

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



See the action from Saturday's intramural semi-final match between FMU and the Rest of the Court in today's *'Special Court Supplement'*. Photos of to match between Detention and Police will appear in tomorrow's *'Supplement'*.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

as at:

Monday, 19 March 2007

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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Special Court for Sierra Leone
Press and Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 19 March 2007

Registrar Lovemore Munlo, SC Announces His Departure from Special Court

Lovemore Munlo, SC has announced he will leave the Special Court after a year and a half as Registrar.



“After one and a half years at the Special Court, the time has come to move on”, Mr. Munlo told staff members last week.

Mr. Munlo became interim Registrar in October 2005. In February 2006, he was appointed Registrar of the Special Court by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In taking up his post in 2006, Mr Munlo said his vision was “to consolidate what the Court has already achieved and to move forward in providing efficient and professional support to Chambers, Prosecution and Defence”.

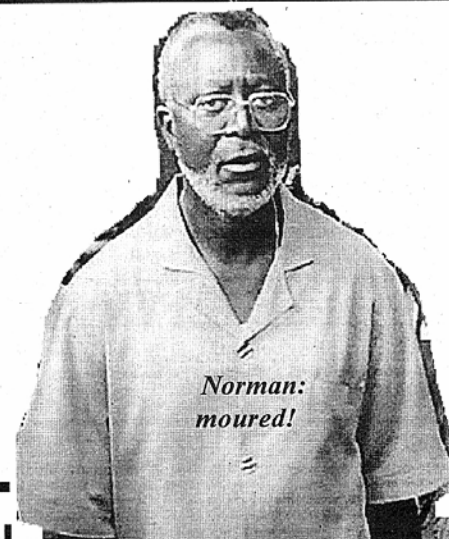
Mr. Munlo numbered among his accomplishments as Registrar a more focused completion strategy which meets projected milestones, and improved working conditions for local staff.

He also pointed to the conclusion of a host agreement with the Government of the Netherlands and the Memorandum of Understanding with the ICC, to enable the Special Court to hold the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor in The Hague.

#END

The Spark
Monday, 10 March 2007

Norman's Family Frowns At Special Court



*Norman:
moured!*

By Hassan Y. Koroma
The former Deputy Minister of Defence and Head of the Civil Defence Militia's late Chief Sam Hinga Norman's family has

frowned on the UN backed Special Court over their negligence and carelessness towards their father's health subsequently leading to his death.

The family highlighted some of the anomalies of the UN dur-

ing a family press briefing at Front Line Café at Hannah Benka Coker Street over the weekend. Juliet Norman lamented that had their father been taken earlier to a top professional hospital where Diplo-

She maintained that the hospital where the Chief was taken to in Senegal was a low class one where respected members of their family yet alone a prominent political figure should not have been taken to. Juliet

added in tears that her father was admitted in a room with a single bed, which looked like a baby's cot, without furniture or refrigerator nor water to drink.

She disclosed that the security around her father was so watertight that even the nurses were not allowed to treat him neither was there free flow of food and water to him. He was also denied seeing his family members even though he made pleas upon pleas to see his children. When

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Norman's Family Frowns At Special Court

From Front Page

they asked him about his condition all they were told was that he was not at liberty to disclose any information because of security reasons.

She commended a hospital staff, a Senegalese, Jawara, who at least made some attempts to help their father.

Sam Norman Jr. expressed his total appreciation to the nation for their condolences and concerns during all the funeral rites of their father. He said that the issue he had is with the UN who were not truthful in giving information about their father's condition. He said that the UN

even gave him the assurance that he would be able to see his dad if he went to Senegal. This he found out was not true because when he did get to Senegal and what he saw was contrary to what he had told about his father.

He said that at the moment the UN is setting up a Commission of Enquiry after an autopsy where the family was left out when it was done. He said the old thing was a manipulation of diplomatic games, but the family is waiting for their father's last verdict as they know that he is innocent of the alleged crime.

Concord Times
Monday, 19 March 2007

Special Court blamed for Norman's death

By Ibrahim Seibure
The family of late Sam Hinga Norman, former war crime indictee Friday told jour-

nalists at the Frontline Restaurant, Hannah Benka-Coker Street, Freetown that their father died because of the

court's negligence towards his health.

