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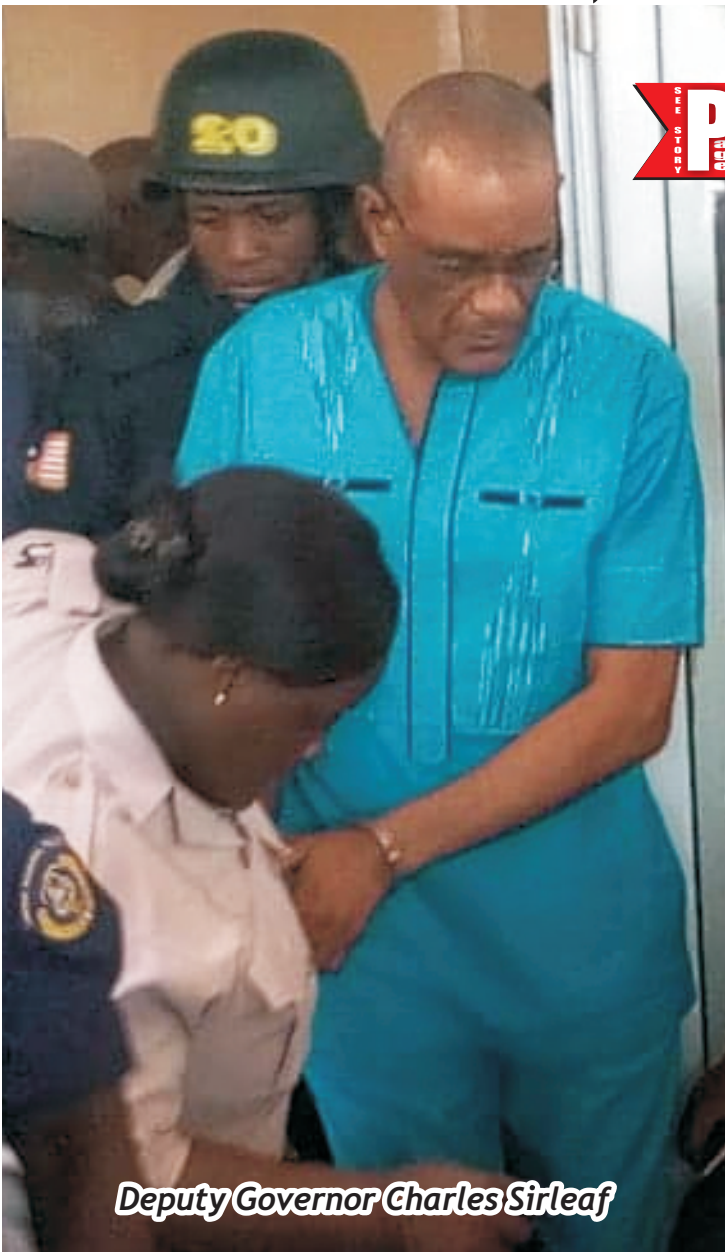
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Sirleaf, others locked-up!



Deputy Governor Charles Sirleaf



Ex-CBL Executive Governor Milton Weeks



Director of Banking Dorbor Hagba

P11



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Continental News

Ruto caught up in Echesa exit storm

Deputy President William Ruto was Saturday sucked into the row surrounding the sacking of Sports Cabinet Secretary Rashid Echesa on Friday.

Speaking in Matungu, Kakamega County in the presence of Mr Echesa, Majority Chief Whip in the National Assembly Benjamin Washiali claimed the sacking was aimed at weakening Mr Ruto's chances of clinching the presidency in 2022.

SIGNAL

"The sacking of Mr Echesa is not about the fight against corruption by President Kenyatta but a plot targeting Mr Ruto's 2022 presidential ambitions," said Mr Washiali.

He claimed that people who opposed the Jubilee government had turned out to be the biggest beneficiaries of the government largesse.

Mr Washiali dared the President and Mr Odinga to take away his Chief Whip position as well.

"Last year, Bungoma Senator Moses Wetang'ula was removed as the leader of the minority party in the Senate and his position given to his Siaya counterpart James Orengo. Today, Echesa has been fired and replaced by

Prof George Magoha from Nyanza. Doesn't this send a signal to Kenyans?" he posed. He claimed that Dr Ruto has been riding on the State appointment positions given to people from Western to sell his 2022 manifesto in the

region. Mr Echesa for the first time spoke about his sacking, saying he was still waiting to be told why he was relieved of his duties.

"I have not received official communication from State House concerning my dismissal even though I know the President has his own reasons for the decision he took," he said. Mr Echesa told mourners at a funeral in Marinda village in Matungu constituency that he learnt of his dismissal from the media.

TAINTED

"President Kenyatta had his own reasons to hire me in 2018 and today he has his reasons to remove me," he said. "But I am still waiting to be given the reasons I was sacked."

This was the first time the controversial former ODM national youth leader was appearing in public after his fall from grace following his surprise inclusion in the Cabinet last year despite the many questions surrounding his suitability to serve.

"I am not the first or the last minister in the world to have

been fired. I have joined the long list of many more ministers who have been sacked from their governments but this doesn't mean the end of life," he said.

He pointed out that Mr Ruto was sacked from the Cabinet in 2010 when he served as the minister of Agriculture during the Coalition government then headed by President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga but has since been elevated to the second highest position in the country. According to Mr Washiali, who addressed the mourners, everyone has a tainted life and Echesa was no exception. "But we cannot despise him because of a few issues surrounding his life. Even those who are sacking have a lot of stains in their lifestyles known to Kenyans," he said.

However, Leader of Majority in the National Assembly and Garissa Township MP Adan Duale termed Mr Washiali's claims as "very reckless" and "out of order". REUTER



Tanzania arrests 65 'witchdoctors' over killings

Police in Tanzania have arrested 65 "witchdoctors", or traditional healers, in connection with the ritual killing of at least 10 children.

The children were killed in January and many had body parts removed.

There is a belief among

some people in Tanzania, and neighbouring countries, that using human body parts in rituals can bring wealth and good luck.

The inspector general of police, Simon Sirro, has ordered that every traditional healer obtain a licence. "We have also requested other

institutions like religious leaders and politicians to help us," he added.

Ten children were murdered in the south-western Njombe region and an unknown number in the northern Simuyu region.

One of the children, Goodluck Mfugale, was just five years old when he was killed. His parents told the BBC their son had been robbed of his future. There is a particular belief that the body parts of people with albinism are especially potent in the rituals, leading to many killings.

