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The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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Wear cautions cabinet officials



Minister McGill in Gbarpolu



LoneStar MTN shares Christmas gifts at orphanages



Continental News

Ministers face Uhuru wrath over poor service delivery

They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. No better is this truism captured than in an image that has been circulating on social media that shows a not-so-happy President Uhuru Kenyatta in the company of ODM leader Raila Odinga and Sports CS Rashid Echesa.

The trio were at the mausoleum of the late Jaramogi Oginga Odinga at Kang'o ka Jaramogi in Siaya where the President gave the CS a dressing down for the poor state of the facility.

President Kenyatta has of late shown open disdain for his Cabinet secretaries, begging the question how long some of them will stay in their docket. The President, the Nation understands, has also been admonishing his CSs privately so much that some dread receiving his call.

Though this could be his style of management, the President's penchant for admonishing his key lieutenants who are supposed

to deliver his vision for the country has left tongues wagging in the corridors of power. Some of the CSs who have had the unfortunate encounter with the Head of State include Echesa, Agriculture CS Mwangi Kiunjuri and Health CS Sicily Kariuki.

The President also rubbished his entire Cabinet when he launched the Kenya Coast Guard and suggested he had to engineer the whole parastatal alongside Chief of Defence Forces General Samson Mwathethe fearing his own men and women would want to steal from the

public.

Unmet Promises

Senate Majority Leader Kipchumba Murkomen downplayed the issue, saying the President's moves are informed by what the public perceives to be unmet promises.

"Let's not read much into these issues, in reality the President is expressing impatience Kenyans have in unmet promises and, once in a while, this may come out in public," he said.

According to an MP who was at Kang'o ka Jaramogi in Siaya, the President was

concerned that Mr Echesa has hardly taken up his ministerial duties with the seriousness it deserves, but instead was giving undue focus on attending funerals and insulting other leaders.

"You seem to think that the work of a Cabinet secretary is to attend all funerals in western Kenya," the President is reported to have told the shocked CS right in front of Mr Odinga and other senior government officials at the home of the former doyen of Opposition politics, Mr Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. Reuters



Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta addresses the Nation from State House in Nairobi

Chamisa takes war to Mnangagwa

MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa has vowed to step up pressure on President Emmerson Mnangagwa in the new year, saying it was time to set Zimbabwe on the path to reform.

Chamisa told The Standard in an exclusive interview yesterday that Zimbabwe was being held back by questions of legitimacy around Mnangagwa's presidency.

"We have to put a full stop to tyranny, dictatorship and be on the path to reform, nation building and peace building. It will be a turnaround year," he said. "It is a take-off year, remedying the ailment affecting our country. It is also the year to revitalise and rejuvenate the organisation through organisational renewal and deepening of our internal democratic processes with the intention of giving effect to the party's new direction."

Chamisa, who narrowly lost the July 30 elections, has refused to recognise Mnangagwa despite a Constitutional Court ruling that said the Zanu PF leader won the polls.

The youthful politician insisted that he was not power hungry and challenging the president's election victory



Philimon Bulawayo Opposition Movement For Democratic Change

was not for his personal glory. "We are not driven by love of power, but the love of our country, love of peace, our people, resources, and the love for each other," he added.

"Power is meaningless if it is not serving its countrymen." The MDC Alliance leader said his Zanu PF rival needed to understand that dialogue between the country's two main political parties was the only way out of the economic and political crisis stalking the country.

"He does not understand that there is nothing that can beat dialogue - this is what separates humans from other animals," he said.

Meanwhile, Chamisa also rejected findings by the Motlanthe Commission of Inquiry into the August 1 army killings, which suggested that the MDC Alliance was behind the violent protests. Reuters

UN hopes Congolese can 'freely' vote after delay

The United Nations Security Council on Saturday said it hoped a week-long delay in DR Congo's election will allow Congolese "to express themselves freely" during the ballot.

Presidential, legislative and provincial elections had been scheduled for Sunday in

the vast, volatile African country, defusing a two-year crisis over the future of President Joseph Kabila.

But on Thursday the Independent National Election Commission (CENI) ordered the postponement, saying a warehouse fire had destroyed voting materials.

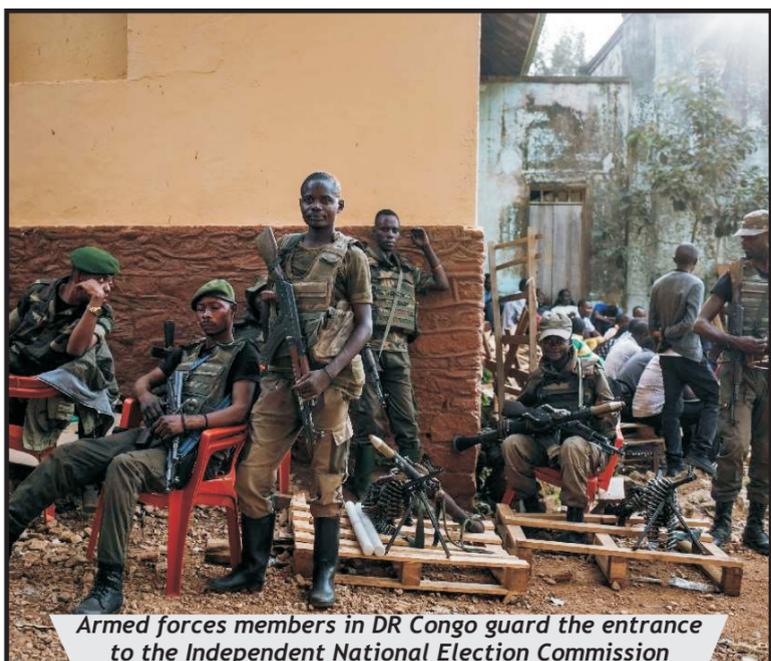
"The members of the

Security Council expressed their hope that this delay will permit the creation of favorable conditions for the Congolese people to express themselves freely" on December 30, the 15-member Council said in a statement. It also "called on all parties to engage peacefully and constructively in the electoral process," to ensure "a transfer of power in accordance with the Congolese Constitution and the 31 December 2016 Agreement."

Kabila, 47, was due to step down at the end of 2016 after reaching the end of his constitutionally-limited two terms in office. But he stayed on, invoking a caretaker clause in the constitution.

Elections were postponed until the end of 2017 under a deal brokered by the powerful Catholic church -- and then again until 2018, when Kabila eventually confirmed he would not run again.

The delay sparked protests that were bloodily suppressed and sparked an outcry from Western nations and the UN.



Armed forces members in DR Congo guard the entrance to the Independent National Election Commission

In its statement, the Security Council reiterated the readiness of MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping mission in DR Congo, "to provide support if requested."

Kinshasa has several times said it wants to organize the elections without financial aid or logistical support from the European Union or the UN. AFP

EDITORIAL

Poor Christmas

LIBERIANS SEEM TO be celebrating the festive seasons here with anxiety and disappointment in the wake of serious shortage of Liberian bank notes on the market with commercial banks restricting depositors how much money to withdraw.

THE SITUATION HAS come to public attention in the last one month especially, towards the Christmas and New Year holidays when many citizens, including business people are engaged in large purchases and sales.

BUT ACTUALLY, THERE seems to be no big sales and purchases this year, as the usual movement of people and goods that are usually associated with the Christmas festivities is not being felt in Monrovia, the most busiest place in Liberia around this season.

SOUNDING LIKE A prophet at a church service recently, President George Manneh Weah forewarned Liberians to stay at home and celebrate Christmas with family members by playing gospel songs and Christmas carols. That's not how we are used to celebrating Christmas!

THE PRESIDENT GAVE the caution around November as if he already knew what lies ahead, trying to lower anxiety and expectations among a 65 percent youthful population, which believes in him and gave its all to ensure his ascendancy to the Presidency about a year ago.

NOW THEY ARE walloping in the shadow of elections euphoria and reality of state governance amid serious economic challenges characterized by lack of genuine credit opportunity, skeptical private sector and growing corruption.

IN SUCH FRUSTRATION with little or no money in pocket, particularly for ordinary citizens, we are being told to stay at home with the family and share whatever little food that is available, while entertaining themselves with gospel songs and Christmas carols.

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY here is also suffering its share of the low economic activity for Christmas as a result of the shortage of cash on the market. Sales are stagnant with no fresh inventory coming in.

HOWEVER, MANY LIBERIANS are optimistic that next Christmas, 2019 would be better, that would enable them to enjoy the usual outdoor festivities associated with the annual holiday that is usually marked by sharing food and gifts, making visitations and expressing joy.

WE ALSO JOIN in the hope that next Christmas would truly bring the good tidings and merriment that Liberians are accustomed to, and rather than prophesying doom, President Weah would tell Liberians to go out and celebrate, because he promised to make life better for all citizens.

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COMMENTARY

By Shlomo Ben-Ami

Anti-Semitism Has a New Name

Beyond offering funding for ameliorative programs, George Soros uses his philanthropy to advance a vision of a truly free society governed by democratically accountable leaders. It is this dimension of Soros' work that has always made Jews a target of the far right.