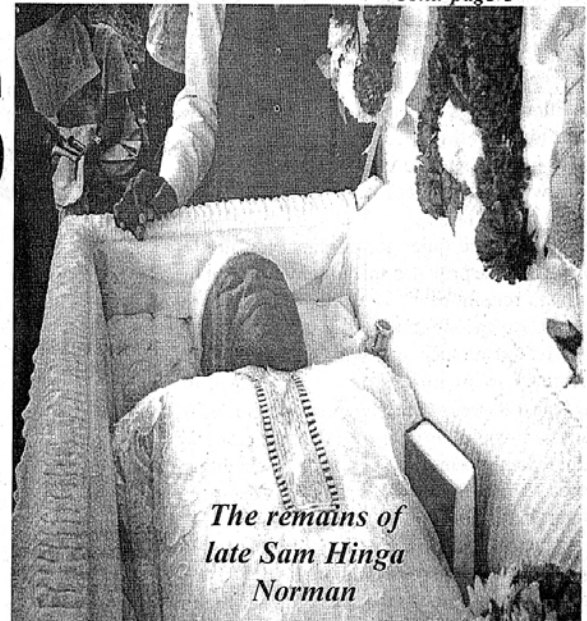
One of Norman's daughters, Juliet claimed that the late man sustained hip injury on the day he was arrested at his Ministry of Internal Affairs' office.

"After his arrest, he complained to me that he was severely manhandled by the Special Court police which

resulted to a shift in his hip. We immediately alerted the court about his state of health but fell on deaf ears. This was an affront to his human rights," she explained.

She said the court did not

Cont. page 5



*The remains of
late Sam Hinga
Norman*

Special Court blamed for Norman's death

From page 1

inform the family when it wanted to take her father to Senegal for the hip replacement operation.

Sam Norman Jr. also stated that his father was not given proper medical attention and the hospital too was ill equipped.

"When I received the call that my dad has died, I contacted the Special Court Registrar who told me that my dad died in a well equipped hospital. He then gave me permission to travel to De La Dante hospital in Dakar, Senegal to see for myself. Upon arrival, I was totally disappointed to discover that the hospital was a

shabby one and even the mortuary where he was kept was not properly functioning. I cried and it occurred to me that it was deliberate on the side of the Special Court to have brought him to that malfunctioning hospital. When I returned to Freetown, I told the court Registrar that he is a liar," Sam lamented.

The family maintained that the court also ordered the autopsy on the late man without its consent and stated that though their father has died, yet they want the court to pass verdict on him for posterity as the case against him had already reached conclusion before he died.

Lans Gberie on Hinga Norman

By mercilessly prosecuting (actually persecuting) and ultimately causing the death of Norman, a national hero with huge following in large parts of the country, the Court has further deepened the fissures in Sierra Leonean society, and deformed the already problematic socio-politics of the country just a few months before nation-wide elections.

Full article to be published tomorrow.

Don't miss it

The Spectator
Monday, 19 March 2007

Late Norman's family seeks legal redress

By Melvin Foday Kargbo

The family members of late Sam Hinga Norman are reported to be currently preoccupied with the investigation of the circumstances that led to the demise of their loved one.

Speaking at a press conference at their Hannah Benka Coker Street residence in Freetown on Friday 16 March, 2007, the son of the late man, Sam Hinga Norman Jr., told journalists that his father was treated with contempt during the time he was admitted at the Dela Dantec Hospital in Dakarr. Hinga Norman jr. also observed that the hospital where the late man was admitted does not befit the status of the latter, and which cannot even be compared with any ordinary hospitals in Sierra Leone. The aggrieved man expressed that he would have preferred his father to be admitted at the Connaught Hospital or Choitram Memorial Hospital in Sierra Leone.

The daughter of the late Hinga Norman, Juliet, recalled that the Special Court arrested their father, on the 10th of March 2003

Mr. Jawara who went to visit Mr.



Norman at the hospital in Dakarr, told the press that the Colonel in charge did not allow him to take a photograph of the hospital but the room in which the man was admitted.

Mr. Jawara finally disclosed that as the family members of the late man have resolved to seek a legal redress, they have already solicited the service of a British lawyer, Dingmans Alfred.

The Exclusive
Monday, 19 March 2007

Norman's Family Demand Verdict

By Musa Sesay requested a verdict from the Special Court of Sierra Leone, with regards to the charges prof-
The children of the late Special Court indictee Chief Sam Hinga Norman, have the charges prof-
ferred against the late man for which he was being tried until his death in Senegal. The children main-
tained that as long as the prosecution and the defense have closed hearings on

Contd. page 2

Norman's Family Demand Verdict

From front page

the matter for which Mr. Norman was being tried, there is every need to provide a verdict.

Though they failed to disclose the line of action they would take should the court comes out with a verdict, they maintained that they have to prove their consciences right or wrong as far as the matter was concerned.

They further maintained that they need representatives on the commission of inquiry proposed by the Vice President of the Special Court to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Norman.