However it is not clear if any of the 10 children known to have been killed had albinism.

Albinism is particularly prevalent in Tanzania with one in 1,400 affected, according to a 2006 BMC Public Health report. This compares with one in 20,000 in Western countries.

Activists on the continent say poverty contributes to the suspicion surrounding albinos and the belief their body parts can be sold for large sums of money. BBC



Albinism affects around one in every 1,400 Tanzanians, far higher than average

Two police officers killed in Waa crash



Police seal off roads near Kenya's Supreme Court in Nairobi

Two police officers have died while 10 passengers sustained injuries when a 14-seater matatu and a tuk tuk collided at Waa on the Likoni-Lunga Lunga highway, in Kwale County.

Matuga police boss Joel Chesire, who said that the two officers were heading to work on Monday morning when the accident occurred.

"The officers died on the spot when the tuk tuk they were travelling in was involved in an accident. The tuk tuk driver sustained serious injuries," he said. Mr Chesire said the police have launched investigations into the cause of the accident.

The bodies of the officers have been taken to Coast General Hospital mortuary. AFP

EDITORIAL

GoL should draw on international best practices

THE LONG-AWAITED FINDINGS from investigations into the alleged 'missing 16 billion' newly printed Liberian bank notes have been released to the public with no clear clue whether money did go missing. But one thing that seems clear from the investigators is that Liberia's fiscal and monetary management processes are beset by systemic long-standing vulnerabilities that need to be addressed.

IN FACT, THE USAID's report released by the United States Embassy near Monrovia draws the Government of Liberia's attention to the importance of drawing on international best practices in the conduct of economic affairs, including thoroughly documenting transactions to ensure credibility and transparency.

IN THE ENTIRE U.S. Embassy-sponsored investigation conducted by Kroll Associates Inc., findings point to systemic and procedural weaknesses at the Central Bank of Liberia that leaves room for compromise at nearly all levels.

NOW THAT THE findings are public, we believe while it is important to go after individuals who supervised and handled transactions concerning the printing of new banknotes that has plunged the economy into serious inflation and rapid depreciation of the Liberian dollar, the real challenge now is correcting the system.

THE LACK OF credibility and transparency in our governing system is systemic and should be addressed as a fundamental problem. Officials take pleasure in conducting the public business in secrecy, and they care less about being accountable.

WE APPLAUD KROLL Associates Inc. for doing an excellently independent job under the circumstances, where officials did everything in erasing trails of their corrupt deals, including withholding communications with external partners that could have helped with the investigation in many ways.

SURELY, THE REPORTED request or order from the CBL to Crane AB to print excess LRD2 billion plus which was infused in this little economy was not only devilish, but unpatriotic.

SOMETHING IS FUNDAMENTALLY wrong with us Liberians; the greed for personal wealth and power at the expense of the majority is killing this nation. Those involved should beware that stolen wealth is a curse that affects even a third generation.

WE CALL ON the current administration to work with international partners in putting in place best practices that would protect our finances and natural resources. However, we know that partners can do only their best and nothing else.

IT IS LEFT with Liberians themselves, to demonstrate love for country and fellow compatriots, by serving with transparency and accountability in whatever public offices or positions they occupy in order to leave behind high standards for those who would come after in order to preserve the Motherland.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

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COMMENTARY

By Andrea Peto

Intellectual Freedom and Its New Enemies

Recent measures by governments across ex-communist Europe have created an increasingly oppressive intellectual climate. And the de-democratization of higher education and of science in general are just the first step toward putting experts in the service of broader anti-democratic goals.

BUDAPEST - The World War I exhibit at the House of European History in Brussels offers visitors an arresting sight. In a simple yet dramatic gesture, the museum has placed the pistol used in the June 1914 assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in a glass-paneled cabinet right in the center of the room.

The tour guide informed our group that, following much heated debate, the museum had agreed to change the objects on display from time to time, so that different countries could exhibit their most precious historical relics. But when I peevishly remarked that the pistol Gavrilo Princip used in Sarajevo is irreplaceable, the curator replied that four European museums claim to have the authentic pistol on display.

As much as I respect and defend the plurality of European national traditions, only one pistol, not four, triggered the outbreak of World War I. We cannot be "pluralistic" and "inclusive" when historical facts dictate a single right answer to a question. And such questions must be decided by experts who have been rigorously educated in the history (and trained in the historical sources) of a given era, not by those with a political agenda.

Such a view may seem like common sense. But scientists, their institutions, and the legitimacy of scientific knowledge itself are under increasing threat in several European countries. Freely elected governments have recently blocked financial support for research projects with no official explanation (Bulgaria), removed educational programs from the list of accredited university subjects (Hungary), and even eliminated entire disciplines (Poland).²

These governments are disregarding centuries-old university traditions that were respected even during the communist era. But the powers behind such decisions are not interested in establishing historical or scientific facts. And they are ready to criticize, ridicule, or even threaten those who have already acquired such knowledge, or wish to do so.

We should reject the notion that the instigators of these attacks are ignorant and uneducated, and do not respect knowledge. Senior members of the Hungarian government that forced the Central European University, founded by the financier George Soros, to move to Vienna, and banned gender studies, had

previously received scholarships from Soros's Open Society Foundation to study in Oxford, New York, and elsewhere. These are highly educated people who know that knowledge is power, have a clear agenda, and are taking advantage of the fact that education in the European Union is the responsibility of national governments, not Brussels-based institutions.

These governments want to establish an educational system according to which the state alone decides which fields of research are necessary and socially important. In the long run, they probably also want the state to grant political loyalists the right to produce and transfer knowledge.

In other words, access to knowledge will cease to be a civil right. Political trustworthiness will determine who can teach and study what about a country and its past. This would mean the de-democratization of higher education and of science in general and putting "experts" in the service of broader anti-democratic goals. To prevent the latter, we must resist the former.

Democratic science policies build on the principle that access to science is a human right. Furthermore, they assume correctly that the knowledge produced through a democratic spirit of inquiry is of higher quality than that produced by someone who became an "expert" through political connections.

Many questions in the social sciences and humanities have straightforward answers. Ultimately, we should accept the verdicts of experts who have devoted their careers to a particular issue, and not those with political axes to grind.

We must, therefore, fight the disturbing trend of European governments giving themselves the right to decide scientific questions, and appointing loyal supporters to act as arbiters of truth. And we should question whether the new, ideologically-based governmental research institutes and universities in some of these countries have a rightful place in the network of European universities and research institutions.