MADRID - Over the centuries, Jews have been blamed for all sorts of ills in Christian and Muslim societies, from the Great Plague of the fourteenth century to the financial crashes of modern times. In 1903, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, produced by Imperial Russia's secret police, "exposed" a diabolical Jewish plot to achieve world domination by promoting liberalism - and became a pretext for anti-Semitism in Europe. These narratives endure to this day, only now they are being projected onto a single Jew: George Soros.

Right-wing, anti-globalist conspiracy theorists - a group that now includes US President Donald Trump - demonize Soros, a wealthy Jew who is deeply committed to liberal causes. The former Fox News host Bill O'Reilly described Soros in 2007 as "off-the-chart dangerous," and "an extremist who wants open borders, a one-world foreign policy, legalized drugs, euthanasia, and on and on." For the Texas-based Infowars founder Alex Jones, Soros is nothing less than "the head of the Jewish mafia" conspiring to derail Trump's presidency.

Such figures imagine the hidden hand of the "leftist billionaire" almost everywhere. When a caravan of desperate Central American asylum-seekers began walking all the way to the United States border before the recent US midterm elections, it was a ploy by Soros to win a Democratic majority in Congress. When survivors of February's mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, launched a gun-control campaign, Soros was supposedly bankrolling them. And it was Soros who arranged for Christine Blasey Ford to testify that Trump's pick for the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh, had sexually assaulted her.

Soros was also supposedly behind the sexual-assault survivors who confronted Senator Jeff Flake in an elevator to demand an investigation into the Kavanaugh accusations, just as he orchestrated the Women's March, a worldwide protest held the day after Trump's inauguration. He was even pulling the strings when the NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick knelt during the national anthem to protest police violence against black people.

But Soros' imaginary designs are hardly limited to the US, nor are they all recent. He has, his detractors declare, single-handedly destabilized governments in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, France, and the United Kingdom.

Soros is what the late historian Isaac Deutscher would call a "non-Jewish Jew" - one who sought ideas, inspiration, and fulfillment beyond the boundaries of Jewry, and yet continued to belong to the Jewish tradition. That stance often enables the non-Jewish Jew to make important contributions to science, culture, and politics.

This is certainly true of Soros, who is not just an enlightened philanthropist, but also a perceptive intellectual participating in today's most heated debates. Soros has proposed bold solutions to a wide range of problems, including Brexit, eurozone reform, migration policy, and the crisis of global capitalism.

A disciple of the philosopher Karl Popper, Soros has promoted open societies as the ultimate guarantee of freedom from tyranny and religious or ideological indoctrination, and as a powerful weapon against rising social inequality. A globalized community that neutralizes the influence of

nationalism, he rightly believes, is vital to enable us to confront existential threats like climate change and nuclear conflict.

So, beyond offering funding for ameliorative programs, Soros uses his philanthropy to advance a vision of a truly free society governed by democratically accountable leaders. For example, his foundations played an integral role spreading democratic ideals beyond the Iron Curtain, both before and after it fell. It is this dimension of Soros' work - together with the sheer fact that he is a wealthy Jewish financier - that so infuriates the far right, beginning in the very countries whose democratic transitions he once supported.

As Eastern Europe's democracies backslide politically, Soros has made donations to NGOs fighting corruption and authoritarianism. This has prompted Russian President Vladimir Putin to ban the Open Society Foundations from disbursing grants to Russian organizations and artists.

In Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who once received a scholarship from Soros to study at Oxford, has introduced the so-called Stop Soros law, which prohibits "promoting and supporting illegal migration." The law's vague wording means that the government could, in theory, arrest anyone who provides any kind of assistance to undocumented immigrants.

Perhaps the most pernicious manifestation of this anti-Soros hysteria, however, has occurred in Israel. Against the advice of his own ambassador to Hungary, who denounced Orbán's anti-Semitic attacks on Soros, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government has blamed Soros for "funding organizations that seek to deny Israel the right to defend itself," and introduced its own "Soros law" aimed at terminating that funding.

To be clear, Netanyahu's accusation is preposterous. Out of the \$1 billion the Open Society Foundations donate annually worldwide, some \$3 million went to Israeli and Palestinian NGOs. At the top of the list is the Palestinian Al-Quds University, whose rector, Sari Nusseibeh, created a peace plan jointly with Ami Ayalon, a former admiral and head of the Israel Security Agency (more widely known as Shin Bet). Another recipient, B'Tselem, is an Israeli group that monitors human-rights violations in the occupied territories.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu allows multi-million-dollar donations for settlement construction by right-wing donors like Sheldon Edelson. In fact, Netanyahu has often allied himself with whichever government or party, including far-right anti-Semites, is willing to support the repression of the occupied Palestinians. So what we are seeing is an Israeli prime minister team up with the ideological descendants of European fascists to attack a Holocaust survivor whose philanthropy fulfills the principle, called tikkun olam, that Jews must act in ways that improve or repair the world. Netanyahu's son, Yair, went so far as to post on his Facebook page a revolting anti-Semitic cartoon targeting Soros, with Nazi imagery.

Some ultra-wealthy individuals, such as Charles and David Koch, who control the second-largest privately owned company in the US, really do use their wealth in opaque and subversive ways. It is they, not Soros and his transparent Open Society Foundations, who represent the real threat to our politics and societies.

O-PED

By Javier Solana

Good Riddance to 2018

MADRID - Sadly, 2018 will not be remembered as a year of political and diplomatic success. Though the international order had already begun to erode in 2017, the global political environment became downright chaotic, combustible, and hostile this year. That is no coincidence, as these are perhaps the three adjectives that best describe the United States under President Donald Trump.

Since January 2018, when the Trump administration announced tariffs on imported solar panels and washing machines, the year has been marked by an escalating "trade war," waged primarily - but not exclusively - by the US against China. The ongoing tariff disputes have seriously undermined the World Trade Organization and deepened mutual distrust in Sino-American relations.

For its part, China this year eliminated presidential term limits, raising fears that President Xi Jinping's so-called new era will end the period of collective leadership ushered in by Deng Xiaoping's reforms, which were themselves a corrective to Mao's cult of personality. This move could also herald a further deviation from Deng's trademark foreign-policy restraint.

Similarly, Russian President Vladimir Putin was reelected in March, to no one's surprise. Under Putin, Russia has been re-emerging as a geopolitical force. And yet, its economy is essentially stagnant, owing in part to its excessive dependence on hydrocarbons. In the absence of growth, Putin has relied on foreign policy to shore up his domestic popularity.

For example, Putin's campaign press secretary welcomed the British government's response to the nerve-agent attack on Sergei and Yulia Skripal, because it may have mobilized Putin's supporters in the run-up to the presidential election. And the Kremlin's recent decision to blockade Ukrainian ports in the Sea of Azov may also have been designed to boost Putin's domestic approval rating, among other goals. The danger now is that both the US and Russia will cease to implement the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, posing a new and acute threat to Europe in particular.

Meanwhile, the Middle East has continued to serve as a battlefield for some of the world's most violent conflicts. Though the Islamic State (ISIS) has continued to lose ground, it is far from defeated - contrary to what Trump has claimed - and the death toll in Syria's civil war continues to climb. Likewise, the humanitarian calamity in Yemen has deepened, though negotiations that ran aground in 2016 have at least resumed and made some progress. In Afghanistan, what is widely regarded as the longest-running war in US history continues, and it is estimated that the Taliban now controls more territory than at any time since their government was overthrown in 2001.

Despite some recent developments in the aforementioned conflicts, the underpinnings of the Trump administration's general strategy in the Middle East remained intact in 2018. The US has reaffirmed its support for the axis of Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, which it regards as a bulwark against Iran. In May, the Trump administration moved the US embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. That same month, it abandoned the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and announced an abusive re-imposition of extraterritorial sanctions, which reflects the increasing weaponization of the US dollar.

Moreover, by siding with the Saudi government over his own intelligence agencies in the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October, Trump has made clear that opposing Iran and purchasing US arms is one of the quickest ways to his heart. The result of his broad approach to the Middle East has been to empower military hardliners throughout the region. In fact, Israel and Iran this year engaged in their first-ever direct military encounter.

Trump has also contributed, in one way or another, to the advance of populism around the world in 2018. In Latin America, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) and Brazilian President-elect Jair Bolsonaro have shown that "populism" can encompass diverse ideologies. While both claim to speak for "the people" against "the elites," the leftist AMLO was elected partly as a rebuke to Trump, whereas Bolsonaro embraces a Trump-like brand of right-wing nationalism, and enjoys the support of many Brazilian elites.

The Russian philosopher Aleksandr Dugin, often regarded as one of the Kremlin's main ideologues, argues that "populism should unite right-wing values with socialism, social justice, and anti-capitalism." This "integral populism," he believes, is perfectly illustrated by Italy's current governing coalition, which comprises the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the nationalist League party.

In October, Italy's government instigated a conflict with the European Union (which has fortunately subsided) by proposing a budget that defied EU fiscal rules. Italy's leaders justified their policies in the name of an outdated interpretation of "sovereignty," one similar to that of the United Kingdom's Brexiters, whose haphazardness has left the UK's future shrouded in uncertainty.