Explaining to the media, the eldest son of Mr. Norman,

Sam Hinga Norman Jnr. recalled that he went to Senegal after being assured by the Registrar of the Special Court, that his father had been taken to a classical military hospital in Senegal where he was assured Mr. Norman would be properly taken care of. Contrary to the assurances by the Registrar, Jnr. Norman said his father was in fact admitted at a low class hospital where he suffered from inadequate care ranging from unqualified nurses, no proper diet and above all, unwarranted humiliation.

He said he was not allowed to take photos of the top military hospital where he was assured his father was being

treated, and had to beg in order to obtain pictures of the hospital where his father was in fact admitted. Giving her own version of his father's story, Mr. Norman's daughter Juliet, said her father never even slept on a comfortable bed for three months before he was flown to Senegal. She said Mr. Norman called her up from Senegal to inform her that he couldn't withstand the appalling conditions in Senegal as the cell where he was locked up was dark and he had problems communicating with even the nurses who spoke French. Even the food she said, was merely placed on the table for him without regards to whether or not he eats.

The African Champion
Monday, 19 March 2007

Special Court a Travesty of Justice

The million dollar unanswered question the oldest, fearless and bravest bird on earth wants to know is: what justice has the Special Court brought to the poor people of Sierra Leone?

The patriotic creature with over 600 years of legal experience in defending the rights of the poor and defenseless people wants these malcontent boys at the Prison's Compound at Hill Station turned Special Court that it wants them to answer the question. The creative creature has long said that instituting any court to try people in this country will cause another trouble but nobody listened. Now come off it if you are men enough - tell the people the goodness of this so-called Special Court in Sierra Leone. I am waiting for any of you to cough up a good answer!!

For one, does this so-called Special Court in Sierra Leone have any iota of the United Nation's blessings or it is just a British and American make-up? Tell it off men!! When they finished their useless law arrangements, they came with their own police and a few of our own people were arbitrarily singled out and arrested. They said the few arrested were the principle actors in the ten years carnage that engulfed the nation. The Special Court says they were in command positions, and that they recruited child soldiers and that they oversaw heinous acts of inhumanity against the civilian populace. But let us stop to ask a question: are there any rules for conducting a war?

What unspeakable atrocities weren't committed against our brothers and sisters in South Africa by the White Apartheid regime in over seventy years they lorded it over the Black population in that country? And in any case, where are the diamond magnates who actively aided and abetted the war? Why are they not indicted and put on trial? Don't they also bear the greatest responsibilities in the war like Colonel Gaddafi whose country is known to have provided training, logistics and finances for the insurgency in both Liberia and Sierra Leone?

The Special Court for Sierra Leone brings into focus the whole question of what justice is. The men in the Special Court detention are said to have borne the

g r e a t e s t responsibility for inhuman crimes committed during the war. Yet the stark fact is that all those who are left in the Special Court were taking orders from above. Sam Hinga Norman who is now dead was ordered by the President and approved by the Parliament of Sierra Leone to empower the Kamajors to wage an armed struggle against the RUF; so between the President, Parliament and poor sacrificial Hinga Norman, Augustine Gbao, Issa Sesay and others, who should have been indicted by the Special Court?

Maybe, we should go back to the dictionary to get a clear definition of what justice is. Justice is just conduct, fairness, and exercise of authority in the

maintenance of law. Poetically, it means reward of virtue and punishment of vice. Clearly, the Special Court had determined before hand that certain people should face justice for crimes that were committed by all fighting forces. For example, do we know how many summary execution of RUF and civilian suspects were carried out extrajudicially by Nigerian ECOMOG forces and even the Sierra Leone Army? Why were the Nigerian commanders

not put on trial before the Special Court? These now languishing in Special Court detention cells can well argue that they were taking orders from there bosses. Foday Sankoh, boss of the CDF is dead. Issa Sesay and others were taking instructions from him and dead Sam Maskita Bockarie. The same argument could hold for the other inditees. The question is: where is the justice the Special Court has brought when victims of the war have had no justice done to them?

For di People

Monday, 19 March 2007

Norman's Kids Point Fingers at Special Court

SAM HINGA Norman Jnr- eldest son and daughter **Juliet Norman** of the late Kamajor chieftain Sam Hinga Norman has cast doubt on the integrity of the Special Court, during a press conference at the Frontline Internet Café at Hannah Benka-Coker street, last Friday.

by

ALPHA B KAMARA

Said Norman Jnr: "my late father was kept in a prison. The Hospital DeLa Dantec in Dakar is a low hospital that I cannot compare to any in Freetown. Ours are far better.

"The bed where the late Chief was placed was like a baby cot. I wanted to

take snapshot of the theater but I was denied access to do so. I only took snapshots where he was lying and the mortuary was stinking.

