

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Tuesday, May 04, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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World Markets Analysis April 29, 2004

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**World Markets
Research Centre**

World Markets Analysis

April 29, 2004

SECTION: IN BRIEF

LENGTH: 214 words

HEADLINE: Indicted Interior Minister Finally Replaced in **Sierra Leone**

BYLINE: Chris Melville

BODY:

President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah announced a minor ministerial reshuffle on Monday (26 April), confirming George Banda-Thomas as Minister of Internal Affairs and bringing three new ministers into the cabinet, including Sarah Marah as Deputy Finance Minister and Foday Yumkella as Minister of Presidential Affairs. Banda-Thomas had served as interim interior minister since last March, when the incumbent, Sam Hinga Norman, was arrested and indicted by the UN-backed **Special Court in Sierra Leone** (SCSL) for war crimes committed during the country's decade-long civil conflict. As the leader of the pro-government Kamajor militia, Norman is charged with having presided over a range of human rights abuses, and is currently facing trial.

Significance: The confirmation of Banda-Thomas is unlikely to have a deleterious effect on relations between President Kabbah and Norman, whose once-close friendship has deteriorated sharply since the latter's indictment. Norman's replacement merely emphasises the extent to which the President has attempted to distance himself from the Kamajor, lest his own role in supporting the militia group is exposed in legal proceedings (see **Sierra Leone: 7 August 2003: Sierra Leone's President Distances Himself from Pro-Government Militias**).

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 2004

Democracy "Taking Root" in Sierra Leone Amid Fragile Peace

United States Department of State (Washington, DC)

NEWS

May 3, 2004

Posted to the web May 4, 2004

By Charles W. Corey
Washington, DC

In the aftermath of Sierra Leone's brutal civil war, "considerable progress" has been made toward consolidating peace with the help of the international community, but that "peace is fragile," warned Thomas N. Hull III, the U.S. ambassador-designate to that country.

In testimony before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee April 28, Hull listed the difficulties Sierra Leone faced and how the United States was helping and would continue to help the country find its political and economic feet.

Politically, he asserted, "democracy is taking root in Sierra Leone," with local elections to be held in May, adding that "the United States will provide training to district and town councils as newly elected officials take up their responsibilities."

But, Hull told the lawmakers, the greatest threat to democracy in the country is corruption, and he pledged, "If confirmed, I will not only nurture democracy but will firmly urge leaders to actively support Sierra Leone's anti-corruption commission."

Citing 2003 statistics from the United Nations, Hull told the committee that Sierra Leone ranks as the world's least developed country. "To boost the economy and provide for basic human needs," Hull pledged to focus on U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) assistance on agricultural development to increase employment and to produce food and cash crops.

Hull also pledged to "direct U.S. assistance to support the [Sierra Leone] government's efforts to exploit its diamond resources in a more transparent fashion and in accordance with the Kimberley Process and in a manner that will generate revenues in diamond-producing areas to stimulate economic growth."

Additionally, Hull pledged to "foster private sector development through micro-enterprise programs and trade incentives such as AGOA [the African Growth and Opportunity Act] and to advocate for U.S. business interests."

Hull, a career diplomat and Africa specialist, added: "HIV/AIDS poses a tragic threat to Sierra Leone's future. The United States has financed an innovative AIDS awareness program in the Sierra Leone armed forces," and as part of that program, specialists from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control regularly advise the Sierra Leone government on combating AIDS.

Hull told the lawmakers that he first went to Sierra Leone as a Peace Corps volunteer nearly 36 years ago and has since held seven Foreign Service assignments in Africa and served as director of African affairs at the former U.S. Information Agency.

Asked to elaborate on the corruption factor in Sierra Leone, Hull said, "Corruption threatens to undermine everything else that we want to achieve in Sierra Leone," calling it a "cancer on democracy" that must be attacked at the root. "You have to go where the resources are, and the resources that are fueling corruption in Sierra Leone are the diamonds."

For that reason, Hull pledged to "pay a lot of attention" to the U.S. initiatives that try to control and regulate

the export of diamonds from Sierra Leone. Even though progress is being made in that area, he said, there is still more than \$100 million a year in diamonds being exported illegally. "That money is clearly fueling corruption in the country," he said.