There were a few positive developments in 2018. Certainly, the easing of tensions between the US and North Korea, and the even deeper rapprochement between North and South Korea, should be welcomed. Much credit belongs to South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who used the occasion of the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang to reach out to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Trump's subsequent turn toward diplomacy - which led to his historic summit with Kim - should also be applauded, though his administration has yet to achieve anything more than symbolic progress toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The result of the US midterm elections was also good news. Democratic control of the House of Representatives means that, from January 2019, there will be more checks on Trump's policies. And there have been welcome developments in the Republican-controlled Senate, where a recent resolution condemning Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for the murder of Khashoggi, and another to end US support for the Saudi campaign in Yemen, passed with bipartisan support.

In Europe, the prospects for 2019 will depend primarily on three factors: Brexit, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron's push for EU reform, and the European Parliament election in May. In each case, one hopes that the supporters of democracy, the rule of law, European integration, and multilateralism will prevail.

Those who oppose these principles have had a rather good year. But they would be mistaken to think that those who uphold them have lost the will - and the ability - to cultivate a spirit of cooperation and harmony.

OPINION

By Jan-Werner Mueller

Reviving Civil Disobedience

PRINCETON - With populism and authoritarianism on the rise around the world, there has been considerable talk of "resistance," especially in the United States. A rather broad term, resistance could refer to everything from supporting opposition candidates to the life-threatening work of those who went underground to sabotage Nazi occupations during World War II. Such vagueness is helpful, if one wants to appeal to as many citizens as possible; but it can also cloud one's thinking when weighing how best to achieve concrete goals.

As it happens, there is a more precise alternative to "resistance" that is rarely mentioned nowadays: civil disobedience. In theory, civil disobedience should be an effective weapon against populists. But, in practice, it faces two formidable challenges. First, there is a widespread misunderstanding of what civil disobedience actually entails. And, second, changes in the media landscape have made it harder to convey the message of civil disobedience to a broad and diverse audience.

The American philosopher John Rawls offered the classic definition of civil disobedience in the early 1970s. Simply put, it means overt law-breaking, but in a conscientious, nonviolent manner aimed at persuading fellow citizens that a law ought to be changed because it is unjust. In Rawls's formulation, those who commit acts of civil disobedience should be prepared to accept the penalties for doing so.

Today, even protests that do not break any laws are often decried as "uncivil" or too "divisive" for an already polarized society. When citizens confronted politicians during US Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings, they were derided as a "mob." Even fellow liberals have admonished the Black Lives Matter movement for being too aggressive. And the noisy demonstrators who have gathered in Budapest to protest against Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's increasingly authoritarian government have been dismissed as "liberal anarchists." In each case, the "civil" in civil disobedience has been conflated with civility, as in politeness or general respectability.

For his part, Rawls was adamant that any law-breaking be undertaken "within the limits of fidelity to the law." He was echoing Martin Luther King, Jr., who argued that one who breaks the law in the name of civil disobedience "is in reality expressing the very highest respect for the law," by highlighting its fundamental injustice in such a way as not to foreclose on future cooperation with one's fellow citizens. Thus, King believed that, "one who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, [...] and with a willingness to accept the penalty."

That invocation of love should not be taken to mean that civil disobedience must be non-confrontational. A highly sanitized and sentimental historical accounting of the 1950s and 1960s might seem to suggest that the civil-rights movement succeeded merely by appealing to arch-American political principles of freedom and equality. In reality, part of the movement's strategy was to seek out confrontations with police and defenders of white supremacy. These clashes generated images of white brutality that made at least some whites reconsider their unconditional defense of "law and order" under Jim Crow.

In a recent study of protest movements spanning more than a century, social scientists Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan show that tough but nonviolent confrontation has been twice as likely as violent alternatives to bring about its stated goals. According to their data, sustained participation by a mere 3.5% of a population can be enough to achieve fundamental political change.

Yet the history of the US civil-rights movement also points to a novel problem in our age. Rawls, King, and other defenders of civil disobedience took it for granted that the message - an appeal to principles of justice - would reach a majority of citizens undistorted. But today, the public spheres in many countries have become so fragmented and partisan that King's idea of "national opinion" now seems nonsensical.

As a recent groundbreaking study by three Harvard University scholars shows, the US has become home to a deeply insular "right-wing media ecosystem" in which all "news" is immediately reframed to confirm the identity of right-leaning citizens. And in semi-authoritarian contexts like Orbán's Hungary, media are now completely dominated by government-friendly actors. Under such conditions, most appeals to what Rawls called a "public sense of justice" will be sidelined, severely distorted, or silenced altogether.

Accordingly, potential practitioners of civil disobedience should not allow themselves to be caught in a trap of politeness and respectability. When opposition politicians recently disrupted the proceedings of the Hungarian parliament by blocking access to the speaker's podium and heckling Orbán to his face, they were accused of attempting a putsch. In fact, they were merely shining a spotlight on the fact that the national assembly is no longer a normal representative body passing legitimate laws.

Still, aspiring disobeyers will have to account for the increasingly fragmented and polluted nature of the public sphere. Sometimes, that will mean engaging fellow citizens directly on the street, in the marketplace, or even through door-to-door canvassing. In other situations, it will mean live-streaming acts of civil disobedience and hoping that authoritarians' brutal methods will be exposed to a large enough audience through social media. And on still other occasions, it will mean pushing for structural changes, such as a return to the Fairness Doctrine by broadcasters in the US.

Civil disobedience would certainly be more effective in a less distorted media landscape. But it still represents one of the most effective forms of democratic "resistance" available.

Pres. Weah cautions Cabinet officials to ignite ties with their Neighbours

-As he sends McGill with huge donations to Gbarpolu as "Thank You" and Christmas celebration.

President George Manneh Weah has called on cabinet officials to ignite good and friendly ties with their respective counties of origin if the impact of the Pro-poor government is to be felt.

President Weah said it is about time to move away from the old order of governance when people, who were given power by the ordinary citizens, felt they were elite or superior, failing to return to them in order to engender the spirit of oneness.

Mr. Weah stressed that as President of the Republic of Liberia, he will not be able to go to every county or visit every community, so he relies on any of his officials living in those communities to bridge that gap between him and the people by living with them, void of arrogance.

The President's statement was echoed last weekend in Bopolu City, Gbarpolu County when the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill, visited the county to extend the President's greetings and present gifts to the citizens.

"Your President, our President George Weah has sent me here to tell you people thank you for voting the CDC to power and celebrate the Christmas with you. The President has told all his cabinet officials that they should be in reach of the citizens in their counties and communities. He said gone are the days when officials see themselves as Lords over those who elected a leadership that empower them", Minister McGill asserted.

He then presented a 10-tire truck load of assorted food items, including rice,



oil as well as four cows. Minister McGill also bequeathed each of the visiting women at the Bopolu City hall where the ceremony was held lappas as special Christmas gift.

In adherence to the mandate for cabinet officials to be in touch with their people, Minister McGill also gave 500,000 (half a million) for the instant launch of an interest-free loan scheme among market women in the county.

He assured the citizens that beginning 2019 upon completion of undergraduate studies, a student will be vetted from each of the six districts of Gbarpolu to be sent to China for master's studies in various disciplines.

Minister McGill further assured citizens of the county the main road from Tubmanbug to Bopolu will be paved with asphalt under the leadership of President Weah.

The young Minister of State for Presidential Affairs used the occasion to dispel rumors that he intends to seek a senatorial seat in 2020, noting that he should be grateful for the opportunity God has given him as Minister of State and would exercise the office for the benefit of his native Gbarpolu, and the Country at large.

"Let me make it clear here that I don't want to be senator like most of you have been hearing around. I am thankful to God for the current position the President has given me, so I must do everything possible to help you and the Liberian People. Fighting to be senator now will further divide the county, so let other people be given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the county", Minister McGill clarified.

Elders, youth and women groups as well as county based civil society organization heads, who graced the occasion, presented kola nuts, white chickens and certificates to Minister McGill in appreciation of his high-level farsightedness in seeking the interest of the County.

In response, the Minister called on the Gbarpolu Legislative Caucus to trash all differences and focus on the development of the county.

Also speaking at the Thank You and Christmas Celebration Gala, the head of the newest opposition batch that joined the CDC; former Unity Party stalwart Henry Fahnbulleh, expressed satisfaction and joy in the manner in which the CDC appreciates her own.

He said one of the issues that affected the Unity Party was the promotion and practices of elitisms that made several grass rooters to see themselves as strangers. Mr. Fahnbulleh said his accretion is evidenced by the current waves of empowerments done by President George Weah; giving partisans who struggled till victory the opportunity to discover their potentials and demonstrate the cause for which they had been in the wilderness. He said this approach of the CDC had made many in the opposition especially, in the former ruling Unity Party to sway their support toward the CDC.