Social scientists and other academics across ex-communist Europe are once again working in an increasingly oppressive intellectual climate. It must not be up to them alone to defend the democratic quest for knowledge against those who would decide by government decree which pistol was fired in Sarajevo.

OPINION

By Harold James

Brexit Is Hell

PRINCETON - European Council President Donald Tusk recently sparked controversy by saying there is a "special place in hell" for those who advocated Brexit "without a plan." To angry Brexiteers, the statement epitomizes the unfeeling, moralistic attitude of the European Union technocracy in Brussels. British Prime Minister Theresa May duly issued a statement rebuking Tusk for his remark.

But May's response scarcely matters. She has already extended her deadline for holding a "meaningful vote" on an EU-exit deal, effectively confirming that she will remain bereft of a plan until the final moments. At this rate, the delays and extensions of Brexit deadlines might well continue indefinitely.

Tusk's great offense was to offer a banal and universal truth. Whether you are in London, Washington, DC, or anywhere else, it is never advisable to enter into a negotiation without clear objectives and a sense of how the other side will respond. Hence, throughout history, statesmen such as Otto von Bismarck have regarded diplomacy as a chess game. As Bismarck well knew, it is not enough just to move pieces around; one must also anticipate what will come next.

As for the theological language in Tusk's indictment, one could argue that it is perfectly appropriate for politicians in a largely secularized Europe to speak of hell. After all, even many Christian clergy have moved beyond belief in an afterlife of perpetual damnation. And the Anglican Church abandoned the idea of purgatory back in the sixteenth century, with the Reformation.

In Christopher Marlowe's classic play *Doctor Faustus* (1592), the title character asks Mephistopheles what a demon is doing in his study instead of in hell. "Why, this is hell," replies Mephistopheles, "nor am I out of it." Equally all-encompassing was the atheist Jean-Paul Sartre's own conception: "Hell is other people."

What hell implies in a modern political context is open to debate, at least until we have a twenty-first-century Dante to offer a comprehensive eschatology and a new map to the Inferno. In view of former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's defense of Hillary Clinton's flawed 2016 presidential bid, for example, hell is the final destination for "women who don't help each other." Presumably, Albright did not mean that the 42% of women voters who backed Trump have a fiery future in store for them.

Meanwhile, some Italian journalists have alleged, erroneously, that even Pope Francis has dispensed with the notion of hell. In reality, he has put hell at the center of his vision of humanity. Francis reminds us that hell originally derived from a rebellious angel's arrogance, or superbia. A vice deeply embedded in the human psyche, arrogance is the act of telling God, "You take care of yourself because I'll take care of myself," Francis explained in 2015. Accordingly, "They don't send you to hell, you go there because you choose to be there."

Brexit represents precisely this course. If hell is thinking that you do not need others, and that you need only look out for yourself, then the Brexiteers are already there. Those who believe only in themselves see no need to negotiate, because they assume the other side will simply bend to their will.

But in international relations, the assumption that one can regulate everything by oneself creates a hell that others have to live in, too. Hell, in this sense, is what happens when people succumb to the lure of self-determination and "sovereignty," creating a self-perpetuating cycle of strained relationships and mutually destructive unilateralism. This version of hell tends to last quite a long time indeed, because each side has its own selective memory and wants to punish the other.

While the assertion of sovereignty seems to conjure endless new possibilities, as it clearly has for the Brexiteers, it actually constrains one's choices. Those who renounce treaties, for example, invite others to do the same, whereupon it becomes all the more difficult to forge any kind of agreement at all. And those who have convinced themselves that they can choose freely among endless unrealized opportunities tend to live in constant regret of what might have been. This is the trap laid by hubris.

Thus, like Tantalus forever grasping at the fruit that is just beyond his reach, the United Kingdom wants to pursue trade deals that its membership in the EU otherwise precludes. Left unsaid is what that would mean in practice. The UK could aim to maximize prosperity by pushing deregulation as far as possible. Yet to trade profitably with other countries or the EU, it would still have to meet their regulatory standards regarding safety, quality, and so forth. Moreover, outside the EU's regulatory framework, Britain's newfound freedom would also imply new responsibilities to introduce regulations protecting UK residents.

The real question, then, is whether escape is even possible. If May wanted to be bold, she could issue the following statement: "Brexit is a terrible mistake. The decision was reached after a campaign of lies and malign foreign influence, and it is obvious that its costs will far exceed its benefits. As such, my government has decided not to pursue it any further. Instead, we will commit to working with the EU to address British concerns and prepare for an unpredictable future."

Such a statement is of course impossible, because May has already paid the ferryman through her previous choices. What awaits her and the UK is more punishment. First, the dismal reality on the ground will be exposed, and it will stand in shocking contrast to what might have been. Then, someone will have to be held responsible. But assigning blame is a punishment in itself. In Dante's telling, the adulteress Francesca da Rimini spends the rest of eternity incessantly pinning the blame for her actions on everyone and everything but herself.

Brexit augurs a similar national fate. The debates in Westminster and Whitehall show no sign of ever ending, and it is becoming increasingly obvious why: Brexit is eternal damnation.

O-PED

By Kenneth Rogoff

Modern Monetary Nonsense

AMBRIDGE - Just as the US Federal Reserve seems to have beaten back blistering tweets from President Donald Trump, the next battle for central-bank independence is already unfolding. And this one could potentially destabilize the entire global financial system.

A number of leading US progressives, who may well be in power after the 2020 elections, advocate using the Fed's balance sheet as a cash cow to fund expansive new social programs, especially in view of current low inflation and interest rates. Prominent supporters of this idea, which is often referred to as "Modern Monetary Theory" (or MMT), include one of the Democratic Party's brightest new stars, congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Although their arguments have a grain of truth, they also rest on some fundamental misconceptions.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell could barely contain himself when asked to comment on this new progressive dogma. "The idea that deficits don't matter for countries that can borrow in their own currency I think is just wrong," Powell insisted in US Senate testimony last month. He added that US debt is already very high relative to GDP and, worse still, is rising significantly faster than it should.

Powell is absolutely right about the deficit idea, which is just nuts. The US is lucky that it can issue debt in dollars, but the printing press is not a panacea. If investors become more reluctant to hold a country's debt, they probably will not be too thrilled about holding its currency, either. If that country tries to dump a lot of it on the market, inflation will result. Even moving to a centrally planned economy (perhaps the goal for some MMT supporters) would not solve this problem.

