

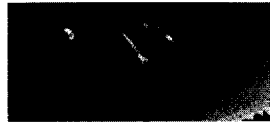
**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**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, March 01, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248  
MOBILE: 232 76 645 914



For up to the minute sports.



## Prosecutor of UN-Assisted Sierra Leone Special Court to Step Down

UN News Service (New York)

NEWS

February 28, 2005

Posted to the web February 28, 2005

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, set up with United Nations help to try those most responsible for war crimes committed during the West African country's civil war in the 1990s, today notified Secretary General Kofi Annan that he will leave his post this summer.

David M. Crane wrote Mr. Annan that he would not seek reappointment and will step down on 15 July.

Mr. Crane was appointed in April 2002 and issued his first set of indictments seven months later. Six of the eight indictees - including former Internal Affairs Minister Sam Hinga Norman and former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader Foday Sankoh - were arrested in Operation Justice on 10 March 2003 in Sierra Leone. Since then there have been five other indictments issued. Nine of these indictees are in custody and being tried in three joint criminal trials.

Following Mr Crane's 17-count indictment on war crimes and crimes against humanity of then-President Charles Taylor of Liberia, Mr. Taylor fled to Calabar, Nigeria. Mr. Taylor is only the second Head of State in history, and the first African, ever to be indicted for war crimes.

Mr. Crane told the Secretary General that he hoped he could serve mankind and the United Nations in another capacity someday. By statute only the Secretary General can appoint a Prosecutor for the Special Court.

The Special Court is the world's first hybrid international war crimes tribunal, and was established by an agreement in January 2002 between the United Nations and the Republic of Sierra Leone. It is headquartered in the capital Freetown.

---

Copyright © 2005 UN News Service. All rights reserved. Distributed  
by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).

---

FairfaxDigital

NEWS | MYCAREER | DOMAIN | DRIVE | FINANCE | CITYSEARCH

Welcome Lee | [edit details](#) | [member centre](#) | [logout](#)

## Sierra Leone UN prosecutor resigns

March 1, 2005 - 1:24PM

The lead prosecutor at Sierra Leone's United Nations-backed war crimes tribunal has resigned.

He cited family obligations for the move but expressed no regrets after more than two years in the post.

David Crane, a veteran lawyer from the United States Defence Department, said his three-year contract had come due with the UN-backed court trying atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's brutal 1991-2002 war and that he wouldn't seek to renew it.

"As you know, this is a non-accompanying post," Crane said, meaning his family didn't live with him in Sierra Leone's war-battered capital, Freetown.

"I am just keeping to the promise I gave to my wife, who is a career (US government) employee," Crane said.

"I'm leaving with a great deal of satisfaction and will continue to work hard for the people of Sierra Leone until I finally leave."

UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said Crane wrote to secretary-general Kofi Annan that he would not seek reappointment and will step down on July 15.

He told the secretary-general "that he hoped he could serve mankind and the United Nations in another capacity some day", Eckhard said at UN headquarters in New York.

By statute, only the secretary-general can appoint a prosecutor for the special court, the world's first hybrid international war crimes tribunal. It was established in January 2002 under an agreement between the United Nations and the Sierra Leone government.

Crane, 54, began his job as head of the prosecution team in August 2002 and trials opened in June 2004.

The Sierra Leone court is handling cases stemming from more than 10 years of fighting for control of Sierra Leone and its diamond fields, a conflict that saw rebels hacking off the limbs, lips and ears of civilian victims.

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor, the highest-profile of the court's 10 indicted suspects, is accused of directing Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels and trafficking in guns and diamonds while in office.

Taylor lives in exile in Nigeria and Crane has vociferously lobbied for his hand over to the Sierra Leone court, which unlike other tribunals mixes UN and local statutes.

Nigeria, which helped broker the peace deal that ended Liberia's 14-year civil conflict last year and sent the first troops to calm the country, has said it will only surrender Taylor to a Liberian court.

© 2005 AP

Brought to you by aap

**Get the Herald delivered to your home for as little as \$3 a week**

### Our Advertisers

3 months FREE Dial-up access. [Click here](#)

The new National Visa Mini. Wear it out. Find out how

### More breaking news

6:49pm

[Black replaces Molloy as Taipans coach](#)

6:44pm

Tuesday March 01, 2005

# David Crane Resigns

As we put the paper to bed news was received from the Special Court that David Crane Chief Prosecutor at the Special Court has resigned his post effective July 15th when his three year contract ends.. The announcement went on to say that David Crane's resignation is for family reasons. He will not be asking for a renewal of his contract. It will be recalled that David Crane came to

Sierra Leone with a flourish and gusto to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for our 10-year civil war. He had his successes and disappointments.