I wept for over an hour. On my return to Freetown, I told the Registrar of the Special Court that he is a liar and that my father was not treated as a VIP as he had claimed.

He was in a prison in a

Dakar Hospital," he said.

For Juliet Norman, her father got the injury the day he was arrested on 10 March 2003.

"Before taken to Bonthe, my father was handcuffed on the back, hit with a gun and forced into a vehicle. In 2004, the late Chief started complaining about the persistent pain on his hip.

"The SCSL promised that

they will do something until 3 June 2004 when he started hoping but still continued to Court because he wanted to see his people.

"When the SCSL decided to take the late Chief to Senegal, none of us was informed and I only knew about the indent the day he was flown out on Wednesday. My father had told me before that time that he had been sleeping on a chair for three months."

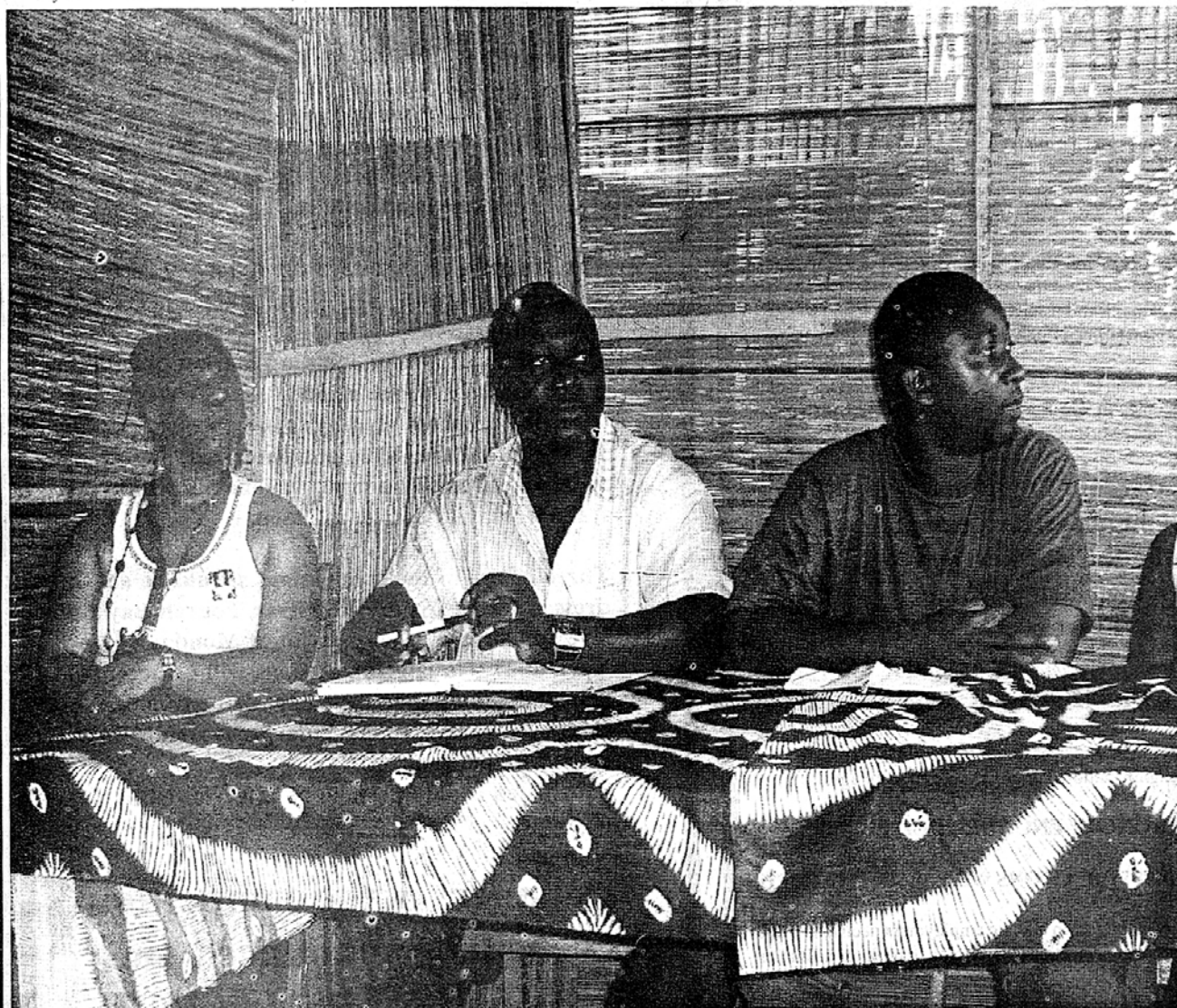
She also sad while the late Chief was in Senegal, she

had a call and heard her father saying: "Hawa! Hawa! I am finished! I know I am not coming back to Sierra Leone. Here I am in a prison hospital," she said.