Asked if the Special Court for Sierra Leone can be effective while former Liberian President Charles Taylor remains in Nigeria, Hull said: "We [the United States government] are ... supporters of the Special Court. We hope they will begin their first trials soon. We would like Charles Taylor to make a visit to Freetown and appear before the court. He certainly should be held accountable for any war crimes that he may have committed."

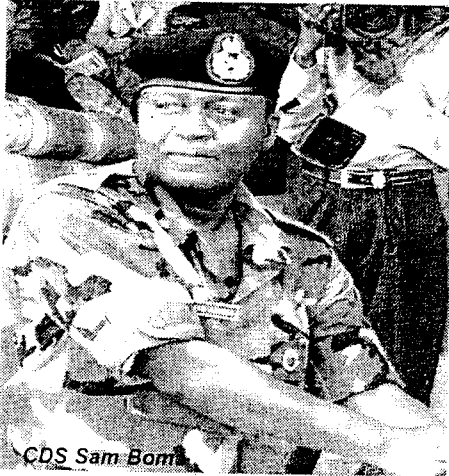
Hull said he understands that an "active dialogue" is under way among the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Embassy in Abuja and the Nigerian government to try to get Taylor to travel to Sierra Leone.

Asked what can be done to improve the situation of women and girls in Sierra Leone, Hull said a number of steps could be taken. "Women and girls need more education. ... Harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation need to be addressed." Hull said that working through the very effective nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Sierra Leone that are operated by women is the best way to address many of those kinds of problems.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

Army, Police wrestle in Makeni

The Independence Day celebration within the township of Makeni ended in a brawl between a cross section of the Army and Police personnel. The frequent trading of punches between these two security forces especially during street carnivals has left tongues wagging about the fate of citizens now that UNAMSIL is withdrawing from the country. This latest development in Makeni occurred during the 'Paddle' street carnival in

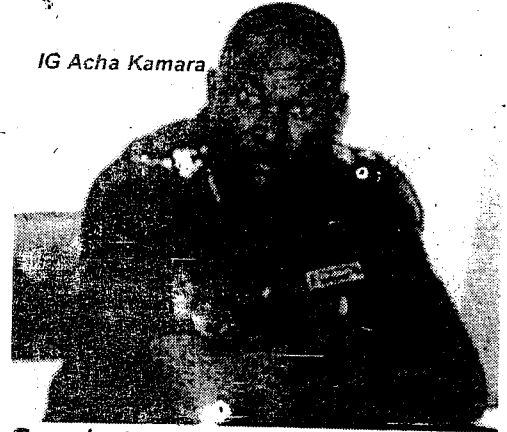


CDS Sam Borna

the township. According to our Makeni Correspondent, barely four days after UNAMSIL handed over the security responsibility to the Army and Police, this ugly incident has not gone down well among the civil populace. Varied accounts have emerged as to what led to the fist-fighting between the two sections of the security forces around Magburaka Road. Information

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IG Acha Kamara



From Front Page

gathered allegedly points to a Police Officer attached to the 'E' division of the Operations Support Division (OSD) in Makeni 3379 Sergeant Lamin Kargbo. According to the report, civilians participating forcefully disarmed the OSD at the climax of the street carnival because of what they termed as for "our safety." The OSD is alleged to have put up a stiff resistance during which gunshots were fired. He is alleged to have been beaten up and eventually sort

refugee in a nearby dwelling house, which was allegedly pelted with stone by the angry mob. The timely intervention of reinforcement from the Police succeeded in bringing the already chaotic scenario under control. According to our Correspondent, a Police Officer attached to the Information Department in Makeni, 3798 D. Sesay, who claimed to be a victim of the violence said three of his colleagues were assaulted by members of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Armed Forces in civilian dress. The molestation he said occurred during their bid to rescue a colleague Sgt Kargbo from the wrath of the angry mob. When the dust settled down, it was reported that five people including three soldiers were arrested and taken to the Mena Police Station. Police have not released the names of the three soldiers arrested for questioning and even that of the Lieutenant who secured their release from the Police.