He was instrumental in netting erstwhile big fish former minister of internal affairs, Chief Hinga Norman. His greatest disappointment was his failure to get ex-President Charles Taylor of Liberia to be brought to Sierra Leone. The Special Court was set up by the United Nations in conjunction



*David Crane - resigned because he was unable to get Charles Taylor?*

with the Sierra Leone government.

*More on this breaking story next issue.*

*Salone Times*

*Tuesday March 01, 2005*

# **Special Court Reacts To Halloran's Imprisonment**

*By Mohamed Mansaray*

*The Registrar of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Robin Vincent has expressed concern for the welfare of former court investigator, Australian-born Peter Halloran who was sentenced to 18-months imprisonment, press release from the office of the Registrar has stated.*

Mr. Halloran was found guilty last week of indecent assault of a 13-year-old girl by the High Court of Sierra Leone.

A portion of the release reads: "A board of Inquiry convened by the Registrar in July last year found insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations against Mr. Halloran".

The release added that the Special Court will continue to cooperate with Sierra Leonean and Australian authorities in the event of an appeal.

However, one senior court official who spoke to SALONE TIMES yesterday on the issue but does not want to be identified said that the Special Court does not condone lawlessness and has full respect for the local courts.

The source explained that the Special Court only has powers over the local courts with respect to people who bear the greatest responsibility for crimes committed against humanity during the war in Sierra Leone.

The source cited Santigie Borbor Kanu, alias 55 as an example who was facing trial in the local court but had to be transferred to the Special Court following his indictment. "If the Special Court finds 55 innocent of the charges for which he was indicted, the Sierra Leone courts could still try him if they so desire," he source said.

The source added that the court had shown respect for the laws of Sierra Leone by first investigating the matter when it came to public knowledge and then bringing it to the knowledge of the police.

Asked whether Mr. Halloran's conduct would in anyway damage the image or reputation of the Special Court, the source said: "Although it is painful but one is bound to uphold the Rule of Law as it regulates the conduct of human beings".



It's not just a place on the map.

## Sex Abuse in War Crime Court

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

February 28, 2005

Posted to the web February 28, 2005

### *Chief Investigator Jailed For 18 Months*

It is often said that the courts are the moral guardians of society and that those that administer them are the agents of morality, truth, and justice.

So when it became apparent that Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) visited violence, mayhem, rape, and death upon innocent civilians during the Sierra Leonean ten-year civil war, the government of that country, in collaboration with the United Nations, wasted no time in setting up a war crimes tribunal to try those who bear the heaviest responsibility.

Until recently when it was discovered that the court itself is wrapped in scandals bordering on child sex molestation, all was deemed well: former Kamajor leader and later Defense Minister, Hinga Norman, has been arraigned to answer charges of crime against humanity while former Liberia's controversial president, Charles Taylor, was indicted awaiting extradition to Sierra Leone from his hideout in Nigeria to face trial. Now, as The Analyst's Staff Writer reports from the perspective of IRIN, the Chief Investigator of the Sierra Leone court is himself guilty of one of the very crimes he was sent to Sierra Leone to investigate. The question many are asking is, "Where does the scandal leave the credibility and impartiality of the court in the wake of the scandal?" The Chief Investigator at the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone, Peter Halloran, has been jailed for 18 months after been convicted in a Freetown Court for child molestation.

The 56-year-old war crimes official, who is also former Head of Homicide in the police force of Victoria State in southern Australia, was convicted and sentenced by the High Court in Freetown on Monday this week on charges of sexually molesting his 13-year-old house girl.

The victim was not named, but a February 22 IRIN dispatch from the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, says investigator Halloran was caught in the act by another court official, Ms Mandy Caldwell, an investigator working under Mr. Halloran who was staying at his house at the time of the incident.

Ms. Caldwell told the Sierra Leone court investigating Mr. Halloran that she discovered the victim sleeping in Halloran's bed.

She said Mr. Halloran was noticed luring the girl into his bedroom and "groping her bare breasts in the night" without saying why upon observing the act she did not raise alarm.

