

Ghana marks 30th birthday

By JAMES FLAGAL

Ghana has been the typical example of both promise and disappointment in Third World development a forum commemorating the 30th anniversary of Ghana's independence was told recently.

Professor Eboe Hutchful, of the political science departments of the University of Toronto and the University of Waterloo, called his presentation, "Ghana at 30: Decline or Renewal?" The seminar took place in Bethune College and was sponsored by the Office of the Master of Bethune College.

Hutchful explained that Ghana has been stigmatized as the example of how post colonial development has fared in the Third World, because it was the first country in Africa to gain independence this century.

Hutchful said that the decline of Ghanaian society was really inevitable after the country enjoyed such a prosperous existence under British colonial rule. Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, was the healthiest economy in all of Africa in its year of birth, 1957.

Since then, Ghana has lost most its cocoa market to competitors, dropping to only 12 percent of the world market from its previous share of 40 percent. Its gold production fell by half, and the \$500-million U.S. reserve has been transformed into a \$1.45 billion foreign debt. According to Hutchful, between 1972 and 1979 Ghana became characteristic of the economic decay which was devouring African states.

Hutchful sees this decline as necessary economic and political processes which must occur before Ghanaian society can flourish under native rule. Ghana, Hutchful said, had been living in an "abnormal state of well being under the colonialists," and that this decline may "prove positive for a foundation of state." Hutchful explained that the absence of "structural and ideologi-

cal explanations to define the political problems" besetting Ghana also contributed to the political and economic decline of that country. This decline, Hutchful says, "has led to the exclusion of large social forces from the political realms of society," forcing a "political recession" to dominate the country, characterized by "widespread alienation."

Hutchful described Ghanaian politics not as revolutionary, but as "survival politics" where people only want to get by, not necessarily challenging the state. Because of this, Hutchful explains, trying to determine the political stability of the state is useless. Instead one should look at the strengthening of social links and the emergence of egalitarianism within Ghana taking place because of this decline. Hutchful claimed that this is possible because of the great gift Ghanians possess in abhorring violence, and their capacity to reach a consensus.

No relief is in sight for the present depressed condition of Ghana, Hutchful said, for already 60 percent

of Ghana's export revenue will be going towards servicing the debt unless new terms are worked out with the IMF (International Monetary Fund). He said that there is a possibility for renewal or decline in the next 30 years, depending on the future of economic and political policy from government. Hutchful believes it is time for the present Rawling government to begin allowing greater mass participation in Ghanaian politics, and to address the persistence of old economic disabilities which still plague the country. He emphasized that the solutions for Ghana cannot be found in the liberal democratic structures of the West, but will develop domestically and separately from other existing politics.

Hutchful said after the seminar that Ghana has come to accept the fact that it cannot blame its present economic woes on its colonial past, and that these dilemmas are the fault of Ghana's own past and must be dealt with through strong government policy.



HONESTLY: Robert Nixon, Treasurer of Ontario, assuages the concerns of the dozen or so people who attended his talk.

BABAK AMIRFEZ

National defense and NATO are focus of forum

By STEVE SOMER

"Outside the Nuclear Club," a three-day conference to be hosted by York University, will offer a unique view of the options available to non-nuclear powers in their ongoing struggle for global peace and security.

According to the conference's convenor, Professor Patrick Gray of the Department of Humanities in Atkinson College, the timing of the conference is ideal because the issue of world peace is currently generating significant interest throughout Canada. One of the overriding goals for the June 10-13 forum is to determine "what kind of policy Canada should have in this whole bag of things," Gray said, specifically in the

area of national defense and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Gray, who teaches religious studies, said that he is simply a concerned citizen who desires to "ensure that we don't drift into annihilation or an accidental nuclear war." For this reason, he pooled his efforts with other people to bring this conference to York. He said that it was the sentiment of the organizers that York should contribute to the causes of peace and disarmament in a manner similar to conferences previously held in other Canadian cities.

Gray feels that a unique element of this forum is that it will provide "a showcase of people from all over the world," thereby alerting people to the varying ideas which exist about

the topic of global peace. According to Gray, "this is the first conference where peace and security are being discussed in the overall structure." By bringing in experts from such Greece, Romania, Sweden, Japan, Mexico, and Egypt, "this conference Mexico, and Egypt, "this conference should provide an excellent opportunity to let us know what other people think," Gray added.

The conference will feature such notable speakers as Gwynne Dyer and Stephen Lewis. Several professors from York, namely Rod Byers, Hannah Newcombe, and James Mekintosh, will also be participating in the conference.

The forum will commence on the evening of June 10, and will be followed by full daily programs until

the 13th. Each day will begin with open sessions, followed by closed afternoon seminars (no media will be allowed in the hope of precipitating frank discussion, Gray said), and completed with "evening addresses."

The conference is funded in part by several parties: York University, governmental and non-governmental agencies, foundations, religious institutions, as well as the private sector. It is open to everyone, at a cost of \$35 (part of which will be subsidized by the government, according to Gray).

For more information contact Sheila Creighton, the conference coordinator, in the Master's Office in Atkinson College (736-5211).

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