Govt Assures Sierra Leone of Good Neighborliness

The NEWS (Monrovia)

NEWS

April 29, 2004

Posted to the web May 3, 2004

By Estella Nelson
Monrovia

Vice Chairman Wesley Johnson has assured that the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) would always "subscribe to the principles of good neighborliness and peaceful co-existence" with the State of Sierra Leone.

At celebrations marking the 43rd Independence Day of Sierra Leone, Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Liberian Government adherence to such principles was to avoid a repeat of the "checkered" past between the two countries.

He said the "quick" visit by Chairman Gyude Bryant to Freetown following the seating of the Transitional Government was a demonstration of efforts to improve bilateral ties.

"Chairman Bryant was quick to visit Sierra Leone to extend a hand of reconciliation and to acknowledge past mistakes that may have interrupted the amicable and historic relations between our two countries. We note the appreciation your government has given this visit", the Vice Chairman told the Sierra Leonean Ambassador.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that efforts by the two Governments in recent times to amend relations were highly pleasing.

He also expressed deep gratitude to Sierra Leonean President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah for the level of support to the peace process in Liberia.

The Vice Chairman disclosed that President Kabbah, in his desire to enhance bilateral ties of cooperation between Sierra Leone and Liberia, recently sent two experts, Dr. Francis Kaikai and Mr. Kanja Sesay to assist the Liberian Government in the DDRR program.

In his Independence Anniversary speech, the Ambassador of Sierra Leone, Mr. Patrick J. Foyah said President Kabbah has expressed his commitment to the full implementation of the Liberian peace Agreement.

He said the DDRR is the key element in the Liberian peace process.

The Sierra Leonean Ambassador however said that, "a lot more needs to be done and done in a hurry," asserting that key institutions and programs were required to ensure the success of the process.

Earlier, Mr. Foyah said his country has designed and put into place relevant institutions to avoid a repeat of the ills that placed his country at the bottom of the UN development index.

He named the Anti-corruption Commission, Privatization Commission, Good Governance Commission and the UN-backed Special Court as some of the institutions his Government has designed and put into place.

Also, the Ambassador mentioned plans for the re-establishment of a District Council with a view to

strengthen the Government's decentralization policy.

The celebration was attended at the Sierra Leonean Ambassador's residence by officials of the Liberian Government, members of the Diplomatic corps as well as Sierra Leoneans and other distinguished guests.



Sierra leone Sierra Leone - 2004 annual report

3.05.2004

The government continued to look askance at the independent press. Corruption was still a taboo subject and the few journalists who dared to write about embezzlement within the state apparatus paid the price.

The press is free as long as it does not poke its nose into anything troublesome. This seemed to sum up the government's position on free expression. Corruption was by far and away the most sensitive subject. Whenever a journalist tried to denounce embezzlement or fraud involving senior officials, the authorities used and abused everything in their judicial arsenal to fight back. **Paul Kamara**, the editor of a privately-owned newspaper, was the chief victim of this in 2003.

At the same time, those responsible for the murders of journalists between 1996 and 2000 still enjoyed complete impunity. No real investigation has been carried out and nothing has been done to track down and punish those responsible. The former rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), who killed some 15 journalists, and the soldiers of ECOMOG, the West African peace-keeping force, who executed a reporters on a Freetown street in 1999, have never been troubled by the judicial authorities.

A journalist imprisoned

Paul Kamara, the managing editor of the privately-owned daily *For di People*, was released on 11 March 2003 after four months in prison. He told journalists at the time that the case for which he had been jailed was still not over and that his fight against corruption would go on. A six-month sentence for libel and calumny passed by the Freetown high court in November 2002 had been reduced by two months. The court had also fined him 4,500 leones (about 2 euros) and banned his newspaper for six months. The conviction stemmed from articles referring to appeal court judge Methland Tholla Thomson as a thief, criminal and constitutional swindler, which had prompted the judge to bring a complaint on 5 April 2002. The authorities had confiscated some of the newspaper's equipment on 24 October 2002 in order to pay the judge damages.

Kamara was detained again on 3 October 2003 when he was called to the Criminal Investigation Department in Freetown and was questioned about a report headlined "Speaker of Parliament challenged ! Kabbah is a true convict !" The report said a commission of enquiry found President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah guilty of fraud in 1968 when he was economy minister. It was unconstitutional of the parliamentary spokesman to claim that Kabbah now had immunity as president, *For di People* said. When Kamara was charged with libel a week later, such a large sum was set as bail that he had to remain in detention. He was finally released from prison on 11 November when the amount of bail was reduced.

