

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:

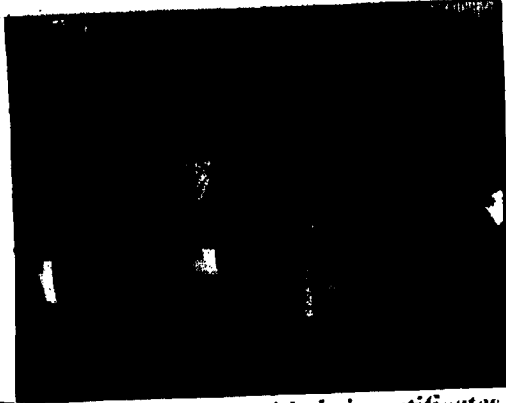
Monday, August 29, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Special Court

Six officers of the Sierra Leone Prisons Service have received Certificates of Merit and congratulated by the Director of Prisons, Foday S. Conteh in a ceremony at the Special Court's courthouse, New England.

The Director of Prisons noted at the ceremony that the Sierra Leone Prisons Service was pleased that the six officers were able to make valuable contributions to the Special Court stressing that they have acquired immense knowledge while working at the Special



The six honorees with their certificates

Court. He added, "the certificates awarded to you is not only in recognition of your individual contributions to the Court, but it will also be valuable to

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Special Court Honors

you in respect to your future careers in the Sierra Leone Prisons Service".

The six honorees who were seconded to the Special Court in late 2003 are Veronica Bameh, the only female, Ahmed Bangura, Osman Kamara, Quentin Dunn, Bangalor Dixon and

Emmanuel King who received his certificate in absentia.

During their two years secondment at the Special Court, the six prisons officers gained knowledge such as interpersonal skills, how to treat detained persons and their families with dignity and the more physical aspect of detention work,

all of which they are expected to transfer to their jobs in the Sierra Leone Prisons Service.

Furthermore, the experience gained such as cell extraction of a violent detainee, handcuffing, general principles of security and the secure handling, movement and control of detainees.

The Exclusive Newspaper of 26th August 2005: from Sierra Leone
By Exclusive Newspaper
Aug 26, 2005, 01:00

Hinga Norman 'Wahala!' **SLPP Elders Step In**

By Foday Fofana

Going by their democratic tradition, the SLPP have taken kindly and respectfully to the constitutional injunction filed by Special Court war crimes indictee, Chief Sam Hinga Norman and have shifted the date for the party's convention even when all arrangements have been made.

And this court action was greatly publicised by the party over the radio and in newspaper advertisement.

Democracy

That the plaintiff, Chief Norman's case should reach the courts and put the SLPP schedule behind is no mean achievement on the part of the indictee.

The world is watching us to know how we would solve this problem.

Mediation

Several attempts have been made at meetings presided by the Head of State such as the one held at the party's headquarters recently and chaired by the leader (Kabbah) himself, to get Chief Norman to understand that his claims could be better settled out of court.

When all this had been done without success, we are now looking up to the Chief Justice, Mr. Ade Renner-Thomas who has stated categorically that he is determined not to be influenced by anything other than the law and precedents.

We equally hope that this matter will be resolved soonest, despite the monumental work load the Chief Justice inherited in our judiciary.

Even if not to save us from wastage as all candidates for the presidency in the SLPP had long booked hotels and guest houses in Makeni; including Chief Norman himself.

The end of this matter ought to come soon so that the two major political parties don't get locked up in an unending legal battle while state functions are relegated to the other day or month.

Fair Treatment

If since his arrest and detention, this is the first time ever that an SLPP delegation had called on him in prison, then this behaviour is questionable.

No matter what, Chief Norman is a force to reckon with and putting it very mildly, he has incited his followers against the present government and assuming he was a free man, he would have wielded a lot of influence.

To the credit of the SLPP as a matter of fact, there were plans to hire the best lawyers to defend Chief Norman. All is well that ends well!



'Trust Me SLPP Lacks an Iota of Democracy' Republican Movement Secretary General Says

Concord Times (Freetown)

INTERVIEW

August 26, 2005

Posted to the web August 26, 2005

By Sahr Musa Yamba

Freetown

Concord Times' Sahr Musa Yamba in an exclusive interview with Gabriel Madiye, Secretary General of the Interim executive of the Republican Movement explores the rationale behind the formation of the new party, corruption in the country, the Special Court and how they intend to address pertinent issues when they register as a party.

I heard the name Republican Movement, why are you coming up with a political party now?