Even though there was no evidence of sexual penetration, Judge Samuel Ademusu who investigated Mr.

Halloran said the special court investigator would not be allowed to go scot-free because the individual involved was an innocent student who was looking for job for education and survival.

"Halloran took most improper liberties with the girl who was anxious to get a job [and he] told deliberate lies to the police out of a wish to conceal his disgraceful behavior," Judge Samuel Ademusu said in his ruling.

He added, "It would be meaningless to impose a fine on the accused, bearing in mind that this is a very serious offence in which I feel very strongly - taking a girl from school who was anxious for a job should not be visited with any other sentence than a custodial one." Without saying whether he is guilty as charged or not, Mr. Halloran chose to raise racial sentiments minutes before he was whisked off to prison: "I am a white policeman in a foreign country accused of that most loathed of crimes - sexual assault of a child. Of course I will be a target in jail, and of course I might not get out alive." The unnamed Sierra Leonean girl confirmed to police that she had slept in the house for two days during which Halloran had molested her. His intentions stopped short of intercourse, she added.

The Special Court for which Mr. Halloran worked is an impartial body set up by the government of Sierra Leone with the backing of the United Nations to try those most responsible for crimes against humanity during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 brutal civil war.

Halloran, as Head of Investigations, led the team that prepared evidence for the prosecution.

His job included interviewing witnesses, perpetrators and victims of war crimes that included the hacking off of limbs, rape, torture and mass killings.

Halloran's lawyer, Nicholas Browne-Marke, said that his client would appeal against the verdict and there are already clear signals from within the Sierra Leonean justice system that Halloran may after all get some form of respite before the jail term is over.

Attorney General, Frederick Carew, said that though there was no precedent, he would not object if the Australian government made moves to have Halloran transferred back to Australia to serve his sentence there.

He noted that Australia, like Sierra Leone, was a member of the Commonwealth and had been magnanimous in taking in Sierra Leonean refugees.

However, such a move would require "a diplomatic and political decision," Carew said.

Diplomacy and political manipulation with financial undertone may earn Mr. Halloran his freedom before August 22 next year, but the lingering question is, "Where will that leave the credibility of the Special War Crimes Court which Mr. Halloran served as chief of investigation?" "Certainly all preliminary investigations conducted by a man who sees nothing wrong with child molestation are bound to come under scrutiny," predicts one observer.

In that case, he said, even Charles Taylor may convince the world that those set out to try him are themselves perpetrating, in peace time, the same crimes they are out to investigate and that therefore all previous acts and decisions of theirs should be legally nullified as belonging to those not emotionally stable.

It cannot be said what world opinion would be then.



Help stop the crisis in

## **Renewed Pressure for Taylor Surrender; EU Member States Press Button On Nigeria**

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

February 28, 2005

Posted to the web February 28, 2005

The European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Union and its member states to take immediate action to ensure former Liberian President Charles Taylor's appearance before the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The Special Court indicted Charles Taylor on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in contributing to the death, rape, abduction, and mutilation of thousands of civilians during Sierra Leone's civil war from 1991 to 2002.

Forced from power in August 2003, the former Liberian president is currently in exile in Nigeria.

There have been frantic efforts by the international community to try to prevail on Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to hand over Taylor to the war crime court for prosecution.

But Obasanjo has rejected all such pleas, saying Taylor accepted Nigeria's offer of asylum for the sake of peace in Liberia.

The European Union and its member states should press for Nigeria to hand over former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the U.N. backed court for war crimes in Sierra Leone, Human Rights Watch said.

"Today's European Parliament resolution calling for Taylor to be turned over to the Special Court is a welcome step," said Richard Dicker, Director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch.

"The EU and its member states should press Nigeria to surrender Taylor. They should also support a Security Council resolution doing the same. Taylor's continued presence in Nigeria not only undermines the principle that crimes against humanity in Africa should not go unpunished, but it also poses a risk to stability in West Africa," Human Rights Watch said.

There are a number of allegations that Taylor remains in frequent contact with members of his former government, and that he also may be supporting an insurgency aimed at Guinea composed of fighters loyal to him.

These include combatants from the former Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, the Liberian Anti-Terrorist Unit and Special Security Service, and numerous Guinean dissidents.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone began operating in Freetown in July 2003 and is expected to function on a short time frame, approximately three years. It is funded primarily by voluntary contributions and has faced significant difficulties in raising adequate funds to operate.