During the program, the former commissioner for Gbarmah district, Siafa Konneh, stood through in the hall with poster above shoulder that had inscriptions "Hon. McGill, Please Intervene. We need a United Caucus, a Caucus Leadership, and County Council Sitting for Bopolu Speedy development."

According to several of the speakers including elders, women and youth groups and county-based civil society organizations, members of the County Caucus have been heavily divided with many blaming it on power struggle.

County Superintendent J.Saah Keyah also alluded to the Caucus' fracas, which he noted it has made it very difficult for the county to project or implement any development because there has been no county sitting.

Minister McGill, who has been mediating in the current situation said, it would be very difficult for the county to experience development if those who the citizens elected to seek their interest, are at loggerheads.

The program climaxed with a football match between "Friends of McGill" and the County youth that saw a 2-1 victory in favor of the "Friends of McGill."



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

W/African leaders conclude 54th summit in Abuja

West African leaders have concluded the 54th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with a 59-Count Final Communique.

Several presidents from the ECOWAS region and other high-level officials representing some respective presidents restated their strong commitment to peace and security at the end-of-year Summit that held in Abuja, Nigeria on December 22, 2018, a release from the Liberian Embassy in Abuja says.

According to the release, Liberia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gbezohngar Milton Findley represented the President President George Manneh Weah.

Minister Findley was accompanied by the Liberian Ambassador to Nigeria, Professor Al-Hassan Conteh, who is also Liberia's Permanent Representative to ECOWAS.

The opening ceremony of the Summit witnessed opening remarks from the Nigerian Head of State and Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou and the Special Representative of



West African leaders at the Summit

the United Nations Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas.

Declaring the summit open, President Buhari maintained that the gathering is a clear testimony of the continued collective resolve and commitment of the leaders to the effective integration of the West African region, the release adds.

Applauding the significant progress made by ECOWAS in the recent past, particularly in the areas of political governance, peace and security as well as economic and social fields, President Buhari said the achievements, "have positioned ECOWAS as an example of a regional

economic community on our continent"

He paid special tribute to Presidents Nana Akuffo-Addo and Alpha Conde of Ghana and Guinea respectively who as ECOWAS facilitators in the resolution of the Togolese political crisis, have been tireless in the search for its peaceful settlement.

Welcoming the successful elections in Sierra Leone and Mali in 2018, President Buhari noted the electoral support given to some countries, and said the Authority has also acted pro-actively to neutralise potential conflicts through preventive diplomacy before they exploded.

He then recommitted his personal support towards the

electoral process expected to take place in Nigeria in February, 2019 where he himself will be the incumbent

presidential candidate.

The Chair of the Authority of ECOWAS however noted that despite the positive strides, ECOWAS is still confronted by several challenges in the economic, governance, peace, security and humanitarian fields.

For his part, the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Mr. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou in his opening remarks told regional leaders and guests that his team has been working to strengthen and accelerate the implementation of Community ECOWAS' programmes and projects in the different fields.

Attributing the continuous growth of ECOWAS to positive leadership over the years, President Brou disclosed that 2018 has witnessed economic

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Welcome To The New World

Local contractors urged to form partnership

The President-elect of the Liberian Engineering Society, Thomas Gonkerwon, wants Liberian construction contractors to form partnership for the growth of the industry.

Addressing the 2018 General Assembly of the Association of Liberian Construction Contractors

recently in Paynesville, outside Monrovia, Mr. Gonkerwon stressed that partnership would enable them have access to much needed logistics for effective implementation of construction contracts.

He notes that such partnership would also enable local contractors to strengthen

funding support and professionally compete with foreign contractors.

While underscoring the need for government to accord them necessary support, he challenged the new leadership and members of the Association to carry out their duties with a high sense of credibility and integrity at all times.

Also speaking at the assembly, the President of the Association of Liberian Construction Contractors Sackie G. Johnson, praised the partnership between ALCC and GIZ, a German international development agency.

Mr. Johnson, who described the partnership as not only unprecedented and mutually rewarding, named capacity building for local contractors, mass public awareness and education on activities of the ALCC nationwide as some of the gains made in the partnership with GIZ.

He also spoke of cooperation and collaboration with the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Public Works and ALCC,

disclosing that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will shortly be signed between the ALCC and the Ministry of Public Works for the benefit of Liberian construction contractors across the Country.

He stressed the need for local contractors to demonstrate commitment, dedication, trust and confidence in the execution of their professional duties.

According to him, ALCC has decentralized its activities nationwide with the appointment of coordinators in all 15 counties of Liberia, including setting up five clusters.

He said the initiatives have

enhanced relationship between county authorities and the Association that has led to cordial ties with project awarding institutions in both the public and private sectors.

Mr. Johnson also made reference to the MOU signed between ALCC and Gray Construction Company, an international entity aimed at addressing the logistical and capacity development constraints the Association faces.

At the same time, he disclosed that 126 tradesman have been recruited by ALCC to develop their capacities as part of efforts in the reconstruction of Liberia.

Editing by Jonathan Browne



#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

PUL condemns hostilities against journalists

The Press Union of Liberia is concerned about reinforced hostilities against the media from within the power cycle of President George M. Weah.

On Wednesday, 19 December 2018, Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel D. Tweah vowed to “weaponize” government’s base so as to make it capable to deal with what he described as “mistruth and falsehood in the media.”

“We’ll weaponize through the case to go and deal with mistruths and falsehoods in the media,” the Minister told ‘militants’ of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change at an event which scores of members of the former ruling Unity Party defected to the now governing CDC.

Such posture and rallying of young fanatics put journalists at Frontpage Africa at risks and is entirely a big step to downgrade media favorability in the public, the PUL stressed.

The threat is a second



contained in official responses to an FPA investigation which speaks of a fraudster’s effort to robe the country of over US\$32 million being thwarted at last minute due to alarm from the international banking community. The paper is reporting multiple layers of corruption, fiscal mismanagement, kickbacks

and waste resulting in millions of dollars in losses from the Liberian government coffers in just the first year of the Coalition for Democratic Change government.

Presidential Affairs Minister, Nathaniel McGill had on Monday, December 17, 2018 threatened to jail Journalist Rodney Sieh.

Nathaniel McGill: “I think Rodney Sieh, the press and the FrontPage Africa is a criminal

entity bent on tarnishing the good reputation of people... if it is proven that I motorized the payment, I’m going to resign from the government but if it is not proven, Rodney Sieh will go to jail because I will not allow people to tarnish my reputation. I worked for my reputation.”

In the wake of the latest all out combustible official department against the media in Liberia, the Press Union of Liberia is reminding President Weah of his commitment to uphold civil liberties including respect for the free press.

The PUL is calling on President Weah to advise his assistants to end their inflammatory comments and actions against the media because these negative energies undercut the country’s democratic gains.

Liberians unhappy over containers’ movements

By Emmanuel Mondaye

There are growing concerns among ordinary Liberians over the continued movements of heavy containers at densely populated market places where they go for business transactions especially in these festive seasons.

Like many other countries around the world, Liberia is observing Christmas season, and many ordinary people use this time to purchase auctioned goods that are often found to be expensive after the festive seasons.

But in spite of the multitude of people that converge at market places either to buy or sell goods, there are concerns

that police here are not preventing the movements of containers at populated places to avoid accidents.

The police could not be reached immediately.

A resident of Gbarnga, Bong County who travelled to Monrovia on a shopping spree, Mr. Robinson Sherman Doe says it was unrealistic for the police to allow the movement of heavy container trucks at populated locations such as Redlight, Waterside, Duala and other places.

Mr. Doe complains about the grave threat and danger it poses to the lives of pedestrians when these containers are not controlled

by the police.

According to Mr. Doe, he was awaiting commercial car to go to Redlight, Paynesville on the night of 22 December when a 40ft container appeared drove in the midst of dozens of sellers and bystanders.

Mr. Doe says some people fled for their lives as the truck driver appeared to struggle to drive through the area.

He observes that the truck had challenges to drive through the area freely because the street was still park.

Also speaking with this paper, Lucia Dennis, a dealer



LIBERIAN PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY

Starts on page 10

Apparently, the company was losing some of its workforces migrating to Fernando Po for better earnings and benefits.

Coleman was born in Kentucky, United States. He came to Liberia and was first a carpenter. Then he joined the True Whig Party, worked in various capacities and later became vice president to Joseph Cheeseman, who died in office. Coleman completed Cheeseman’s term and ran successfully for two terms on his own. Perhaps he missed politics during retirement. He came out and ran for the presidency as the candidate for the People’s Party in 1901, 1903, and 1905, but lost. He died in Clay-Ashland, Liberia. His son, Samuel David Coleman, attempted to follow in his footsteps. David later joined the broke-away Independent True Whig Party as it’s vice standard bearer in 1955, after working in the Tubman government as secretary of the interior. But he was implicated in the “Plot That Failed” incident. He was killed with his son John Coleman in a shootout with the soldiers at the family farm in Bomi County.

King’s and Yancy’s fall from power led Secretary of State Edwin Barclay to become president. Like in their resignation, the country was faced with a constitutional crisis when Coleman and his vice president left power and Secretary of State Garretson Gibson was made the president. The Speaker of the House, Robert Marshall, who was to succeed Coleman, was passed over because his congressional colleagues found him unqualified.

