Globethics Repository

Globethics

"This is Business"

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository. More information on Globethics see https://www.globethics.net. Data and content policy of Globethics Repository see https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy.

Item Type	Book chapter
Authors	Woode, Samuel N.
Publisher	Asempa Publishers / Christian Council of Ghana
Rights	With permission of the license/copyright holder
Download date	2026-11-11 17:43:39
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/173466

WOODE, Samuel N., *This is Business*, in: Ethical dilemmas and moral temptations. Cases in Administration, Accra: Christian Council of Ghana, 1998, 19-21.

2.3 'This Is Business"

In recent years, District Assemblies have been given the authority to award on contract certain projects which do not cost more than 150 million cedis. In view of this, at the District where I work, the Assembly was to construct three markets at different communities in the District totaling 450 million cedis, i.e., 150 million cedis per project.

However, the law is that before such contracts can be awarded, they should be made known to the general public by advertising in any of the local newspapers. Therefore, these three market projects were put on tender through publication in one of the Ghanaian daily newspapers.

One week after the advertisement, I received an Expedited Mail Service (EMS) letter, inviting me to Accra to meet a man I did not know for an important message at a particular date. Initially I did not want to honour the invitation. However, upon reflection I decided to go and meet the man because I was expecting some important information from a brother who was in the United States.

On arriving in Accra, specifically at the man's office in the Kantamanto commercial area, I was told that the man was attend-

WOODE, Samuel N., *This is Business*, in: Ethical dilemmas and moral temptations. Cases in Administration, Accra: Christian Council of Ghana, 1998, 19-21.

ing a meeting at a nearby office building and had directed that I should wait for him. It was the man's secretary that I met at the office. She served me a bottle of Malta Guinness.

About twenty minutes later, the man arrived from the meeting and I was introduced to him. Beaming with smiles, he in turn introduced himself by mentioning his name as Mr Amankwa*. As it was already lunch time, he suggested that we go out to a restaurant for lunch. We found ourselves in a popular restaurant. It was my first time of going to that restaurant. At the restaurant, I was asked to order whatever I wished to eat. But, as I did not know why I was being entertained, I was not at ease. The man kept saying, "Oh feel free, you are at home." There was no doubt that he wanted to impress me.

We, finally, drove back to his office. It was then he introduced himself to me as a building contractor and explained why he had invited me to Accra. He told me that he had read the advertisement from my assembly inviting contractors to bid for the construction of the three markets. He was interested, he continued. He went on to say that, at a meeting somewhere, a friend told him to contact me because I was the schedule officer for those projects. He pleaded that if there was a way I could help him to get the projects, he would be grateful and he was prepared to offer something. He ended by saying: "My brother, it is business that we are talking of. Here is £500,000 and two packets of roofing sheets. I need you to tell me the bill of quantities and estimated quotations from your consultants, and also quotations from other bidders."

In fact, I was dumbfounded; I was surprised to hear that. For five minutes I was quiet and the man was doing all the talking. First, I needed hundred thousand cedis to pay my junior sister's school fees. Second, I needed about one packet of aluminium roofing sheets to renovate my parents' building.

However, because it was difficult to say no to him and at the same time I did not want to accept the offer, I politely suggested to the man to submit his completed contract document, telling

* Not real name

him that his chances of winning were high, as at the time nobody had come for any of the contract forms.

He was persistent and was prepared to offer an additional £200,000. But I refused to take anything from him. I then asked to leave; he asked his driver to take me to the State Transport Yard to take a bus back. He gave me £50,000 to pay for my transport fare, which I took .

Questions which may be useful for discussion

1. What examples from your experience/circumstances were you reminded of?
2. What kind of person would respond to a letter of invitation from an unknown person the way the man did? Are there times when it is better to be tactful than honest?
3. Would you have taken the £50,000?
4. What does "This is Business" say about the purpose and meaning of business?
5. When do you have duty to protect official information?
6. What title would you give to this reading?