"Taylor has been indicted for heinous crimes committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone, and he could continue to threaten stability in West Africa," said Dicker. "With the court's clock ticking, he should not be allowed to evade justice any longer." The European Parliament resolution calls on the European Union and its member states "to build international pressure in order to bring about Charles Taylor's extradition." The resolution notes that EU member states have contributed more than \$30 million to support the functioning of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and that the European Union has contributed 800,000 Euro to support the special Court's work.

The resolution also calls on Nigeria to turn Taylor over to the court, for the United Nations to work toward this objective, and for the U.N. Security Council to urgently take up this issue.

---

Copyright © 2005 The Analyst. All rights reserved. Distributed by  
AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).

---

Christine Mante Tuesday March 01, 2005

## ***Special Commentary***

# **What Manner of Justice, International or Salone Justice?**

"I have no doubt that the first accused acted most improperly and committed the acts", the words of Justice Ademusu, after sentencing Peter Halloran to 18 months in prison.

The Australian Policeman serving under the Special Court for Sierra Leone was jailed last week for conducting "an improper relationship" with a girl less than 14 years. Halloran was earlier acquitted in January, of the two main charges in the original indictment – unlawful carnal knowledge and procuring a girl under age 14. On judgement day Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February, he was also acquitted of a conspiracy charge related to the incident, as were the brother and uncle of the child at the centre of the case.

From the outset, the case had been one of controversy. Firstly, the child for whom Halloran was convicted denied having any sexual or improper relationship with Halloran and then disowned the 'original statement' she was alleged to have made to

Contd. pg. 2

# **What Manner of Justice, International or Salone Justice?**

From pg. 1

the police. In fact she said in court that she was made to sign it without understanding the contents, with promises of money and travel from Mandy Cordwell, a key witness for the prosecution, an Australian police officer and co-worker at the Special Court with Halloran

Secondly, the National Forum for Human Rights reported during the trial alleged intimidation of witnesses by agents of the prosecution and also the police for bringing pressure to bear on witnesses.

Thirdly, the father of the girl in question told the court that she is over 14 according to his own estimation based on the traditional way of registering births.

All of these issues created cloud of doubts over the prosecution's case. No wonder Halloran was acquitted on all but one of the charges. Where then did the statement "I have no doubt that the first accused acted most improperly and committed the acts" come from? On which statute did our learned judge base his reasoning or conclusion? Because, any astute judge would notice the doubts and inconsistencies in the matter, unless of course if his reasoning is clouded or polluted by other considerations that have nothing to do with points of law.

The prosecution should be able to prove its case beyond all reasonable doubt, is the mantra of international justice. So what manner then is the judgement of Justice Rashid on Peter Halloran, Salone justice?



## **Witness Completes Testimony, Defence Challenge Interpreters**

**Hirondelle News Agency (Lausanne)**

NEWS

February 28, 2005

Posted to the web February 28, 2005

Arusha

A prosecution witness completed his testimony on Monday, in the trial of four senior officers of the former Rwandan army (Ex-FAR) on genocide charges, before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) amidst complaints from defence counsels about translation errors.

The witness code-named AMW was a factual witness who testified for 3 days mainly concerning the former chief of staff of the Gendarmerie (Para-military police), General Augustin Ndindiliyimana. Counsel Christopher Black (Canada) for Ndindiliyimana challenged him on several fronts.

When the witness neared the end of his testimony, Black accused the simultaneous translators to and from the Kinyarwanda language of not interpreting information to and from the witness correctly.

He argued that at one point the "interpreter signalled something to the witness". "We cannot continue like this", added Black.

He requested the trial chamber to play a tape of the session he was describing but the Presiding judge said he had taken note of what he said.

But according to the prosecuting counsel, Ivorian, Alphonse Van, "there is no reason of casting doubt on the Kinyarwanda interpreters who are under oath."

Counsel Black later stated that "with a couple of exceptions all [Kinyarwanda] interpreters are Tutsis; we need a fair trial, we need to get interpreters satisfying all sides". All the accused are Hutus.

The lead defence counsel of the former chief-of-staff of the Rwandan army, General Augustin Bizimungu, also raised a complaint against the prosecutor's translators who took down the witness's statement sometime between February and June 2003.

He said AMW's statements had inconsistencies, which the witness acknowledged had come from the investigators.