On Powell's second point, that US debt is already high and rising too fast, there is far more room for debate. True, debt cannot rise faster than GDP forever, but it may do so for quite a while. Today's long-term, inflation-adjusted interest rates in the US are about half their 2010 level, far below what markets were predicting back then, and far below Fed and International Monetary Fund forecasts. At the same time, inflation has also been lower for longer than virtually any economic model would have predicted, given current robust US growth and very low unemployment.

What's more, despite being at the epicenter of the global financial crisis, the US dollar has become increasingly dominant in global trade and finance. For the moment, the world is quite content to absorb more dollar debt at remarkably low interest rates. How to exploit this increased US borrowing capacity is ultimately a political decision.

That said, it would be folly to assume that current favorable conditions will last forever, or to ignore the real risks faced by countries with high and rising debt. These include potentially more difficult risk-return tradeoffs in using fiscal policy to fight a financial crisis, respond to a large-scale natural disaster or pandemic, or mobilize for a physical conflict or cyberwar. As a great deal of empirical evidence has shown, nothing weighs on a country's long-term trend growth like being financially hamstrung in a crisis.

The right approach to balancing risk and reward is for the government to extend the maturity structure of its debt, borrowing long-term instead of short-term. This helps to stabilize debt-service costs if interest rates rise. And if things get really difficult, it is far easier to inflate down the value of captive long-term debt (provided it is not indexed to prices) than it is to inflate away short-term debt, which the government constantly has to refinance.

True, policymakers could again resort to financial repression, and force citizens to hold government debt at below-market interest rates, as an alternative way of reducing the debt burden. But this is a better option for Japan, where most debt is held domestically, than for the US, which depends heavily on foreign buyers.

Having the Fed issue short-term liabilities in order to buy long-term government debt turns policy 180 degrees in the wrong direction, because it shortens the maturity of US government debt that is held privately or by foreign governments. Contrary to widespread opinion, the US central bank is not an independent financial entity: the government owns it lock, stock, and barrel.

Unfortunately, the Fed itself is responsible for a good deal of the confusion surrounding the use of its balance sheet. In the years following the 2008 financial crisis, the Fed engaged in massive "quantitative easing" (QE), whereby it bought up very long-term government debt in exchange for bank reserves, and tried to convince the American public that this magically stimulated the economy. QE, when it consists simply of buying government bonds, is smoke and mirrors. The Fed's parent company, the US Treasury Department, could have accomplished much the same thing by issuing one-week debt, and the Fed would not have needed to intervene.

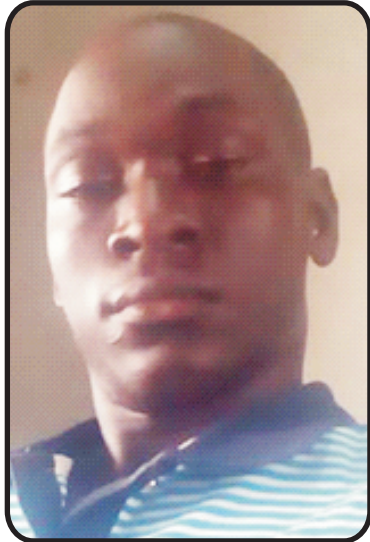
Perhaps all the nonsense about MMT will fade. But that's what people said about extreme versions of supply-side economics during Ronald Reagan's 1980 US presidential campaign. Misguided ideas may yet drag the issue of US central-bank independence to center stage, with unpredictable and potentially serious consequences. For those bored with the steady employment growth and low inflation of the past decade, things could soon become more exciting.

LIBERIANS DEBATE



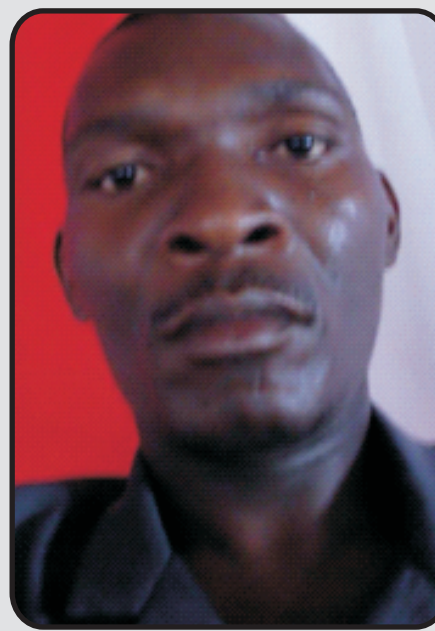
With Sally H. Gaye Cell#: 0886726282 Email:sh0770291004@gmail.com

Final report of the Presidential Investigation Team (PIT) has revealed that there is no LDR16 billion missing, but exposed a trail of discrepancies leading to the printing, shipment and delivery of the nation's banknotes. The New Dawn has been getting views from some Liberians in Monrovia on the report and its implication on the country's economy.



Chris Toe

“Even if the whole world investigates this LRD16bn issue and come out with a report, Liberians will not still be satisfied, as long President George Manneh Weah is not indicted; we know people like thoughts and intensions; shame on you. The American Embassy will not give credence to that. You're coming from America now to demonstrate, since demonstrating is your specialization. Do you understand my post? Investigation has been carried [out], report has been made, and the government is taking action, what more they want? Every times demonstration; we can't hear, just to bring instability and present our country ugly out there to other nations.”



Isaac Scott

“At least you're seeing the light in the tunnels, right direction and more will be followed. This is a tip in the iceberg; I am possibly sure the head of the past government has information as well. What a cruelty to public service to your country; your fellow citizens and shame to the world. If these guys have chance to sell Liberia, they would have done so. Hope they spend the rest of their lives in jail, all accounts, domestic and worldwide seized along with properties. Let the laws of the land take its course and hope this will deter future dishonest officials or face the same disgraceful consequences for being too greedy. Remember this, “When ground squirrel wants to die, it wants to come to town in search of patched peanuts. LRD16billion container missing out of site! What were they thinking off? The land of the free, the love of liberty brought us here, after being oppressed by our masters and not the love of corruptions.”

Edwina Twahn

“It is with contentment they arrested those two CBL executives, while Finance Minister Samuel Tweah enjoys privilege! Samuel Tweah should have been languishing behind bars by this time! Samuel Tweh took taxpayers' US\$25 million to New Kru town in the name of infusing [the money] into the economy; let Samuel Tweah be arrested to answer public questions and provide tangible proofs how the \$25 million was infused into the Liberian economy.”