Born of Barbados parentage, Barclay was born in Liberia and was a nephew of Arthur Barclay. The new president took revenge on those advocating for justice for King’s removal. Under President Edwin Barclay, the Liberia government expelled Didwho Twe, Professor Dr. F.W.M. Morias, and other advocates from the Liberian legislature. Liberians who testified on the Fernando Po investigation were punished; Kru chiefs were killed, and their villages were burned. The revenge caused the Sasstown war. Sasstown Chief Juah Nimley, the war hero, was arrested, paraded in the streets of Monrovia, and jailed. On the battlefield, he refused to surrender even when approached and begged by some educated men of his ethnicity. He wrote Lord Cecil of the League of Nations and spoke to international observers that he did not trust the Barclay government because “ in the end, we may be killed like the 75 chiefs who were invited to a “peace conference”.....”.

Barclay visited Nimley in prison, scores of people from other parts of the country came to see him, reporters interviewed him, he was called the “Wonderful Nimley”, the government could not kill him, for doing so would make him a martyr, and the international community would blame the government. So they released him, he became a free man. After months of exile in Gbarnga, he returned to Sasstown and later died there and became a legend. Barclay maintained an improve relation with the US and requested more assistance from President Franklin Roosevelt.

Lawrence Marinelli, an economist, in reviewing Liberian past economic condition, wrote.

When foreign funds became more readily available, the Liberian Government was distrustful. All capital was kept out, in the belief

TO BE CONT'D



Français

« J'ai prévenu Weah », le sénateur Teahjay

Le sénateur du comté de Sinoe, Jaye Milton Teahjay, est mécontent de la nomination du juge Joseph Nagbe comme juge associé de la Cour suprême du Libéria. Il l'a dit aux membres de son groupe ethnique à Monrovia. Il a révélé avoir mis en garde le président George Manneh Weah contre la nomination de cet homme qu'il accuse d'avoir les mains souillées, mais le président ne l'a pas écouté.

M. Teahjay a dit avoir rencontré le président Weah face à face pour le prévenir contre la nomination du juge Nagbe, parce qu'il "n'a pas les mains propres". « Cet individu ne devrait pas siéger à la Cour suprême du Libéria », a-t-il dit avant d'ajouter : « J'ai averti Weah de ne pas le nommer, car cela détruirait la Cour suprême et ce que j'ai dit se concrétise dans le cas de ce qui s'est passé lors de l'élection partielle de Sinoe ». Avant sa nomination par le président, M. Nagbe était sénateur du comté de Sinoe.

M. Sentor Teahjay, ancien



es. Weah

Justice Nagbe

Sen. Teah

surintendant de Sinoe, a exprimé sa frustration récemment à Monrovia, lors d'une cérémonie de collecte de fonds et d'investiture des responsables élus de Juarzon United Citizens Association (JUCA), une organisation identitaire de l'ethnie Sarpo

dans le comté de Sinoe.

Les Sarpos et les Kru sont les tribus dominantes du comté de Sinoe, tandis que Juarzon est le deuxième district le plus ancien après Careyburg dans le comté de Montserrado à avoir obtenu le statut de district statutaire sous l'administration

du président William Richard Tolbert en 1972.

Joseph Slewro fut le premier représentant de Juarzon. Il avait remporté le siège en 1976 sous le régime de Tolbert. Slewro et Tolbert ont été tous deux tués au cours du coup d'État sanglant de 1980. M. Teahjay, qui a été élevé à Juarzon, a fait don de 30 000 dollars libériens. C'est sa contribution initiale à tout programme de développement qu'entreprendra JUCA dans le district.

Pour lui, les juges libériens doivent rester à l'écart de la politique, ce qui n'est pas le cas pour le juge Nagbe, car il aurait été vu en train de faire campagne pour un candidat

lors de la récente élection sénatoriale partielle qui a eu lieu dans le comté de Sinoe. Mais le New Dawn n'a pas vérifié de manière indépendante les allégations du sénateur Teahjay qui menace de saisir la cour de la CEDEAO. « Comment un juge qui a été vu en campagne peut-il présider aux questions électorales au niveau de la Cour suprême ? mais sachez-le, nous finirons par saisir la Cour de la CEDEAO à Abuja, au Nigéria. »

Le sénateur Teahjay a également expliqué que les anciens candidats Romeo Quiah et Othello Nagbe, respectivement du Parti du peuple uni (UPP) et de la Coalition pour le progrès du Libéria (CLP), ont été poignardés dans le dos lors des dernières élections sénatoriales par leurs propres gars « qui estiment que si ce ne sont pas eux, alors que ça ne soit personne ». « Avant le début de la campagne électorale, j'ai clairement dit que je soutenais et c'était Othello Nagbe, car il travaille avec moi depuis quelque temps déjà ; de même Roméo, qui était mon adjoint quand j'étais surintendant à Sinoe », a-t-il dit.

Le juge Joseph Nagbe, un ancien sénateur de Sinoe, a remplacé le juge Philip Z.A Banks, qui a atteint l'âge de la retraite de 70 ans en août 2017, mais qui a officiellement quitté la Cour suprême en octobre 2018.

Le fondateur du journal d'investigation FrontPageAfrica menacé de prison

Le ministre d'Etat aux Affaires présidentielles a menacé de prison le fondateur de FrontPageAfrica, premier journal d'investigation du pays, après la publication d'une enquête révélant des dépenses douteuses du gouvernement. Reporters sans frontières (RSF) demande au

Président George Weah de respecter ses engagements en faveur de la liberté de la presse et de la lutte contre la corruption en condamnant ces propos sans réserve.

Quelques heures seulement après la sortie d'une enquête publiée lundi 17 décembre par le très populaire quotidien

FrontPageAfrica (FPA), le ministre d'Etat aux Affaires présidentielles Nathaniel McGill, a affirmé que son fondateur Rodney Sieh "irait en prison" et que son journal qu'il considère comme "une entité criminelle" serait poursuivi en justice pour "avoir terni sa réputation".

Dans son enquête, FPA révèle des projets de dépenses douteux impliquant plusieurs ministères. Documents et photos à l'appui, le journal d'investigation rapporte notamment l'autorisation d'un paiement de 180 000 dollars vers une entreprise n'existant plus depuis 2003. Le ministre d'Etat aux Affaires présidentielles a démenti être à l'origine de ces dépenses mais son homologue des Finances, tout en dénonçant de "fausses informations", a reconnu que ce paiement était "toujours en cours".

"Aucun journaliste ne devrait craindre de représailles pour son travail d'enquête et d'information, souligne Arnaud Froger, responsable du bureau Afrique.

Articles traduits
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Les journalistes qui révèlent l'existence de telles pratiques sont des alliés pour la bonne gouvernance et la lutte contre la corruption dont le président George Weah avait fait des priorités dans son tout premier discours officiel en tant que Chef d'Etat. Un an après son élection, nous lui demandons de condamner ces propos sans réserve."

Des enquêtes qui dérangent Le 9 avril dernier, l'équipe entière du quotidien FrontpageAfrica avait été arrêtée et auditionnée par la Cour civile après la publication d'une annonce à l'origine d'une plainte en diffamation. Cette annonce avait été diffusée dans d'autres journaux mais seul FPA fait l'objet de poursuites dans cette affaire. Les plaignants, des proches du

parti au pouvoir, réclament 1,6 million d'euros de dommages et intérêts.

Depuis le lancement de FrontPageAfrica en 2005, son fondateur Rodney Sieh a été inquiété à de multiples reprises par la justice à la suite d'enquêtes sur la corruption des élites et les dysfonctionnements de l'Etat. En 2013, son journal avait été interdit de parution pendant trois mois. Rodney Sieh avait lui-même passé quatre mois en détention après avoir été condamné à cinq mille années de prison pour ne pas avoir pu s'acquitter d'une amende d'un million d'euros pour diffamation. En 2014, RSF l'avait consacré "héros de l'information" pour l'ensemble de son travail de journaliste d'investigation.



Français

Éditorial

Les Libériens ont soif du « riz pour les pauvres »

Le désir ardent des Libériens de s'offrir au moins un sac « du riz pour les pauvres » importé récemment par le gouvernement est non seulement écœurant, mais risible.

Certains habitants de Monrovia se plaignent de ce que « le riz pour les pauvres » ne soit pas disponible dans les magasins, tandis que d'autres soupçonnent le gouvernement d'avoir emballé le lot de riz pour être vendu à un prix beaucoup plus élevé ultérieurement, et expriment la crainte que des hommes d'affaires peu scrupuleux ne s'en saisissent pour le faire passer clandestinement dans les pays voisins.

Mais voici la réalité évidente : de simples principes économiques élémentaires stipulent que lorsque l'offre ne répond pas à la demande, la pénurie intervient. Et c'est la réalité à laquelle nous sommes confrontés aujourd'hui. Aucun désir pour le riz pour les pauvres ne peut rien changer à court terme tant que l'offre reste constante à 80 000 sacs.