At one point, the statement mentioned General Augustin Bizimungu instead of former Health Minister, Casimir Bizimungu. And in another instance, there was a mix-up between General Bizimungu and General Ndindiliyimana.

The presiding Judge Asoka De Silva of Sri Lanka said that "this is a lingering problem". "I will think about it and also speak to the president" of the ICTR, he added.

The Military II trial continues on Tuesday with a new witness. General Ndindiliyimana and General Bizimungu are co-accused with the former commander of the Reconnaissance battalion, Major François-Xavier Nzuwonemeye and his deputy, Captain Innocent Sagahutu. They have all pleaded not guilty.

---

Copyright © 2005 Hironde News Agency. All rights reserved.  
Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).

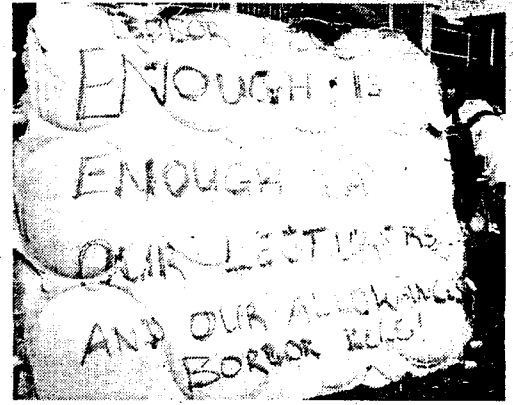
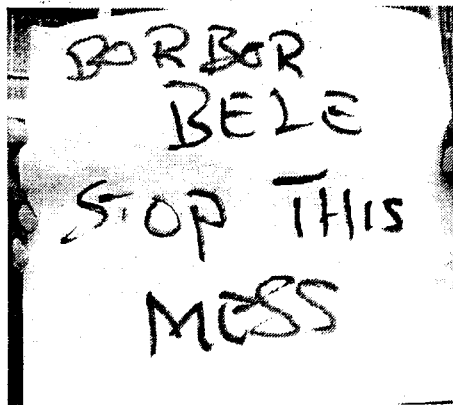
---

as protest brings city to standstill..

# "'Swegbeh' Alpha Wurie must resign now" - *Students demand*



*Youyi building tug of war between Students and Police*



By Tamba Borbor & Austin Thomas

Students of Fourah Bay College including those of the constituent Colleges marched up to the Education Ministry yesterday to register their grievances against the

Minister. The plan of the protest according to the students was hatched after the Minister's failure to amicably handle the issue of payment of monies owed to Lecturers of the University including students' overdue

allowances: "The negligence shown by the Minister to even negotiate with the Lecturers at the meeting held last week prompted us to decide on coming down to town, as we were supposed to start our exams yesterday when the Lecturers went on

strike," explained one of the student protesters. Numbering over a few thousand, the students first marched to State House, from where they processed to the American Embassy. From this point, they

zealously marched to the Education Ministry at New England Ville with their placards. Some of which read: "Enough is enough. Pay our

lecturers now"; "is this your vision for Sierra Leone"; "please allow us to write our exams"; "our candles are burning in vain", "Alpha Wurie must resign".

*Contd. Page 2*

Awoko

Tuesday March 01, 2005

Awoko

Tuesday March 01, 2005

# “‘Swegbeh’ Alpha Wurie must resign now”

*Wurie try to settle the bills of our Lecturers and students' difficulties in the country." Arriving at the Ministry of Education while chanting: "Swegbeh Alpha Wurie must resign now", the students met the*

doors of the Ministry tightly closed, as the Minister and his Deputies were nowhere to be seen. Assistant Inspector General of Police Francis Munu was spotted trying to calm the students down but to no avail, as they

shouted: "No Police, No Police." Still unified to their cause, the students then decided on trooping way down to Youyi Building to get the authorities to know about their plight. On arrival at the entrance, personnel of

the Operational Support Division (OSD) were seen wielding tear gas canister guns, while others stood right at the gate to make sure the students don't get in. This turned into a tug-of-war situation, as the students who outnumbered the OSD personnel tried to force their way in while the Police were trying to push them out. The Police then resorted to using tear gas to disperse the students, much to the displeasure and suffering of passers-by and school going pupils in the vicinity, as they were seen running helter-skelter as a result of the tear gas burning their eyes. The protesting students upon meeting this unexpected resistance from the Police, as according to them: "our protest was carried in a peaceful manner", resolved to pelt stones at the OSD personnel who were lurking behind the main entrance of Youyi Building. Some of the OSD personnel were seen wielding both AK58 and 47 weapons inside the building. Speaking to the President of the National