Sandra Roberts

“While we appreciate the initial arrest of those involved in the alleged financial malpractices during the printing of the money, we wish to call on our government to deal with the reports indiscriminately and decisively. The reports show that the \$25m for the mop up was done without documentation to proof that the money was infused to former governor Milton Weeks, deputy bank governor for operation Charles Sirleaf and director on banking Mr. Dorbor Hagba deserved the charges of economic sabotage, theft of property and criminal facilitation... Let these perpetrators be prosecuted and taken to jail when found guilty...President Weah should be circumspect to fight corruption. I hope Dr. Weah will not be a direct replica of our former President Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who took the blame for some workers at the National Oil Company of Liberia or NOCAL.”



Amos Bah



“Let me firstly commend the investigative team for the finding around the ‘missing money’. Kudos to the national security for those arrested so far. It is time now for ‘the driver to beat it.’ I am watching and looking forward to more arrests. Secondly, I strongly agreed with the EFFL. The Impeachment proceeding should be halted because the impeachment is politically motivated and meant to witch-

hunt Associate Justice Ja'neh. Let me firstly appreciate the government and Liberia National Police for given a democratic space provided to the Economic Freedom Fighters of Liberia. The issue of the alleged sixteenth billion dollars missing is now a finished case and must be buried in its natural death in totality.”

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

CDC warns Ellen PUL lauds Pres. Weah

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) National Chairman Mulbah Morlu has issued a sharp warning to former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf over claims that he gathered information that Mrs. Sirleaf conducted a secret meeting against government efforts to prosecute alleged corrupt officials.

Mr. Morlu made the claim Monday, 4 March after the George Manneh Weah - led

she's meeting with select group of journalists today to influence negative coverage against government efforts to prosecute alleged corrupt CBL officials," Morlu alleges further.

The CDC Chairman warns that his advice for the former President and all Liberians is that the fight against corruption is a moral national responsibility that should galvanize collective support.

He argues that President Weah's decision to wield the anti-corruption axe is not

reporting against government is not only unpatriotic, but selfish and unlawful.

He suggests that former President Sirleaf has to be seen as supporting President Weah while he tries to contain the 'Vampire' that Mrs. Sirleaf once declared and had feared throughout her Presidency.

Mr. Morlu believes that Mrs. Sirleaf needs to retrospect the enormous respect and goodwill that President Weah has always shown her and refrain from attempting to undermine a patriotic anti-corruption effort being waged within the framework of the rule of law.

Morlu intimates that while it's her right to rise to the defense of her son as naturally expected, he urges the former President to do so through the court of law, not subterranean maneuvers that contravene collective will or violate laws.

"Frankly, I am proud as a Liberian citizen that finally, in my lifetime a President has demonstrated unwavering political will to fight the age-old monster called corruption. This is a victory for all of us, including former President Sirleaf," Morlu notes.

He says the CDC expects nothing less than her support, warning further that attempting to undermine a credible, popular, moral and legal necessity is a perpetual impossibility.

Morlu stresses that what is seen today is just a tip of the iceberg in the fight against corruption, saying the 'Vampire' will be legally contained and sent back to its dark and isolated abyss.

He warns against interference because "Liberia is a country of laws."--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



government arrested and detained three officials last week from the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), inclusive of Mrs. Sirleaf's son Charles E. Sirleaf for their alleged roles in Liberia's alleged 'missing 16 billions' saga.

"We're gathering facts that on last Friday, 1st March 2019, former President Ellen Sirleaf had a nighttime meeting at her home in efforts to undermine ongoing investigation in the CBL arrest," Morlu alleges.

"We're now confirming that

merely to fulfill a campaign promise, but it is based on the outcome of credible and unimpeachable investigative reports.

"President George M. Weah is doing what others failed to do in the past, and he has unprecedented public support as he cleans the mess and protects public trust," Morlu boasts.

The ruling party chair alleges that the former President's alleged effort to influence negative media

The Press Union of Liberia commends President George Manneh Weah for signing into law a bill which repeals some sections of the Penal Code of Liberia in an effort to decriminalize speech offenses and create a free media environment here.

President Weah on 31st May 2018 submitted a draft legislation, which at the time sought to amend Chapter 11 of the Penal Law of 1978, repealing Sections 11.11 on criminal libel against the President; 11.12 on Seditious and 11.14 on criminal malevolence, respectively.

According to a release, the Press Union of Liberia says it is exceedingly grateful to President George M. Weah for

Commission.

"We are happy that we have decriminalized speech offenses. This constitutional right must not be abused by journalists, media workers and other professionals but use in ways and manner that will contribute to nation building. We must at all times be cautious of our responsibilities to preserving our country's peace and serving all of humanity. Our joy today is packaged in the fact that the law is named

Kamara Abdullai Kamara Act of Press Freedom, in honor of the deceased immediate past President of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL)" the release notes.

The former president of the PUL used up his mandate as



Press Union of Liberia President, Charles Cuffey

the political will mustered to drive the passage of the bill in the legislature. "We are also grateful to all development partners and lovers of liberty, who supported this lawmaking initiative which is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen Liberia's growing democracy."

The release notes that the Constitution provides for Freedom of Speech and expression and a caution of an abuse thereof. The West African State is a signatory to the Table Mountain Declaration which demands that African countries abolish insult and criminal defamation law. Liberia also has a Freedom of Information Law (FOI) and the Independent Information

leader of the journalism community, advocating for the repeal of provisions of the Penal Law of Liberia, which hinder freedom of speech and independence of the media in Liberia.

Meanwhile, the Press Union of Liberia urges government agencies whose responsibilities fall in the realm of ongoing media reforms in the country to remain engaged to enable the formulation of an internationally acceptable regulatory regime for the media sector in Liberia.

Sen. Yallah launches loan program

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Bong County Senator Henry Willie Yallah has launched a five million dollars Village Saving Loan scheme in Gbarnga, Bong County.

The loan program will help local business people in the county to beef up their financial strength to do their businesses.

Many of these business people are said to have allegedly been denied loans by banking institutions and credit unions.

Our correspondent in the county says Sen. Yallah has



promised to provide LRD\$100,000,000.00 for the local business people from the

time of the launching of the program to December, targeting about 500 groups.

Sen. Yallah told beneficiaries of the loan program over the weekend that he has decided to venture into the program to help individuals to develop their lives and build their financial capacity.