Honnêtement, que peuvent faire 80 000 sacs de riz à une population de 4,5 millions d'habitants ? Ce n'est rien qu'une goutte d'eau dans un seau, étant donné notre appétit insatiable pour le riz. Nous avons appris que les sacs de riz ont été répartis entre les différents marchés. Mais cela ne répondra pas non plus à la demande actuelle.

Le gouvernement du Libéria a déclaré avoir établi un partenariat avec un importateur privé, TRH Trading, qui travaille en collaboration avec le ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie pour importer du riz afin de le vendre à un prix beaucoup plus réduit, soit 10 dollars le sac, contre 17 dollars qui est prix actuel d'un sac de riz ordinaire. Cela signifie que pour qu'il y ait suffisamment de riz de 10 dollars américains le sac sur le marché libérien, le gouvernement et son partenaire auront besoin d'environ 4 millions de sacs de « riz pour les pauvres ».

Cependant, même si cela se faisait, cela n'aiderait en rien l'économie de ce pays, car nous maintenons constamment que l'agriculture est la seule stratégie durable pour nourrir notre population. Nous devons cultiver le riz à grande échelle et accorder de la valeur à la production locale par rapport au riz importé. Il n'y a pas d'autre stratégie viable.

L'exercice en cours n'est rien d'autre qu'une simple tentative d'obtenir des gains politiques, ce qui est à courte vue et insoutenable. Nous apprenons que le gouvernement Weah a l'intention de proposer aux villageois une partie du « riz pour les pauvres ». Ce serait la plus grande erreur ! En agissant ainsi, le gouvernement découragerait les agriculteurs assidus.

Au lieu d'importer du riz pour les villageois, nous appelons le ministère de l'Agriculture à mettre en œuvre son programme pour le secteur agricole, qui devrait désormais être une priorité.

Il est dommage qu'en tant que pays de 171 ans, nous, Libériens, nous bousculions pour acheter du riz étuvé brisé importé d'Inde. C'est trop triste ! Avec une population de 60% de jeunes, ce pays est mûr pour l'investissement agricole. Tout ce qu'il faut, c'est un leadership visionnaire.

Cependant, le gouvernement semble envoyer des signaux erronés qu'il regrettera plus tard, car s'il arrivait que le so-disant « riz pour les pauvres » ne soit plus disponible sur le marché, l'administration Weah pourrait recevoir la raclée qu'il tente d'éviter.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Shlomo Ben-Ami

L'antisémitisme prend un nouveau nom

MADRID - Au cours des siècles, dans les sociétés chrétiennes ou musulmanes, les juifs ont été accusés de toutes sortes de maux, de la Peste noire du XIVe siècle aux krachs financiers contemporains. En 1903, Le Protocole des sages de Sion, rédigé par la police secrète de la Russie tsariste, « révélait », un diabolique complot juif pour parvenir à la domination du monde en diffusant les idées libérales - et devenait un prétexte à l'antisémitisme en Europe. Ces discours ont toujours cours, mais aujourd'hui, ils se projettent sur une seule personne, un unique juif : George Soros.

Des théoriciens de la conspiration, antimondialistes de droite - un groupe qui comprend désormais le président des États-Unis Donald Trump - diabolisent Soros, un juif riche, fermement engagé dans la défense des causes libérales. Bill O'Reilly, ancien présentateur de la chaîne de télévision Fox News qualifiait Soros, en 2007, de « dangereux, au-delà de toute mesure » et d'« extrémiste, partisan de l'ouverture des frontières, d'une politique étrangère mondiale, de la légalisation des drogues, de l'euthanasie, et ainsi de suite ». Pour le Texan Alex Jones, fondateur du site web conspirationniste Infowars, Soros n'est rien moins que « le chef de la mafia juive », conspirant pour faire échouer la présidence Trump.

Ces gens-là imaginent presque partout la main cachée du « milliardaire gauchiste ». Lorsqu'une caravane de demandeurs d'asile désespérés s'est mise en marche depuis l'Amérique centrale vers la frontière des États-Unis, avant les récentes élections américaines de mi-mandat, il ne pouvait s'agir que d'un coup monté par Soros pour que les démocrates regagnent la majorité au Congrès. Lorsque les rescapés d'une fusillade à la Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School de Parkland, en Floride, ont lancé une campagne en faveur du contrôle des armes à feu, c'était Soros, encore lui, qui les finançait. Et c'est aussi Soros, bien sûr, qui a organisé le témoignage de Christine Blasey Ford devant le Sénat, où elle a accusé publiquement Brett Kavanaugh, le juge choisi par Trump afin de pourvoir un poste vacant à la Cour suprême, de l'avoir sexuellement agressée.

Soros était même derrière les rescapées d'agressions sexuelles qui ont pris à parti le sénateur Jeff Flake dans un ascenseur, exigeant une enquête sur les accusations dont Kavanaugh était l'objet, tout comme il avait orchestré la marche des femmes, manifestation d'ampleur mondiale, qui s'est déroulée le lendemain de la prestation de serment de Trump. Et qui tirait les ficelles lorsque le quaterback de la National Football League Colin Kaepernick, pour protester contre les violences faites aux noirs, mit un genou en terre alors que retentissait, avant un match, l'hymne américain ? George Soros, bien sûr.

Non seulement les plans imaginaires de Soros ne sauraient se limiter aux États-Unis, mais ils ne datent pas d'aujourd'hui. Il a déstabilisé, aux dires de ses détracteurs, les gouvernements malais, thaïlandais, indonésien, japonais, russe, français et britannique.

Soros est ce que l'historien Isaac Deutscher aurait nommé un « juif non-juif » - quelqu'un qui a cherché des sources d'inspiration et de pensée, qui a voulu se réaliser au-delà des frontières de la judéité, et qui néanmoins continue d'appartenir à la tradition juive. Une attitude qui permet souvent aux juifs non-juifs d'apporter de remarquables contributions à la science, à la culture ou à la politique.

On peut l'affirmer de Soros, qui n'est pas seulement un philanthrope éclairé, mais aussi un intellectuel perspicace, participant aux débats les plus enflammés de l'heure. Soros a proposé des solutions audacieuses à toute une série de problèmes, allant du Brexit à la réforme de la zone euro, de la politique migratoire à la crise du capitalisme mondial.

Disciple du philosophe Karl Popper, Soros a porté la cause des sociétés ouvertes, qui sont à ses yeux les ultimes garants de la liberté contre la tyrannie ou l'endoctrinement idéologique et constituent une arme puissante contre le creusement des inégalités sociales. Une communauté mondialisée, capable de neutraliser l'influence du nationalisme, pense-t-il à juste titre, nous

est indispensable pour répondre aux menaces des changements climatiques et aux risques de conflit nucléaire.

Ainsi Soros, non content de financer des programmes altruistes, met-il son action philanthropique au service de ses conceptions en faveur d'une société véritablement ouverte, gouvernée par des dirigeants démocratiquement responsables. Ses fondations ont joué un rôle important dans la diffusion des idéaux démocratiques au-delà du rideau de fer, avant et après qu'il est tombé. C'est cette dimension de l'œuvre de Soros - combinée au simple fait qu'il est un riche financier juif - qui déchaîne la colère de l'extrême-droite, et d'abord dans les pays mêmes où il a autrefois soutenu la transition démocratique.

Tandis que les démocraties d'Europe orientale retombaient dans leurs errements politiques, Soros a effectué des dons à des ONG combattant la corruption et l'autoritarisme. C'est ce qui a poussé le président russe Vladimir Poutine à interdire aux fondations Open Society de soutenir les organisations ou les artistes russes.

En Hongrie, le Premier ministre Viktor Orbán, qui bénéficia dans sa jeunesse d'une bourse Soros pour suivre ses études à Oxford, a fait adopter une loi, dite « Stop-Soros », qui interdit « le soutien et l'aide à l'immigration illégale ». Les termes de la loi sont si vagues que le gouvernement peut, en théorie, arrêter quiconque fournit une assistance à des immigrants sans papiers.

Et pourtant, c'est peut-être en Israël que s'est développée l'expression la plus pernicieuse de cette hystérie tournée contre Soros. Contre l'avis de son propre ambassadeur en Hongrie, qui a dénoncé les attaques antisémites d'Orbán à l'égard de Soros, le gouvernement du Premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahu a accusé Soros de « financer des organisations cherchant à contester le droit d'Israël de se défendre » et déposé sa propre « loi Soros » pour interdire ces financements.

À vrai dire, l'accusation de Netanyahu est absurde. Sur le milliard de dollars que donnent chaque année dans le monde les fondations Open Society, environ trois millions vont à des ONG israéliennes et palestiniennes. En tête de liste figure l'université palestinienne Al-Qods, dont le président, Sari Nusseibeh, est l'initiateur d'un plan de paix, conçu avec Ami Ayalon, amiral à la retraite et ancien chef de l'Agence de sécurité d'Israël (plus communément nommée Shin Beth) et ami de longue date de Nusseibeh. B'Tselem, autre bénéficiaire, est un groupe israélien d'information sur les violations des droits de l'homme dans les territoires occupés.