There is a changing scenario of things. Political parties were formed some years back, just after Independence or properly before Independence. These two parties like the APC and the SLPP have existed but on a bulk arena things are changing. Factors within the parties are also changing, to lead up to the expectation of the modern man. And in the world of Democracy how much democracy is been practiced within the party systems, as to allow young people to go in there and contribute mainly to society. Questions bordering around that led some people to start seeing the need to start charting the way forward. What we did was to go around people who were denied party symbols in 2002 local government election. We moved around them and said guys - because you were denied party symbols please be motivated and run as Independent candidates. "We went around to Kabala, Kenema and other places. The Vice President, Solomon Berewa was busy discouraging the efforts of people who wanted to run as independent candidates. We went around them and sensitized them that if they want to adhere to democracy then they should not just be around APC or SLPP, but we want you to go as Independent candidates. When we started this party, we knew people would be denied symbols even though they were favorites of their communities, but just because they could not give envelopes to party stalwarts.

So in short is your party present all around the country?

Let me tell you, just look at the list of 2004 Independent candidates. Initially those who ran for the 2002 Independent candidates formed the 'Independent Candidates Association.' We used that as a forum to discuss what happened to be the Republicans.

Why the name the Republican Movement?

It is very nationalistic. The reason here is that people today especially the proportional representative style of election, only parties present candidates. After election, the loyalties of parliamentarians were

loyalties to parties. The loyalties to their parties outweigh that of their loyalty to the electorates. What is happening in parliament is the MPs are representing parties and the people who are the electorates remain unrepresented.

In view of that, the Republican Movement is to make sure that the people of this country are provided with broader political choices so that come 2007, the Sierra Leoneans would have a new party elected for the first time.

Now you talk about Independent candidates forming the Republican movement, are you talking about all the Independent candidates?

We are really talking about our chiefdoms, districts, and we have held series of consultations and already we have been incorporated into the Republican Movement.

Now the Republican Movement, no doubt, is a new political movement. Has that party been registered?

It is yet to be registered. We discussed with Christiana Thorpe, the new NEC Chairlady. She said they have sent some one to Ghana for training and he will be coming back in October. When he comes registration will open.

When do you expect to register?

We are ready to register today.

But one of the criteria to register is to have offices all around the country. I would not want a scenario were you would complain Christian Thorpe has refused to register us because we don't have offices in Kenema, Bo or Makeni.

We have already done the research work, we have viewed the structures and human resources. Firstly we have the offices. Only thing we need now is to register. Then other things would follow.

Do you have a Chairman, Secretary General and others? Do you really have a party structure?

We have a working committee, working on that, and interestingly, I am the Secretary General for that party. I don't want to call the name of our Chairman now, I think we still need a better consensus.

But are there other members in key positions you may want to name?

I really don't want to name names. I am not here for that now.

Now you said you've been going round the country holding consultations with people here and there, what has been the response of the people.

It is wonderful. One thing I would like to say here Mr. Yamba is that the ordinary Sierra Leonean people want change. A total change Mr. Yamba. A change that will be good for all of us.

Have you ever been a member of another political party?

What I will tell you is I have been a voter all my life. I have been voting for the SLPP.

Why then don't you stick with the SLPP but decided to form another party?

Trust me SLPP lacks an iota of democracy within the party.

How?

Symbols are awarded by privileges and not on merits. A lot of young people were denied symbols because they cannot dance to the tune of their music.

And they all decided to go as independent candidates.

What is your assessment of the present Kabbah government?

I respect President Kabbah. He is my president.

And I also respect the SLPP government, because they carry my mandates. I voted them in, and as a citizen they are doing well. They have wonderful policies except that the deliveries of those policies are all lacking and we need a mechanism whereby the delivery mechanisms are charged.

Why don't you help the SLPP to put in place these mechanisms that you say are lacking, than you deciding to form another party?

That is very good. The main thing for democracy is the brooding of choices. Because I voted in a government does not make me swallow policies to hook, line and sinker. It makes me to be very critical of our direction. To be very honest my allegiance is not to a party but to the state.

Let me take you off politics a little, what do think of the Special Court?

I think the Special Court has a purpose, you and I know, that impunity in modern times is disastrous.

If at all the Special Court addresses impunity then it has a purpose. My worry is what parameters they have got for 'greatest responsibility.' To say for example Mr. Yamba carries the 'greatest responsibility.' That is my only worry, otherwise if that is not checked it will become problematic.

Do you think Chief Hinga Norman should be behind bars?

My personal opinion is that Chief Norman did a job. And he belonged at that time to an institution.