He expresses optimism this will also help build Liberia's struggling economy.

Some of the beneficiaries extended commendation to the Bong County Senator and promised to improve their local businesses through his goodwill.

According to them, for too long they have been forgotten.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Deputy Speaker launches vocational program

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Deputy House Speaker Prince Kermue Moye has launched a vocational skills training program in Sinchue Electoral District #2, Bong County.

The vocational school facility is a US\$550,000.00 project funded by the World Bank through Rep. Moye.

The vocational skills training program is anticipated to help thousands of residents from across Bong County and will also help build Liberia's economy when utilized by beneficiaries.

Construction of the facility was done by the World Bank, while Deputy Speaker Moye pledges to take full responsibility of sponsoring programs or courses that will be offered at the school.

Some of the courses that will be offered include computer science, soap making, agriculture, carpentry, missionary and cosmetology, among others.

At the program, Rep. Moye provided one US\$1000.00 and promised to give additional support.

Speaking at the well-attended launching program over the weekend, Montserrado County District #3 Rep. Ceebee C.D. Barshell expressed happiness over the work of Mr. Moye, saying the vocational school will help



Deputy House Speaker Prince Kermue Moye

inhabitants of the District and the County by extension.

Serving as Guest Speaker, Rep. Barshell told the gathering that vocational skills are very important.

He stresses that if an individual has vocation skill, he or she becomes independent and also serves as an employer for others.

For his part, Bong County Sen. Henry Willie Yallah admonished the citizens to take advantage of the skill training programs which he believes will help put food on their tables.

Sen. Yallah made an initial

contribution of LRD\$30,000.00 to the vocational school.

Earlier, the administration of the school presented a budget of US\$4,650.00 to Mr. Moye for the first phase of the program.

Some of the direct beneficiaries of the program described Moye's gesture as a dawning of a new day in their lives. According to the beneficiaries, the program is important because it will break the yoke of poverty and the mindset of only depending on farming activities for survivability.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

Missing billion reports troubling

-IRRED

By Lewis S. Teh

The Institute for Research and Democratic Development or IRRED says the report released by USAID thru the United State Embassy in Liberia is troubling and worrisome for the country.

In a press release Monday, March 4, IREDD says it welcomes the redacted version of the independent review regarding allegation of the disappearance of LRD16 billion, as released last week.

"IREDD notes that the findings from the report are overwhelming, troubling and underscores the complete collapse of the country's financial and administrative institutional systems, processes and mechanism across the public management chain and extremely weak

released to the public.

Several officials of the Central Bank of Liberia or CBL, including Deputy Governor Charles Sirleaf, were arrested last week along with Dorbor Hagba, Director for Banking, hours after government released its findings into investigation on the alleged missing 16 billion banknotes. The officials have been taken to court and formally charged.

The final report of a scoping investigation initiated by the United States Agency of International Development upon request of the United States Embassy near Monrovia into the "missing 16 billion Liberian bank notes" reveals that excess LRD 1.944 billion was printed by Crane AB of Sweden and brought into Liberia in two tranches, characterized by discrepancies and inconsistencies.

#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#

MOT to launch waterway transportation

By Lewis S. Teh

The Ministry of Transport reveals plans to launch sea transportation in the country to boost transport here.

Siatta P. Harmon, says the department is one of the newly created departments (established in 2018) and since its establishment they have been working to ensure

Ms Harmon notes, Liberia is surrounded by water, and transportation poses serious constraint to citizens, adding that it was against such backdrop that the department thought it wise to work along with the ministry and the government at large to open waterway transportation.

"When this waterway transportation is launched, it will ease the tension on the transpiration sector mostly market women, and other that use rivers to migrate from one county to another", she adds.

Assistant Transport Minister for Administration and Insurance, Madam Nuwoe A.D. Scott, says International Women Day is set aside for women all around the world to celebrate their achievements, especially those hardworking women who sacrifice their lives in contributing to society.

Minister Scott says theme of this year's celebration is, "Gender Equality in Service Delivery", noting that the role of the Ministry of Transport is basically to deliver service to the public thru showcasing women working side by side



Minister Samuel Wlue

Speaking at celebration of the International Day of Women recently on behalf of the Rail and Waterway Department of the Ministry, Ms

waterway transport gets underway to ease transportation constraint citizens face across Liberia.

oversight public institutions."

IREDD says it takes note of the swift step by the government through the Liberia National Police to effect arrest of some officials of the Central Bank of Liberia and others who may be found culpable.

"We would like to urge the government to bring all those found culpable to face justice, and strongly cautions against any form of selective justice", IREDD adds.

Meanwhile, IREDD recommends to USAID and the Government of Liberia that in the spirit of doctrine of openness and on the [basis] of the exclusive rights of Liberians to know and right to information, full and un-redacted report should be

USAID hired an American private firm, Kroll Associates, Inc. to conduct a scoping report engagement to ascertain the basic facts of the alleged disappearance of new Liberian Dollar banknotes, and to determine to what extent a broader investigation would be required into the matter.

The investigation followed an official request from the Government of Liberia to the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, ECOWAS and other international partners to assist with investigation that had already begun by a Presidential Investigative Team commissioned by President George Manneh Weah.

Read The NewDawn Online Daily

with their male counterparts in delivering services to the public.

"Upon your arrival to our ministry, we have women who are delivering service in

various departments, including driving license, motor vehicle registration, among others".

Français

Trois dirigeants de la Banque centrale devant la justice après un audit assassin

Trois dirigeants de la Banque centrale du Liberia (CBL), placés en garde à vue après la publication d'un audit indépendant révélant les méthodes peu orthodoxes de l'institution monétaire et de nombreux dysfonctionnements internes, ont comparu hier lundi pour la première fois devant un juge de Monrovia.

Charles Sirleaf, fils de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2006-2018), qui a occupé de hautes fonctions à la CBL jusqu'à sa démission en août, et un autre dirigeant, Dorbor Hagba, ont été interpellés quelques heures après la publication jeudi de ce rapport, rédigé par le cabinet conseil américain Kroll Associates.

L'ancien gouverneur Milton Weeks, qui a démissionné après l'accession au pouvoir de George Weah en janvier 2018, s'est quant à lui rendu à la police vendredi, selon les médias locaux.

Les trois hommes, parmi les plus influents de ce pays pauvre d'Afrique de l'Ouest,

"vont certainement comparaître lundi devant un tribunal, parce c'est ce que dit la Constitution", a déclaré à l'AFP la source policière. Selon la loi libérienne, la durée de la garde à vue ne peut excéder 72 heures.