Pendant ce temps, Netanyahu autorise des dons de plusieurs millions de dollars pour la construction de logements dans les colonies, effectués par des donateurs d'extrême-droite comme Sheldon Adelson. À la vérité, Netanyahu a souvent conditionné ses alliances, que ce soit avec des gouvernements ou des partis, au soutien à sa politique de répression contre les Palestiniens occupés. Nous voyons donc un Premier ministre israélien faire front commun avec les héritiers idéologiques des fascistes européens pour attaquer un rescapé de la Shoah, dont l'action philanthropique répond au principe du tikkun olam, que les juifs doivent mettre en œuvre afin d'améliorer ou de « réparer » le monde. Ya'ir, fils aîné de Netanyahu, est allé jusqu'à publier sur sa page Facebook une révoltante caricature antisémite visant Soros, reprenant l'imagerie nazie.

Certaines personnalités extrêmement riches, comme Charles et David Koch, qui contrôlent la deuxième entreprise à capitaux privés des États-Unis, utilisent leur fortune de façon réellement opaque et subversive. Ce sont eux, et non Soros et ses fondations Open Society, qui représentent la véritable menace contre notre vie politique et nos sociétés.

Traduit de l'anglais par François Boisivon

Shlomo Ben-Ami, ancien ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, est vice-président du Centre international de Tolède pour la paix. Il est l'auteur de Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy

FEATURE ARTICLE

LIBERIAN PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY AND THE GEORGE WEAH PRESIDENCY: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC CONDITION

By *Dagbayonoh Kiah Nyanfore II*

History is important to the growth and development of a country. Presidential history tells us the political behaviors and policies of past and present presidents in their dealing with national issues and crisis. Current heads of state can learn from the past and lead their administrations to success.

This article attempts to review some of Liberian past presidents and the policies they implemented in resolving a major economic crisis. The goal is to see how the George Weah presidency can learn from history in dealing with the present economic condition. The paper is aware of its limitation and of the fact that the Weah presidency is new, and a review now of the administration would be unfair. However, an initial look at the current policies would and can provide us a glance of what could happen.

CURRENT CONDITION

President George Weah Coalition for Democratic Change came into power with an overwhelming support of the Liberian people. The people expected a change in their living conditions. The previous Unity Party led-government of Madame Ellen Sirleaf, while is credited for helping maintain the peace, has for twelve years failed the Liberian people in bettering their lives. The economy was in a shamble, the education system was "a mess", the agriculture was ignored, and health and road conditions were undeveloped. Ebola, for instance, exposed the backwardness of the health system.

In the few months of the Weah administration, the economic condition continues to exacerbate. The prices of basic commodities have increased. For example, a half bag (25 KGS) of rice, Liberian staple food, has gone up from 1900 LD (Liberian Dollar) to 2200 LD; a 10-liters of cooking oil from 1550 LD to 1800 LD. Gasoline is up from 485 to 560 in one month, from June to July this year.



Moreover, the rate of the US dollar has increased while the Liberian dollar has depreciated about 50% from December 2017 to January 2018, according to government estimates. This has created a chilling and alarming effect in the Liberian market. Opponents, detractors, even some earlier supporters of the ruling party have criticized the Weah administration. Others, however, have called for calm and patience. "Weah means well, the administration needs time, and things will be fine", they say.

PAST PRESIDENTS: WHAT DID THEY DO?

Past Liberian presidents approached economic crisis differently. Since Liberia's independence in 1847, the country had had the problem in improving economic condition and in meeting national development agenda. Foreign nations were reluctant in giving Liberia loans, due in part to the behaviors of the Liberian government. Some scholars suggest that the attitudes of the settler ruling elite contributed to the under-development, pointing out that the settlers initially failed to engage in agriculture and to include the rest of the Liberian people in the national development and administration. Even Jehudi Ashmun, the key representative of the American Colonization Society which transported to and settled American freed Black slaves in Liberia, threatened to resign and leave Liberia in frustration with the settlers' refusal to engage in agriculture but desire to acquire land and become masters like their former owners. The settlers used the Congos from the Niger-Congo Delta and African native Liberians to do their farming. This behavior was embarrassing and disappointing, given the fact that the former slaves were cotton farmers on their White masters' plantation in America.

Few years after independence, Liberians controlled their

economy as darker-skinned settlers engaged in shipping and other commerce. Coffee, rice, and palm oils were major export commodities. Liberian coffee, which at that time was considered the best in the world and was introduced in Brazil, was later monopolized by the Latin American country. Also, the palm oil market was controlled by British traders. This reduced Liberian exports and the national treasury. By the 1870s, the settlers abandoned trading and engaged in politics forming the True Whig Party which put Edward Roye into the presidency previously dominated by lighter skinned settlers; mulattos, children of slave masters.

From 1874, the party controlled politics and the presidency of Liberia. With a focus on politics, the ruling elite depended on borrowing from foreign nations and local taxation from the natives for revenue. The country economy started declining.

Arthur Barclay, who became president in 1904, inherited a broken economy. He was born in Barbados. His administration operated under the policy of "internal development". Like today, export was down. "Conditions worsened, as the cost of imports was far greater than the income generated by exports of coffee, rice, palm oil, sugarcane, and timber". To come back the situation, he attempted several methods, including extending citizenships to the majority native population. He tried to borrow foreign loans to meet national development. The granting of citizenship was done to enhance local taxation and stop foreign criticism of discrimination of natives. However, he was unsuccessful.

After Barclay, Daniel Howard became president in 1912. The economic hardship was passed over to his administration. Things got more difficult. The government was unable to meet payroll. The enactment and enforcement of the port of entry law became

unattainable. Under this law, the government taxed local and foreign traders for conducting business at coastal ports. The Kru, in particular, protested this enactment on the ground that the government was imposing taxation without representation. The Kru, by 1912, had complained previously to the Barclay administration about the unjust killing of their chiefs in cold blood in Sinoe County by a powerful senator without justice. The government protected the senator. This impunity along with the enactment led to the Kru revolt of 1915 -1916 during the Daniel Howard presidency. His military reaction to the resistance brought the massacre and execution of 72 Kru chiefs in front of their people in 1915. But the brutality did not stop the problem and either solve the economic decline.

Howard tried to improve the condition by granting the French government permission to build a cable station in Liberia and it led to the military blockade of the country by Germany. Consequently, with the support of the United States and other allied nations, Liberia declared war on Germany. The move was risky in that Germany was Liberia's major traders and investors. About 75% of Liberia's trade was with Germany. Although Liberia lost the revenue, confiscation of German properties and assets helped the national coffer. Yet the money was inadequate, despite receiving the Liberty Loans for participation in the war. Howard appealed to the US for a loan, which was not provided before leaving office in 1920.

Charles B. King succeeded Howard in 1920. Born of Creole Sierra Leonean paternal parentage, King held many important positions like previous presidents. His first vice

president was Henry Toe Wesley, a Grebo from Maryland County. Toe Wesley, other called him Too-Wesley, was the first native to come this high in the settler controlled government. Under King, Liberia met her most embarrassing and difficult period. The country was facing hardship; World War I had just ended; the world economy had declined, and Liberia needed resources. King continued Howard's appeal to the US for a loan. While US President Woodrow Wilson was sympathetic to the Liberian cause, the US Senate rejected Liberia's request for a \$5 million loan.

Liberia recorded the most fraudulent election in world history, making The Guinness Books of Records. In the 1927 election, King won over Thomas Faulkner of the People's Party with total votes of about 243,000 out of less than 15,000 registered voters for the election. Faulkner received 9,000 votes. Faulkner madly protested to no avail. King won his third term with his second vice president, Allen Yancy, a former soldier and gun repairer also from Maryland County. The administration urgently needed capital for development.

This need resulted in the coming of the Firestone Company to Liberia in 1926 and to the plantation of the Firestone Rubber in Liberia in 1928. Firestone, a US company, gave Liberia a \$5 million loan at 7% interest. The money was to repay other foreign loans and to meet domestic obligations. To get the loan, Liberia leased Firestone one million acres land for 99 years at 6 cents per acre. Sadly, the company was given the authority over Liberia's revenue until the loan was paid. When Liberia missed a payment, Firestone requested the US government to send its gunboat to take charge. On the other hand, Firestone provided a financial opportunity to government officials becoming absentee

private rubber farmers. The Liberian farm owners employed local unskilled workers on their farms in an owner-servant relation. But at the same time, the government stopped the unionization of rubber workers to protect its interest. Thus while foreign finance came to the country, the general living condition of the Liberian people remained unchanged. Moreover, the Liberian government was unhappy with foreign intervention in the country's domestic affairs, though it needed foreign capital. King and Vice President Allen Yancy were forced to resign for engaging in forced labor and enslavement of native Liberians in Fernando Po, a Spanish colony in Africa. Fernando Po plantation needed laborers. King and Yancy received a commission for the recruitment of workers. They also were charged pocketing insurance benefits for Liberian workers died on the plantation.