Furthermore, that after the operation, Norman called and informed her that he had started walking and on the Tuesday, she was called again and told he was in a coma.

"15 minutes later, Jawara called and said my father has died," she said

Mohamed Haji Kaila who



NORMAN'S SON:centre narrates the ordeal his father went through and blames the Special Court calling them a liar to the public

chaired the occasion, said the late Chief was "profoundly incarcerated" due to the circumstances surrounding his death. He said the late Chief was not given 24-hour nursing care and that there was no nurse to see him at night even though he was bleeding and that it would have been better for Norman to have been treated at Connaught or Choithram hospital.

"As a family, we had secured the service of Pro-

fessor Wilroy who is a well-known world pathologist but the Special Court played all sorts of excuses and frustrated the pathologist's involvement in the post-mortem process.

"Later we realized that there were underlying factors which derailed the family from having an independent autopsy.

"We did not consent to that autopsy carried on the body of the late Chief. The family have decided to write the SCSL requesting the result of the autopsy and also to be included on the enquiry that will be set up to investigate the circumstances that led to the death of Norman.

Kaila also said the late Chief was indicted and detained by a UN administered Court; and that their family put the blame purely on that institution.



ie NORMAN: treated?

Awoko

Monday, 19 March 2007

Letters To The Editor By Puawui - Dr. Sama Banyo

May Hinga Norman's Soul Rest In Peace

Another sad chapter has closed in the history of Sierra Leone's widely acknowledged as the most brutal war. I refer to the arrest, indictment and death in custody of Chief Sam Hinga Norman. Much has been said and much more written on this subject, nearly all of it critical of President Tejan Kabbah, his Vice President Solomon Berewa and the membership of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP). The most vocal and brutal since Norman's death have been the editors of the Awoko and the New Storm newspapers, the latter a registered PMDC Member.

Both papers accuse the President and the SLPP as having betrayed Norman and proved ungrateful to him. Awoko further states that Kabbah should have taken a stand similar to that of President George H. Bush, or that of the people of Serbia by refusing the establishment of the Special Court. That kind of opinion deceives only the ignorant as both the circumstances and the influencing factors are quite different. Nobody had he Norman or the Kamajors in mind. These people are not writing from a position of empathy with the Norman family. On the contrary they write out of malevolence, because a little professional investigation would certainly have influenced them differently. It is always naive to pretend to be wise on hindsight.

The following are a few facts to remind the impartial and fair minded readers about the sequence of events. When the Lome Peace was being drawn up the government of Sierra Leone decided on a blanket amnesty for all fighters, a proposal which the international community refused to endorse. In the course of time the RUF and its allies began to violate the accord with attacks on towns and villages in the rural areas. When the matter was brought to Foday Sankoh's attention he said he would go round and admonish his men. In fact what he did was to send clandestine messages to inform them to ignore any admonishment from him, as it was just a front.

When the RUF abducted some 500 Unamsil Peace Keepers and marched them as far as Kailahun in the east and Sankoh was confronted, he denied the involvement of his men. He said that the Peacekeepers, being unfamiliar with the country had probably lost their way in the bush, but that he would assist in locating them. It was however left to British Commandos to rescue those people.

When Sankoh's men began to advanced on Freetown from Rogbere junction, a group of concerned women set out for his residence to impress on him that they the women who with children suffered most, were tired of war. They had to flee as Sankoh's men threatened either to slash their throats or split their bellies. A few days later, in what Awoko newspaper derides as an SLPP organized march, thousands of citizens from all works of life decided to march peacefully to Sankoh's residence. No sooner had the first batch arrived there then his security opened fire killing and wounding many.

Then the government acted; Sankoh and most of his henchmen were apprehended, he about a week later as he had fled. In addition to the arrests government was no longer bound by Lome and continued negotiation for a war crime tribunal. The matter was fully discussed in cabinet with Charles Margai participating as Minister of Internal Affairs. When it was agreed to include all combatants, late Hinga Norman and Charles Margai went round the Kamajors to persuade them to endorse the agreement even before it was ratified by Parliament.