Ils pourraient être inculpés notamment de "sabotage économique" et de "vol", a affirmé le journal libérien Front Page Africa.

- "Rendez l'argent" -

Le document de 68 pages, consulté par l'AFP, contient une seule bonne nouvelle pour les finances du pays : non, un conteneur rempli de 15 milliards de dollars libériens (102 millions de dollars américains, 89 millions d'euros) imprimés à l'étranger n'a pas disparu entre son arrivée sur le territoire et les coffres de la Banque centrale, contrairement à ce

qu'affirmait une rumeur, à l'origine de l'enquête.

La polémique était née mi-2018 de déclarations du ministre de l'Information, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, indiquant que la nouvelle administration n'avait pas été informée de l'arrivée de ces billets par l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf.

Alors que des manifestants scandaient "Rendez l'argent des conteneurs", George Weah, élu sur un programme de lutte contre la pauvreté et la corruption, avait promis de faire la clarté sur cette affaire, avec l'aide du gouvernement américain.

Le tableau dressé par Kroll est accablant pour les banquiers centraux de ce pays pauvre d'Afrique de l'Ouest, ravagé par une guerre civile (1989-2003) qui a fait quelque 250.000 morts.

L'audit souligne l'existence de problèmes "à tous les niveaux du processus de contrôle des billets entrants et sortants de la CBL" sur la période étudiée (janvier 2016 - décembre 2018), qui correspond aux deux dernières années de la présidence de Mme Sirleaf et au début du mandat de George Weah.

- 'Formulaires écrits à la main' -

Dans le détail, il explique que la CBL a commandé en 2016 et 2017 - sans appel d'offres et sans l'aval préalable du Parlement - des nouveaux billets pour 15 milliards de dollars libériens

(LRD) à la société américaine Crane Currency, qui les a imprimés en Suède.

Si 15 milliards de dollars libériens ont bien été commandés, ce sont finalement 15,506 milliards qui ont été imprimés, livrés et payés, poursuit l'audit. Certains documents évoquent même un montant de 17,450 milliards, mais cela pourrait relever d'erreurs, souligne Kroll, qui juge d'une manière générale "inadéquante" la comptabilité de la banque.

Une tranche de 10 milliards de dollars libériens a en outre été injectée dans l'économie sans que les anciennes coupures ne soient retirées de la circulation, alors qu'une augmentation de la masse monétaire entraîne inéluctablement une hausse de l'inflation et une dévaluation de la monnaie.

Pour enrayer ces phénomènes apparus depuis deux ans au Liberia, George Weah a ordonné en juillet à la CBL le rachat de billets libériens pour 25 millions de dollars américains. Mais cette opération a été mise en oeuvre "sans stratégie clairement définie" par la Banque centrale, selon Kroll.

Enfin, le rapport souligne que le relevé des entrées et sorties des coffres de la Banque centrale à Monrovia se fait "sur des formulaires écrits à la main" et que la comptabilité de la CBL ne reflète pas la réalité de ses réserves. Par l'AFP.



Governor Charles Sirleaf

Ex-CBL Executive Governor Milton Weeks

Director of Bank Dorbor Hagba

Des manifestants prennent d'assaut le Capitole

Des manifestants ont pris d'assaut le palais de l'Assemblée nationale où se déroule le procès en destitution du juge Kabineh M. Ja'neh, juge associé de la cour suprême du Libéria. Ils dénoncent un procès politique et exigent son arrêt.

Une foule sous la bannière

des combattants de la liberté économique (EFFL) et la Coalition des organisations islamiques au Libéria a investi les locaux du parlement où s'étaient déployées quelques heures plutôt les forces de l'ordre.

Le juge Ja'neh fait face à une procédure de destitution pour inconduite présumée,

abus de pouvoir discrétionnaire, fraudes et corruption. L'une des affaires qui ont déclenché la procédure concerne un litige foncier qui opposait le juge à une citoyenne ordinaire du nom de Madame Annie Yancy Constance.

Le pouvoir législatif accuse Ja'neh d'abus de pouvoir et d'avoir usé de son influence en tant que juge adjoint pour obtenir une décision en sa faveur devant la Cour suprême afin de prendre possession de la terre.

Mais pour la défense, l'accusation selon laquelle leur client aurait manipulé la Cour suprême pour statuer en sa faveur dans l'affaire du conflit foncier remettrait en question la crédibilité même du juge président du tribunal, Korkpor, qui présidait la Cour suprême et avait signé le même jugement.

Le Président de la Cour suprême avait été demandé par la défense de se récuser du procès car lui aussi avait signé le jugement rendu dans l'affaire Mme Constance en faveur du juge Ja'neh et pour lequel il est aujourd'hui

poursuivi. Pour la défense, il s'agit là d'un conflit d'intérêts.

Mais le Juge en chef a rejeté de manière catégorique la requête. Il a fait valoir que l'article 43 de la Constitution lui donnait le droit de présider le procès en destitution lorsque le président de la république, le vice-président ou un juge associé de la cour suprême est jugé.

Les manifestants, dans une requête, ont demandé au Sénat libérien de mettre fin à la procédure de destitution du juge Ja'neh. Ils dénoncent un

procès politique et inconstitutionnel commandité par le régime de la Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC). Ils insistent sur la nécessité de protéger et de respecter la légalité.

Le sénateur du comté de Gbarpolu, Armah Jallah, a reçu la pétition au nom du Comité sénatorial sur les affaires judiciaires, après avoir dument remercié les manifestants pour le caractère pacifique de leurs démarches. Il a promis de présenter la pétition complète à la plénière qui devra agir en conséquence.



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Français

Éditorial

Le gouvernement doit adopter les meilleures pratiques internationales

Les conclusions tant attendues des enquêtes sur la disparition présumée des 16 milliards de dollars libériens nouvellement imprimés ont été rendues publiques. On n'est toutefois pas certain que de l'argent avait disparu. Cependant, les enquêteurs ont clairement fait savoir que le système de gestion fiscale et monétaire du Libéria est truffé de vulnérabilités systémiques qui ne datent pas d'aujourd'hui et auxquelles il convient de remédier.

En fait, le rapport de l'USAID publié par l'ambassade des États-Unis près de Monrovia attire l'attention du Gouvernement libérien sur l'importance de s'inspirer des meilleures pratiques internationales en matière de gestion économique, notamment en documentant minutieusement les transactions pour en assurer la crédibilité et la transparence.