King's removal was good news to Faulkner, who saw the disgrace as a payback for his unfair election loss. It met the liking of King's other political enemies, including supporters of William Coleman who was forced to resign in 1900 as president of Liberia after the killing, execution-style, of chiefs who were invited to a peace conference. The chiefs, about 75, came from various tribes; the Gola, Vai, Kpelle, and Mandingo. King, Daniel Howard, Arthur Barclay, and Garretson Gibson had campaigned against Coleman for his positive interior policy and therefore were happy that he resigned. Unfortunately, Coleman resigned just as the time his Vice President Jacob Ross died. Economically, Firestone felt relief and was glad for King's removal. The company saw the recruitment of workers to Fernando Po plantation as a threat to Firestone's manpower and possible labor force.

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LoneStar MTN shares Christmas gifts at orphanages

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia's leading telecommunication giant LoneStar Cell MTN put smiles on the faces of scores of less fortunate kids at three orphanages with the distribution of Christmas gifts on 21 December in Monrovia and surroundings.

LoneStar MTN staff led by the head of Mobile Money Department Atty. Massa Mayson - Dennis shared festive season gifts with orphans at the Antoinette Tubman Cheshire in Sinkor and extend the gesture at Brass for Africa - Liberia at GSA Road in Paynesville and Love a Child Orphanage at VOA Community along the Roberts International Airport (RIA) Highway.

Donations at the orphanages included food, toys, electronics, generator, educational and sporting materials, among others.

The company indicated its passion about less fortunate people, as Mobile Money Team members played games, danced with orphans at Brass for Africa - Liberia and Love a Child orphanages.

As part of activities to entertain kids at these orphanages, Liberian comedian Angel Michael performed at each of the homes during the donations and was live during performances for followers on social media.

Presenting the gifts on behalf of LoneStar Cell MTN, Atty. Massa Mayson - Dennis



indicated that the company is passionate about making lives brighter.

She says they do this by giving back support to those in need, and this Christmas season, the company through its Mobile Money Department is supporting three organizations to ensure a bright and cherished festive period for the less fortunate.

According to her, it's a yearly program that LoneStar MTN started in 2017 December, beginning first with the Antoinette Tubman Cheshire Home in Sinkor.

Presenting the gifts, Atty. Dennis expressed LoneStar Cell MTN's season greetings to the orphanages and also thanked the board, management and staff of MTN for giving Mobile Money Department the platform to identify with less fortunate folks in December.

"And we are very excited to

celebrate this with you," she told recipients at the orphanages.

Earlier in opening remarks, Mobile Money Channel and Development Specialist Mr. William Saysay indicated that

the gesture is not just LoneStar Cell MTN's corporate social responsibility, but it's more of a human nature of identifying with people that are in need.

The orphanages expressed appreciation to LoneStar Cell

MTN for the donation, and wished more blessings upon the company.

Antoinette Tubman Cheshire Supervisor Mr. Jonah Y. Dolakeh says the orphanage looks out to see people in the society to be a blessing to the orphans.

According to him the orphanage takes care of people with multiple disabilities and many of them were abandoned by their parents.

He expresses thanks to LoneStar Cell MTN for all the donations, especially the pampers because eight of the twelve residents at the orphanage use pampers on a daily basis.

Mr. Dolakeh says the orphanage is very grateful also for the generator donated because they have been in darkness since the meter for their power line was stolen.



Logan Town residents extol Pres. Weah

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Residents of Montserrado County district #15 extol President George Manneh Weah for being the first Liberian President to pave the Logan Town Broad Street road on Bushrod Island.

In an interview with this

paper, the residents, including males, females and youth, express delight that President Weah has fulfilled his campaign promise to the district.

The Logan Town Broad Street road stretches from Jamaica Road General Market to the main route to Logan

Town.

Ms. Caroline Harmon of the Logan Town Little White Chapel community; Jeffrey Kaboe and William D. Massaquoi of Vickey Spot community, respectively note that for decades inhabitants of the area have trekked on muddy route, but today, they can boast of a paved road that vehicles and motorcycles can ply on with ease.

According to them, the pavement of the road will enhance smooth transaction of goods and services, not only to residents but non-residents as well as, who on a daily basis, use the route whenever there is traffic congestion along the Logan Town Cinema route.

Meanwhile, a pro-democracy advocate, Jokai Myers, calls on the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) to demolish structures erected in the proximity of the road to provide space for the construction of sidewalk for pedestrians.

He notes that there is no

Liberians unhappy

Cont'd from page 7

of used clothes and Susan Watson of Redlight, Paynesville, explained how the movement of container trucks in their area has become a serious embarrassment for smaller vehicles and pedestrian.

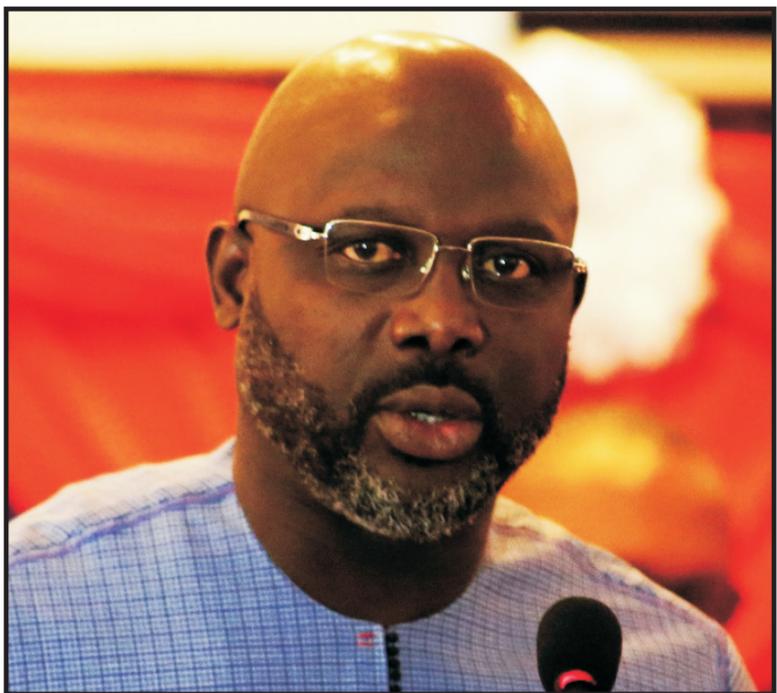
Susan and Lucia say unnecessary traffic congestions are created when these heavy trucks are parked in the street to off-load goods.

They recall how few years

back, container trucks killed innocent people and destroyed properties worth hundreds of dollars.

The urge the police to disallow container trucks from plying the streets in the day to prevent accidents, especially during the Christmas holiday.

They want government to restrict container trucks to travel around 2AM to prevent terrifying accidents during the holiday.--Edited by Winston



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sidewalk in the densely populated community which poses grave risk to residents especially, students, old folks and persons living with disabilities.

Jokai wants government to construct drainages on both sides of the road to avoid usual flooding during the rainy season that affect homes.

He also suggests the Ministry of Public Works

should erect speed breaks along the road to restrain the movement of speeding vehicles and prevent motor accidents.

The Logan Town road is among several community roads paved by the Weah administration, including Doe Community and other communities across Montserrado County. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Madrid create history with latest Club World Cup win



For the fourth time in five years, Real Madrid have claimed the FIFA Club World Cup and in doing so both made history and claimed bragging rights over their rivals Barcelona.

Luka Modric opened the scoring for the European Champions against Al Ain in the final, scoring his first-ever goal for the club in a tournament final to round out his spectacular 2018.

Marcos Llorente delivered his first-ever professional goal for the club to double their advantage while Sergio Ramos

also found the back of the net for Madrid to make it 3-0.

Tsukasa Shiotani scored late to get Al Ain back to 3-1 down, but an own goal by Yahia Nader sealed the 4-1 victory for Madrid.

Last May, Madrid became the first team to claim three consecutive modern-day Champions League crowns and now they have gone on to become the first ever to claim three straight Club World Cup or Intercontinental Cup.

The victory also saw the club become the first to take home four Club World Cup

titles, breaking the tie between themselves and their La Liga rivals Barcelona.

Barcelona had won in 2009, 2011 and 2015, while Madrid's first Club World Cup crown did not come until 2014, but they have now won the last three.

It continues an incredible run by Madrid in the competition, as they are now unbeaten in their 12 games in the competition, winning the last eight outscoring their opposition 22-5.

The trophy is the first silverware won by manager Santiago Solari, who replaced Julen Lopetegui at the helm in November.

Solari became the first Argentinian manager to win the tournament, with the previous five who managed a final, all in charge of South American sides, having lost.

It was also a good night for Ramos, who, along with Marcelo, pulled into third all-time in Madrid history with 20 titles won, behind Gento and Sanchis.

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Public Service Announcement

The New Dawn will take its usual annual break beginning December 24, 2018 to return on the newsstand immediately January 4, 2019. We thank our many loyal readers and subscribers for standing by us in 2018 despite a rather tough business climate. We look forward to a very peaceful and prosperous New Year. Merry Christmas.

The Management

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