A journalist physically attacked

Umaru Fofanah, a journalist working for the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), was insulted and roughed up by the head of presidential security while

covering a meeting between President Kabbah and a UN special representative, Oluyemi Adeniji.

A journalist threatened

Chernoh Ojuku Sesay, a member of the senior staff of the *Pool Newspaper*, received death threats from members of the National Unity Party (NUP) at the end of February 2003 after the newspaper ran an article accusing the NUP candidate in the 2002 presidential election, John Benjamin, of corruption.

Reporters Without Borders defends imprisoned journalists and press freedom throughout the world, as well as the right to inform the public and to be informed, in accordance with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Reporters Without borders has nine national sections (in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom), representatives in Abidjan, Bangkok, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Montreal, Moscow, New York, Tokyo and Washington and more than a hundred correspondents worldwide.

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Guest Writer

By Yeno Esther Thorli in London

Menzies Campbell is the Liberal Democrat deputy leader and Shadow Foreign Secretary. Writing in the Independent on Wednesday 7 April, he concluded, "For the moment, there is no alternative to the occupation of Iraq." This phrase seems to be a mantra adopted by all British and American commentators. But there is an alternative.

The alternative is that All Occupation Military Forces be immediately withdrawn from Iraq. This means that troops from the two principal invading countries, the USA and its Junior Partner Britain must be immediately withdrawn. It means that troops from countries pressurised into joining the occupation - Poland, Ukraine, Spain, Japan, El Salvador, South Korea, Netherlands, Italy, New Zealand, Australia, Portugal, Thailand and Lithuania - must all be immediately withdrawn.

Another mantra constructed by Euro-American propagandists is that Iraq will slide into civil war if the occupation forces are withdrawn. The opposite appears to be the case. All sectors of Iraqi Society apart from the Kurds are uniting to do battle with the common enemy, the occupation forces.

The mainly European forces have been involved in an orgy of killing in Iraq. Americans have been killing Iraqis in extremely large numbers. The British have been killing Iraqis. Italians have been killing Iraqis. Spaniards have been killing Iraqis. Portuguese have been killing Iraqis. Ukrainians have been killing Iraqis. What for? So that America and Britain can reap the spoils of the occupation of Iraq. It's the old European saying, "To the victor the spoils."

With the Iraq Resistance Movement dealing hammer blows to US occupation forces, the Americans resorted to sheer terror in Fallujah. The Americans even bombed a mosque, killing 45 women and children.

In the battle in and around Fallujah, the Americans claimed they were seeking to arrest members of the Iraqi Resistance Movement who had killed and humiliated four Americans the previous week. In the process, the Americans killed between 600 and 1000 Iraqis including men, women, children and babies. The horror photos of dead babies shown on Al Jazeera rebut the American lie that all those killed in Fallujah "were rebels."

Even the Iraqi Governing Council, handpicked by the Americans, was forced to protest, accusing the Americans of committing "crimes against humanity" for imposing collective punishment on the people of Fallujah. The resistance fighters of Fallujah bathed themselves in glory. Their heroism will stand for all time as a symbol of their determination and courage in the face of superior arms, munitions and trained men.

When the Americans attacked Libya in 1986, Muamar al-Ghadafi told them, "You can annihilate us but you can not defeat us." Realising the folly of its wanton brutality in its orgy of killing in Fallujah, the US came to realise that while it had the planes, helicopters, bombs, armoured personal carriers, mortars, heavy guns etc. to annihilate Fallujah, it could not defeat the Resistance Fighters. Consequently, it began

For Peace In Iraq, Withdraw All Occupation Forces

to sue for peace in Fallujah.

The US demanded that those who killed the four Americans be handed over to them. What about American soldiers who have committed "crimes against humanity in Fallujah? To whom are they to be handed over? A crime against humanity has "no statute of limitation." This Iraqi adventure has exposed America as a declining power. As its power declines, so can those who commit crimes against humanity be brought to justice?