Union of Sierra Leone Students- Mr. Ezekiel Duramany Lakkoh at the basement of the Youyi Building, he said they are disappointed at the Police's handling of their peaceful protest. "We planned it in a peaceful way and we did not involve in any violent acts until the Police started shooting tear gas canisters at us. This is why the students are pelting stones at them now." Ezekiel stated, adding that it is the right of students to vent out their views on issues affecting their welfare in a peace way. "If our Lecturers have not been paid what they are due and our allowances not also paid up to this time, it is our right to let the authorities know in a peaceful protest like this," he further maintained. Retreating from Youyi Building, the students then converged at St. John where they mounted a roadblock in addition to another around Mende Church at Campbell Street. Determined to make their grievances heard, the students then trooped into the heart of the City. On arrival at the Electricity House at Siaka Stevens Street, the protesting students sent a

cautious note of warning that if they fail to get electricity from NPA to study at the College, they would visit the institution to vent out their feelings. Leaving the NPA Building, the large crowd of students uprooted the portrait of President Tejan Kabbah at the Cotton Tree roundabout and continued their march into the commercial area of the City. The students' protest saw the temporal closing down of Banks, Schools, as parents rushed to pick up their children. Lebanese shops were also forced to close down as the students marched through the main streets onto their campus at Fourah-Bay College. Up to Press time, there has not been any statement from the Ministry of Education to address the current state of affairs at the University so that the students can start taking their exams. Meanwhile, the students have vowed that until their overdue allowances including that of their Lecturers are paid, they would not relent in their solidarity towards seeing changes in the manner in which the Education Ministry treats issues of such nature. A rather upset student told *Awoko* at New England Ville, "I am finding it very difficult to meet my college obligations so it is better for the Education Minister to treat his former colleagues at the University with the respect they deserve."

Salome Times

Tuesday March 01, 2005



Kabbah

# **Kabbah Gov't** **Abandons Old** **Friends**

**COMMENTARY By Christian Keili**

***The protest march by FBC students yesterday was the latest reminder yet that the coalition of women's groups, students, labour unions and other civil society organisations that made possible the SLPP government's return to power in 1996 and 1998, has collapsed.***

It was that coalition, rather than any effort by politicians, that forced the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) to hand over to an elected civilian government; thus paving the way for the SLPP to assume power after two decades in the political wilderness. That coalition it was that braved threats of gunfire to march boldly through the streets of Freetown signing "Have Faith In God," demanding an end to *soja* rule and a national conference at Bintumani to determine that.

When the new civilian government of the SLPP fell to a

**SEE BACK PAGE**

military coup by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in 1997, the coalition was again at work. The Labour unions' efforts were very crucial in mobilising the Sierra Leonean populace in a civil disobedience campaign that robbed the regime of the legitimacy it so desperately sought. Despite the atmosphere of fear that prevailed back then, students took to the streets to protest, a development that saw many of them sacrificing their lives. The press on its part never let up in lambasting and exposing the AFRC and many journalists indeed suffered for that.

The SLPP was subsequently returned to power as a result of these pressures. But today, the government seems to have turned its back on those who stood by it in its darkest hours. The optimism of the women who marched in 1996 demanding to see the back of the NPRC has turned to frustration. Last year, a group of these women (from the Methodist Church) were prevented from expressing their grievances over the government's performance. The police refused to grant them clearance and the President's own office released a statement questioning their patriotism.

Today, the Labour unions are disgruntled over the government's unfulfilled promises. A nation-wide workers strike at the beginning of the year virtually paralysed the nation's economy and by all indications, that strike may not be the last this year.

Today, the same journalists whose pens fought battles with the AFRC are now threatened with jail terms and Paul Kamara, one of the junta's most vociferous critics is languishing at Pademba Road for expressing an opinion about the president.

Today, those students who dared to stand against tyranny while Pa Kabbah and others were cooling their heels in Guinea are being tear-gassed for merely demanding justice for their lecturers and themselves.

Now that the SLPP government has abandoned the coalition of students, journalists, labour unions and other groups that made its rise to power possible, is it not time that that coalition was brought together again to address the mess in which the country finds itself? Indeed, would a "Bintumani 3," another national consultative conference, not be in order?

We pause for thought.