly offers them seats and gives the customary drink of water. To show his displeasure, the Senior Appiah calls the boy to his bedroom and before either of them has a chance to say anything the boy is carrying in both hands a head (his own of course!) nearly split open by a knock well-aimed, even if old-fashioned. In another scene, my favourite, Mr. Appiah, is sitting at table eating breakfast. Her daughter stands behind him, the wife sits next to him, neither eating, both waiting on him; now and then he would ask for sugar, jam, tea to be poured - rather quintessential of the **male chauvinist pig**. Mr. Appiah does all the things some of us would like to do in our homes but dare not!

O tempora, o mores!!

But **Love Brewed in the African Pot** is not without shortcomings. First of all the title is rather a mouthful, although nobody's mouth hurts yet. And then there are incidents which do not particularly help understanding of the story. There is some measure of anachronism for instance: Buses of the kind that feature in the film were simply not operating in the country during the time-span of the film (1945-51?) When Mr. Appiah takes his family to the bus station to pick up Aba returning from school one member of the family, the boy of five is shown in cloth tied round the neck, which is not so much an anachronism as an unlikely costume for a member of the Appiah family! When we first see evidence of Aba's illness she is running on a deserted street, her parents in pursuit; suddenly she is intercepted by a couple of males who persuade Mr. Appiah her daughter's illness is not a matter for the hospital; they know exactly what she needs; in the very next scene the party has arrived at a fetish shrine. Mr. Appiah is still wearing singlet over a pair of trousers; and as if they were expected a chicken immediately materialises for slaughter and the divination is on. It's all too hurried. For the sequence to be plausible, the fetish should be living next door to the Appiahs, which is rather unlikely. The traditional wedding takes place in a large part; there are too many people in attendance

and the affair is altogether too elaborate to be true of anyone's experience of such ceremonies. In real life all the characters in the film would be speaking the vernacular, Fante for most of them. In the film, however, they speak English, but only for our benefit. How could we understand the film, otherwise? Of course, the characters are not of a homogenous background.

The Appiahs are well-educated; Aba has been to secondary school. On the other hand, Joe did not complete even elementary school; his fisherfolk parents are illiterate. The differences in background are aptly reflected in the qualitative differences in the English that they speak. It's all very well until we come to the fetish priest (Sam Menu) who suddenly begins to speak Twi. Were the others supposed to be speaking real English then? And how does anyone account for fisherfolk of the Gold Coast of 1945 speaking such good English?

The Actors

... **Love Brewed** is lucky in the choice of actors who understand and have a feel for what the Director meant to say. Reginald Tsiobé (Joe Quansah), Anima Misa (Aba Appiah), George Wilson (Mr. Appiah) and Jumoke Debayo (Mrs Appiah), are all professionally trained; the others had had some training as well, thanks to the drama programmes of GBC Television, the Arts Council, the School of Performing Arts at Legon and the various amateur groups that persist against all odds. Thanks indeed to all these various efforts a cadre of reasonably well-trained performers are available in the country for serious theatre. We should be grateful also for the sheer courage of people like Kwaw Ansah who in an economy like ours can commit so much funds (C2 million!) to as hazardous an enterprise as film making.

George Wilson played his masterful role from a sick bed, literally! He would steal away from 37 Military Hospital where he was undergoing treatment of a rather painful ailment to do a part and steal back into bed. It is indeed gratifying that the film comes out so well; otherwise the risks would have been in vain. But the biggest success of them all is perhaps Anima Misa, a product of the School of Performing Arts. This writer has had the rare privilege of a continuing association with the School of Performing Arts from inception. Of recent graduates of that School Miss Misa is outstanding, commitmentwise at least. She is of course different also in another significant sense. She had enough 'A' Levels to have done a degree in the Humanities. She chose to study drama in which

at the time of her enrolment there was only a diploma programme. For many of the products of the School, drama is only a course which may be undertaken to earn promotion in the Education Service, for instance. Once the certificate is secured, the holder can hardly be distinguished from the rest of the community, even in terms of mere patronage of theatre. Miss Misa is not merely involved in the arts; she is a potential leader. Within the past nine months she has played the lead in two of Athol Fugard's plays, namely, **Bosman and Lena** and **People are Living There**, directing the latter which ran June 19 - 21 coinciding with the first public showing of **Love Brewed**.

Relevance

But in the flush of success Miss Misa should watch it that she does not become the new spokesman of a phenomenon which looks progressive but is often rather negative. In the **Ghanaian Times** of 19th June she is reported as saying the Government should ban the importation of films from Western Europe or America because they lack relevance to the African situation; something to that effect. She has views also on champagne but that should not engage us here. It is not as if one was particularly enamoured of Western films, but where is the relevant substitute? **Love Brewed**... has only just arrived and it's the only one. Much that is not too good for the development of the arts often lurks behind the apparent quest for relevance. During SMC I, one heard the Osibisa Band has contributed C100,000 towards the building of a national theatre. Discussion towards the building has stalled, apparently, because there is no agreement on the authentic design relevant to the African situation. What is to become of the performing arts meanwhile? The former Accra Club, otherwise known as the Arts Centre, is hardly the ideal theatre for the African Arts but it will certainly do while we wait for the authentic! Most of the people who appear in **Love Brewed**... had their training from programmes which are probably not particularly relevant, but the experience gained from these activities is there for all to see in the film.

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