Africa and the Africans must be grateful to the Iraqi Resistance Fighters for the hammer blows they have struck against US occupation forces. For make no mistake, with America trying to control the world under the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), Africa would be next. That is where most of the wealth of the world lies, in African soil.

Africa can cause greater disruption to the PNAC by ensuring that America does not successfully complete its plan to put a "military girdle around Africa." With the setting up of a Pan African Military Force under the auspices of the African Union, Africa must implement the policy of "no foreign military forces on African soil." What has become clear to Iraqis is that the occupation of their country falsely premised on a bogus search for Weapons of Mass Destruction is nothing but naked colonisation. About this, Menzies Campbell is clear. He wants the US to hand power to an Iraqi government that will invite "coalition forces" to remain in Iraq.

It means of course, that with the spreading of the Resistance, such a government would not be able to govern Iraq. They would only be able to do so if they are defended by massive American military power, making them nothing but American puppets. But surely, this is a pipe dream.

The Americans first claimed that resistance to their occupation was by remnants of Saddam Hussein's regime. Then they blamed international terrorists. Now it claims that a handful of Iraqis are resisting them. For example, General Sanchez, America's top General in Iraq blamed the resistance on "a small group of criminal thugs." But an analysis of the Resistance shows that the Iraqis are fighting the Americans on many fronts.

There are the Shia Militias in the South. Armed resistance is coming from young male villagers across the Sunni belt. There is the Sunni resistance in Fallujah. Moqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi Army is resisting occupation in many areas in the South. Then there is the ongoing resistance around Baghdad which now seems to be better organised and better targeted, destroying American convoys at will.

In response to the killing of four Americans in Fallujah, US General Mark Kimmit promised an "overwhelming response." This has turned into a propaganda debacle. The heroism of the Fallujah Resistance Fighters has led to more and more Iraqis joining the Resistance and taking up arms against the Americans.

When Sunni Moslems were under attack in Fallujah, Shia Moslems in Sadr City in Baghdad

were donating blood, collecting food and medical supplies for their fellow Iraqis in Fallujah. American forces broke into the compound of a mosque and deliberately destroyed the supplies. The arrogance of these colonial occupiers knows no bounds. What is becoming clear is that most sections of Iraqi society are uniting in a common fight to expel the Americans from their country.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair calls the occupation and colonisation of Iraq a "struggle for freedom, tolerance, sovereignty, prosperity and human rights." Like all colonialists and imperialists, he turns the truth on its head, claiming that the resistance "stand for dictatorship, terrorism, fundamentalism, injustice and chaos." He views defeat for the colonial occupation forces as representing "defeat for democracy and civilisation."

But Blair is an uncivilised barbarian and a willing tool of the Zionist entity that constructed the PNAC. Former Cabinet Minister Robin Cook revealed that Blair and Bush had discussed the invasion and occupation of Iraq two weeks after the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York. In that attack, 2,800 people died. Since then, the Americans have killed over 50,000 people in response. As someone once said, "Caucasians like killing people."

Blair's reputation had already been seriously damaged for lying to the British people about Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq. Now, less than half the British people believe anything he says. When he became Prime Minister, the Labour Party had over 400,000 members. Now, its membership has fallen to just over 200,000, the lowest it has been for 50 years. Labour loyalists are expecting a hammering in the June elections to the European Parliament.

With the coalition occupation forces facing defeat in Iraq, Blair's reputation will suffer further damage. By attacking US and other occupation forces over the entire area of Iraq, US occupation forces are being pulled apart and stretched. When the elastic finally snaps, they will fall and run despite the bluster and bravado of Bush and Blair claiming that they "will stay the course." Moqtada al-Sadr's Army of the Mehdi has shown that they are not afraid to confront the Americans militarily. Iraqi police trained by the Americans have refused to fight their fellow Iraqis. The majority of the 200,000 strong Iraqi army trained by the Americans have also refused to fight. Many have joined the Resistance. This does not augur well for the Iraqi Governing Council or any entity to which the Americans hand over.

Any group to which the Americans cede power will find it exceedingly difficult to invite the American military to stay in Iraq. Such a prospect just means that the Resistance Struggles will go on and on since the majority of Iraqis see the Americans as colonial occupiers. Their view that the Americans are primarily interested in Iraq's oil wealth and giving billions in reconstruction contracts to American multi-national companies.

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