A political party and a government. He never fell out with the policies of the party. There are implications that all what he did was in consonance with the SLPP party and government.

So you think it is the SLPP that should be indicted, not Chief Hinga Norman?

Well that is a question for the Special Court.

My worry is who bears the greatest responsibility.

Now coming back to politics, corruption is one thing very worrisome in this country today. Now if the Republican Movement is to come to power come 2007, what strategy do you intend putting in place to minimize corruption?

Sure corruption is rife. To be very frank the SLPP is fighting corruption not because of party policies. The SLPP is fighting corruption because it is a string attached by donor funding. If you need donor funding you have to be democratic, accountable, and transparent. That is what the World Bank is asking, ADB, DFID and even the G8 countries. So when you talk about the Republican Movement, to be very honest, before you are awarded party symbols in 2007 you have to declare your assets as a candidate. So right from where we are writing our constitution, we are enshrining in it transparency and accountability.

It is a terrible situation that most of the candidates that contested our local government elections are yet to declare their assets despite the fact that it was one of the requirements. How many of them did that?

What is the focus of your manifesto?

The focus of our manifesto is looking at promoting the private sector, fighting corruption, and working with others to minimize it. Improve food security, making sure that the aspect of food security and fighting poverty does not just remain on paper.

Decentralization is also embedded there. I think an institution like NaCSA should be decentralized. At the end of the day NaCSA should be dissolved to the local government.

Do you hope to continue food security like the SLPP?

Yes we (RM) came mainly from a non-governmental background. So we are fully aware of the millennium development goals. And all those little things are components of the millennium development goals.

Now, one thing that is very worrying is the Public Order act of 1965, should Republican Movement come to power would you repeal it?

Firstly you have countries where libel is not criminalizing, what makes Sierra Leone an exception?

I decided not to device ways until such a time we are registered and we will say carry us this way, or there. Firstly we are working with the press. We have officers within our ranks that are journalists.

We really want the voters to do things we think is right. And until that day when you, myself and many others who are human rights activities can see our role as not merely preaching from the pulpit, but demonstrating in the field as a minister or commissioner to executes the very values we stand for.

Ahead of 2007, I supposed the RM wants to run for the presidency am I right?

Yes.

How do you intend to canvass support? Don't you think the time is very short?

About time, we are not very sure the actual dates for election. But presumably we still have two years ahead. The moment we register everything comes up.

The people's movement is here to stay. I told you that we were part of the local government election in 2002 except that we were not yet a registered organized political party. We work as individuals and now we are what we call Republican Movement.

Was the Republican Movement formed in Sierra Leone or abroad?

It is a Sierra Leonean Movement based in Sierra Leone.

Talking about the TRC report what is your opinion about it?

We would be having a meeting on that issue.

What kind of government would the Republican Movement form?

Our government would be very democratic, it would observe human rights, free press, it will be a government that will promote genuine decentralization.

It will raise the living standards of ordinary Sierra Leoneans. Increase literacy level of this country, food security, and education not just reading and writing.

Some people are saying that the parties are too many. They only appear during elections and after that they disappear. What is your assurance that you will not vanish even if you lose?

That is good. The manner of our incorporation and existence is very good. See individuals vying as Independent candidates. And at one point we realized that we were victims of electoral malpractices, you realized it. The Electoral Commissioner had to reign for obvious reasons. Yet still the independent candidates made it with all those anomalies. The whole thing here is that we have existed before, we are not coming in because of 2007. We are people who have suffered electoral malpractices. We are people who have suffered from corruption.

Now if you were to rate the SLPP government for corruption, how much would you give them in percentage?

I am always worried about grading people as to greatest. Remember I was saying the same thing as to how can we tell that a certain man carried the greatest responsibility. So allow me to hold my reservation on that.

what is your view about good governance in SLPP?

Very honestly, relatively we have a free press, we have community radios, comparing to APC days where we had one party system. And if you are giving me an interview, it is because SLPP is really democratic.

Except that we still have some clauses that probably make people worried.

An APC man would say this man originated from the SLPP that is why he is saying certain good things about SLPP. What would you say about that?

Well, I will be an analyst to displace a government entirely when that government has a mandate to rule.

On a final note, maybe I have not asked you some thing that you would want to say. The floor is now open.

We have a slogan for our motor. I can't give it exactly. But we want to provide jobs for young people.

We want to see a country where our people are proud people. I can't go out of this country and feel that I came from a very poor country. Those are our focus. We want to see young people who originally have interest in politics to say I must serve my people in a political position.

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