Both as deputy Minister of Defence and later as Minister of Internal Affairs, Norman and President Kabbah address the late man with anything other than 'chief' or 'Norman' Norman was among the few people who would walk into the President's private sitting room without previous appointment or announcement. When the Special Court Act was finally ratified again Norman reassured the President that he had nothing to fear as neither he nor any Kamajor was involved in any acts of atrocity or human rights abuses, neither did they bear the greatest responsibility. The subsequent news of Norman's arrest came as a bombshell; none of us expected it. Therefore when Awoko writes that President Kabbah should not have allowed it, he is really being hypocritical. A clause in the Special Court agreement is that its functions would be completely independent and free from interference by any person or government. What Awoko is saying is that the President should have said something like, "as you were! You've touched a sacred cow, the agreement is nullified." Was the failure to do that the greatest betrayal?

The President immediately contacted Norman's family in our traditional way and offered government's help in the chief's defence. The Southern caucus of the SLPP sent to inform Norman that they were arranging legal representation on his behalf; he informed them not to worry as friends were securing a British lawyer. Again it was Charles Margai who was making that arrangement but as the fees he requested were well beyond the chief's mean that was the end of the matter and it was left to Dr. Bu-Boakei Jabbie to take over the defence to the end. Suddenly the PMDC and its leader would want us to believe that they are the chief mourners- went nauseating hypocrisy!

But Norman was determined to have his own back on the SLPP. Readers would recall that he took the Party to court on two occasions praying for that body to rule that everything we had done was illegal and ultra vires both the national and the party convention. The Party Secretary General and I were the defendants. While judgement was being considered he invited me to visit him in his cell; we had a very amicable two hours conversation including a suggestion to map a way forward. I would have kept my silence in respect of Hinga Norman's memory but for the nonsense that's been thrown around by trouble makers in their attempt to discredit us.

Awoko

Monday, 19 March 2007

Puawui be conscientious

By S. Alghali

Dr. Sama Banya is a person for whom I have considerable respect. In some of today's newspaper he has published "May Hinga Norman soul rest in peace" in which he seeks in vain to exculpate Government and the SLPP Party from any blame whatsoever relating to Chief Norman's death. Dr. Banya you are wrong very wrong.

It is not the inevitability of Chief Norman's prosecution that is the complaint - one is sure that Chief Norman would have gone through the lengthy Special Court procedure and trial valiantly if he was encouraged and certainly convinced that he had one hundred percent support and loyalty from President Kabba in particular and his Government as well as the SLPP Party.

Because it is firm public opinion that he would definitely have come out of the trial victorious with an acquittal and ending up as a true NATIONAL HERO.

What undoubtedly contributed to Chief Norman's loss of courage and bravery at the end was undoubtedly the defiant and resolute refusal of President Kabba to give evidence when subpoenaed on Norman's behalf. Even the white-man foreigner Mr Penfold (Chief Kumrabi) at no doubt great cost to his diplomatic reputation and legacy voluntarily and passionately gave evidence for and on behalf of Chief Norman. The "let down" by President Kabba coupled with the indolence he displayed when to his knowledge he permitted the Special Court using Gbeki and others to seriously and without warning humiliatingly arrest Chief Norman whilst he was engaged on President Kabba's Ministerial business.

Surely if President Kabba truly cared for Chief Norman whom he described as "one of my best ministers" he should have sanctioned a more dignified arrest such as Bush or Blair would have done for one of their own ministers in similar circumstances.

Mr. Puawui you really should have kept your silence and not resort to blind defenses referring to "nonsense been thrown around by trouble makers" - you only dealt with purely superficial issues. Please Puawui for once at least be conscientious and NOT be as hard-hearted as your Boss. Do you seriously dispute that all the above matters and more did not severely destroy Chief Norman's resistance to everything? Puawui please witness what is reported to be Chief Norman's last words as he was being "herded to Dakar - I shall not be returning alive". Are those not the words of a broken man - of a man who had given up all hope? Indeed did they not turn out to be true? Dr. permit me, who am I a Muslim, to try to equate Norman's last words here to that of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross when he said "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani" which in Hebrew means "my God, my God why hast thou forsaken me" and later went on to say "It is finished" If I have blasphemed may the Lord forgive me. But as I write this, there are tears in my eyes especially when I look at the photograph of Norman as he was being "led away" to Dakar - the stoical look on his face looking towards the East with lips parted and his mouth open - what a picture? How does this picture strike you, President Kabba the SLPP and the Government? What about being led like a sheep to be slaughtered?

Dr. Puawui you unfortunately referred to the time when "thousands of citizens from all walks of life decided to march peacefully to Sankoh's residence". In this regard let me remind you of two things: Firstly President Kabba refused approval for the march but rather suggested that 3-6 persons only should go but fortunately he was ignored.

Secondly, to this day what memory has this Government set up for those who lost their lives on that magnificent occasion?

You have done nothing. However a next different party Government would appropriately honour those who were so killed.

Finally, it is lapses such as are detailed above that has left both your Party and your Government despised by the people.

Agence France-Presse

Friday, 16 March 2007

Lawyers protest cell surveillance of Liberia's Charles Taylor

FREETOWN, March 16, 2007 (AFP) - The lawyers for former Liberian president Charles Taylor on Friday said they had suspended legal visits to the war crimes suspect in protest against a camera being installed in his cell.

Karim Khan, one of Taylor's British lawyers, told a press conference in Freetown that the move was "unheard of in most civilised systems," adding: "Our sanctity of legal visit has been violated."

Taylor is currently being held in The Hague, where his trial for 11 counts of crimes against humanity, war crimes and human rights violations will be heard by the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) from June 4.

The hearing was moved to the International Criminal Court (ICC) from the SCSL's base in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, for security reasons.

Khan said that following a complaint, the SCSL president had asked the ICC to remove the camera from Taylor's cell, but the request was denied.

"It is a cause of lament that it seems that the special court is not sovereign in relation to its own accused," the lawyer said.

He added: "It seemed as if the Special Court for Sierra Leone is going out with a begging bowl to foreign international legal institutions, not as an equal but separate judicial institution."

SCSL officials in Freetown refused to comment on Khan's remarks.

Taylor, 58, is seen as a key player in the series of civil wars in Liberia and neighbouring Sierra Leone between 1989 and 2003, which left about 400,000 people dead. He has maintained he is innocent of the charges.

United Nations  Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 16 March 2007

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

International Clips on Liberia

Sirleaf Seeks Liberia's 'Stolen Monies' as Belgium Joins Debt Relief Wagon

03/1607 - FrontPageAfrica

Brussels- Belgium has pledged to join countries supporting Liberia on debt cancellation and bilateral cooperation. Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt made the disclosure Thursday in Brussels during an official meeting with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Prime Minister Verhofstadt said he was impressed with the progress made by the Johnson-Sirleaf Administration. The President was accompanied to the meeting by Planning and Economic Affairs Minister Dr. Toga McIntosh and Liberia's Ambassador to Belgium Madam Youngor Telewoda.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivorian cocoa growers say drought worst in memory

DALOA, March 16 (Reuters) - A harsh spell of dry weather in **Ivory Coast's** central Daloa region which has lasted several months is the worst in living memory and is killing off young cocoa trees, farmers and cooperatives said on Friday. Rains have scarcely fallen in the major cocoa producing region since late November, apart from a short but heavy downpour in early February. Farmers in the world's top cocoa exporter said they expected to harvest far less than usual during the coming April-September mid crop, the smaller of the two six-month growing cycles. "It's a complete failure.

INTERVIEW-Reuniting Ivory Coast would boost GDP -minister

ABIDJAN, March 16 (Reuters) - Reuniting Ivory Coast under the latest peace plan for the war-divided country could boost economic growth by 3 percent and smooth the way for a resumption of frozen donor aid, Planning Minister Paul Bohoun Bouabre said. President Laurent Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro, leader of the rebels who hold the north of the world's top cocoa grower after a 2002/03 civil war, signed a new peace deal this month aimed at reuniting the country and organising delayed elections. "I think with the simple fact of reunification we will gain 3 percent growth

Peace plan stirs fears in Ivorian no-gun zone

TEAPLEU, Ivory Coast, March 16 (Reuters) - A peace deal this month to reunify Ivory Coast's rebel-held north and government south after more than four years has stirred fears in this distant western village. The farming community of around 5,000 lives in the "confidence zone", a strip of land running across the war-divided country and patrolled by U.N. and French peacekeepers to keep the enemy forces apart. The deal signed by President Laurent Gbagbo and rebel leader Guillaume Soro

foresees the removal of this buffer zone and the redeployment of state services in the north before long-delayed elections within 10 months.

Local Media – Newspaper

Former Transitional Chairman Bryant Files US\$2.6 Million Bond

(The Inquirer, Heritage, The News, New Democrat, The Informer, Daily Observer, The Analyst and National Chronicle)

- Former Transitional Chairman, Gyude Bryant has filed a criminal appearance bond value at US\$2.6 million. Mr. Bryant was arrested and charged last Tuesday for allegedly misappropriating over US\$1 million during his tenure as head of the interim government as indicated in an ECOWAS Audit report. He has since denied any wrongdoing. The former Chairman is expected to reappear when a notice of assignment of the case is issued by criminal court "C".

National Security Agency Debunks Claims of Media Censorship

(The Inquirer, Heritage, The News, Daily Observer, The Analyst and National Chronicle)

- Speaking to reporters yesterday, National Security Agency Director, Fumba Sirleaf denied claims by the Press Union of Liberia that the agency has requested the preview of newspapers headlines before publication.
- Director Sirleaf said there "is no iota of proof" and challenged the union or anyone with tangible evidence to reveal it. The President of the PUL, George Barpeen on Wednesday alleged that there were attempts by government to censor the media and vowed to resist any attempt.

World Bank to Rehabilitate Water Treatment Plant Soon

(Heritage)

- In an interview, the Infrastructure Cluster Leader of the World Bank in Liberia, Paul Kriss said the bank plans to rehabilitate the White Plains water plant outside Monrovia. Mr. Kriss said the Bank in collaboration with the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation would shortly start the rehabilitation and that his organization was committed to improving the sanitation and sewage system in the country.

Elections Commission Hold Consultative Conference Today

(The Inquirer and Heritage)

- In a release issued in Monrovia yesterday, The National Elections Commission said it will today hold a conference that would discuss an overview of the Governance Reform Program, the decentralization of local government structures and the boundary harmonization and challenges for holding local elections.
- The conference is being held under the theme: increasing citizens' participation in the democratic process and is part of a one-year project funded by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, OSIWA and implemented by NEC.

Local Media – Radio Veritas *(News monitored today at 9:45 am)*

National Bar Criticizes UNMIL's Judicial Training

- The National Bar Association of Liberia has described UNMIL's training of judicial officials as ineffective. According to the President of the Bar Association, Counsellor Oswald Tweh, those trained under the program has made no "noticeable" impact despite the huge amount UNMIL says it has spent and thought the mission should review and overhaul its program to make it more effective so that Liberians can benefit from the full intent. UNMIL has however, hailed the training of judicial personnel as successful.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Belgium to Support Liberia's Debt Waiver

- Belgium has pledged to join countries supporting Liberia both on the issues of debt cancellation and bilateral cooperation.

- Making the disclosure during a meeting with President Johnson-Sirleaf in Brussels, Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt said he was impressed with the progress made by her Administration.
- President Johnson-Sirleaf also held bilateral discussions with King Albert II of Belgium, President of the Belgian Senate, Secretary of State Francois De Donnea and European Union Commissioner Louis Michel.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

President Wants Bankers to Disclose Sources of Stolen Money

- Addressing a conference for multi-national heads and senior government officials from around the world, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf called on financial institutions, which have kept stolen monies from countries to make full disclosure of the funds.
- President Johnson-Sirleaf said there was also a need for these institutions to disclose who the depositors are because corruption is a far-reaching problem, which involves donor countries, recipient countries and the private sector.
- President Johnson-Sirleaf spoke yesterday in Belgium when she addressed a conference on 'Improving Governance and Fighting Corruption, New Frontiers in Public Partnerships'.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

U.S. Report Alarms over Prevalence of Sexual Violence against Children

- A U.S. State Department situation report says child abuse and sexual violence against children are widespread in Liberia.
- According to the report, civil society organizations reported increase in the incidence of rape against young girls less than twelve years.
- The report, released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour, also said there are still many children living in the streets of Monrovia and that it was difficult to tell street children from ex-combatants or IDPs.

(Also reported on ELBS and Star Radio)

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board or would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Mr. Weah Karpeh at karpeh@un.org.

United Nations News

Friday, 16 March 2007

Citing flawed process, UN expert says Iraq should not execute ex-Vice President

16 March 2007 – After this week’s dismissal of Iraqi former Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan’s appeal against the death penalty imposed by the country’s High Tribunal, an independent United Nations legal expert called on the Government to not carry out the execution, citing the “procedurally flawed legal process” that led to the sentence.

Leandro Despouy, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, issued a statement today saying that the High Tribunal “has violated international standards on due process” and “therefore is not in a position to sentence Taha Yassin Ramadan to death.”

The Appeals Chamber of the High Tribunal, in its 12 February decision, did not address the “grave shortcomings” of the original trial which sentenced Mr. Ramadan to a life sentence. The Chamber described this decision as being “too lenient,” and sent the case back to the trial court for his sentence to be increased to death.

On Wednesday, all nine members of the appeals court ratified Mr. Ramadan’s death sentence. The trial violated international human rights standards and principles, according to the Representative, “in particular the right to be tried by an independent and impartial tribunal and the right to adequate defence,” as laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Mr. Despouy, who has issued two previous press statements on this matter, is an unpaid expert serving in an independent personal capacity, reporting to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council.

Special Court Supplement

Semi-final Match: FMU 3 – 1 Rest of the Court (Penalties, after a 1-1 draw)
Saturday, 17 March 2007 at the Stadium Practice Field