Les conclusions de l'enquête autorisée par l'ambassade américaine et menée par Kroll Associates Inc. font apparaître dans l'ensemble des faiblesses systémiques et procédurales à la Banque centrale du Libéria, lesquelles faiblesses sont susceptibles de saper la transparence presque à tous les niveaux.

Maintenant que les conclusions sont publiques, nous pensons que certes il est important de s'attaquer aux personnes qui ont supervisé et géré les transactions concernant l'impression des nouveaux billets de banque qui ont plongé l'économie dans une inflation sérieuse et une dépréciation rapide du dollar libérien, mais le véritable défi consiste maintenant à corriger le système.

Le manque de crédibilité et de transparence dans notre système de gestion financière est systémique et devrait être traité comme un problème fondamental. Les fonctionnaires ont plaisir à mener les affaires publiques dans le secret et se soucient peu de rendre des comptes.

Nous félicitons Kroll Associates Inc. pour avoir fait un travail extrêmement indépendant dans cette affaire, où les fonctionnaires ont tout fait pour effacer les traces de leurs forfaitures en empêchant les communications avec des partenaires extérieurs afin de pouvoir contribuer à l'enquête de nombreuses manières.

Certes, l'impression d'un excédent de plus de 2 milliards de dollars libériens par Crane AB sur l'ordre de la banque centrale et qui ont été infusés dans cette petite économie était non seulement antipatriotique, mais aussi diabolique.

Il y a quelque chose qui ne va pas chez nous Libériens. L'avidité pour la richesse personnelle et le pouvoir aux dépens de la majorité tue cette nation. Les personnes impliquées doivent prendre garde car la richesse volée est une malédiction qui touche même la troisième génération.

Nous appelons l'administration actuelle à collaborer avec les partenaires internationaux pour mettre en place les meilleures pratiques permettant de protéger nos finances et nos ressources naturelles. Cependant, nous savons que les partenaires ne peuvent faire que de leur mieux et rien d'autre.

Il appartient aux Libériens eux-mêmes de manifester leur amour pour leur pays et pour leurs compatriotes, en servant avec transparence et responsabilité à tous les postes publics qu'ils occupent, afin de laisser un niveau élevé à ceux qui viendraient après afin de préserver la Patrie.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Andrea Peto

La liberté intellectuelle et ses nouveaux ennemis

BUDAPEST - L'exposition que consacre à la Première Guerre mondiale la Maison de l'histoire européenne, à Bruxelles, offre au visiteur une vision saisissante. En un geste aussi simple que spectaculaire, le musée présente, dans une vitrine disposée au centre de la salle, le pistolet utilisé en juin 1914 pour assassiner l'archiduc François-Ferdinand.

Après des débats enflammés, nous informe notre guide, le musée a accepté que les objets exposés « tournent » de temps à autre, pour que les différents pays puissent valoriser leurs plus précieuses reliques historiques. Mais lorsque je fais remarquer, quelque peu irritée, que le pistolet utilisé par Gavrilo Princip à Sarajevo ne peut lui aussi « tourner », le conservateur me réplique que la pièce authentique est revendiquée par quatre musées européens différents.

J'ai beau respecter et défendre la pluralité des traditions nationales européennes, c'est la gâchette d'un seul pistolet et non de quatre qui a déclenché la Première Guerre mondiale. Lorsque des faits historiques apportent une réponse unique à une question, le « pluralisme » et l'« inclusion » sont hors sujet. La réponse doit venir de spécialistes formés avec rigueur à l'histoire d'une époque déterminée (et familiers de ses sources), non des rédacteurs d'un programme politique.

Cela semble le pur bon sens. Mais les scientifiques, leurs institutions et la légitimité de la connaissance scientifique elle-même sont de plus en plus menacées dans plusieurs pays d'Europe. Des gouvernements procédant d'élections libres ont récemment bloqué (en Bulgarie) leur participation financière à des projets de recherche sans la moindre explication officielle, supprimé (en Hongrie) certains programmes de la liste des enseignements dispensés à l'université, voire éradiqué (en Pologne) des champs disciplinaires entiers.

Ces gouvernements méprisent des traditions universitaires pluriséculaires qui étaient respectées même durant l'ère communiste. Mais les pouvoirs qui sont à l'origine de ces décisions n'ont que faire d'établir des faits historiques ou scientifiques. Et ils sont prêts à vilipender, à moquer ou même à menacer ceux qui ont déjà acquis un tel savoir ou souhaitent l'acquérir.

Nous ne devrions pas croire que les instigateurs de ces attaques sont ignorants et dépourvus d'instruction, ni qu'ils ne respectent pas le savoir. Des membres de premier plan du gouvernement hongrois, qui a contraint l'université d'Europe centrale, fondée par le financier George Soros, à partir pour Vienne, et a interdit les études de genre, ont antérieurement bénéficié de bourses accordées par la fondation Open

Society de Soros, pour suivre leurs études à Oxford, à New York ou ailleurs. Ce sont des gens très instruits, qui savent parfaitement que le savoir, c'est le pouvoir, qui ont un programme précis et qui profitent du fait que l'enseignement, dans les pays de l'Union européenne est de la responsabilité des gouvernements nationaux et non des institutions établies à Bruxelles.

Ces gouvernements veulent mettre en place un système éducatif pour lequel l'État décide seul des champs de recherche nécessaires et socialement importants. À long terme, ils veulent probablement que l'État accorde aussi à ses thuriféraires le droit de produire et de transmettre le savoir.

Autrement dit, l'accès au savoir cessera d'être un droit civique. La fiabilité politique déterminera qui peut enseigner et étudier un pays et son passé. Cela signifierait un considérable retour en arrière par rapport à la démocratisation de l'enseignement supérieur et de la science en général, qu'accompagnerait la mise en place d'« experts » au service d'objectifs anti-démocratiques généralisés. Pour empêcher la seconde, nous devons résister au premier.

Les politiques scientifiques démocratiques s'appuient sur le principe que l'accès à la science est un droit humain. En outre, elles affirment, à juste titre, que les connaissances produites dans un esprit démocratique de recherche sont de meilleure qualité que celles qui le seraient par un « expert » ainsi désigné en raison de ses relations politiques.

Nombre de questions des sciences sociales et des humanités acceptent des réponses dépourvues d'ambiguïté. Fondamentalement, nous devons reconnaître les conclusions de spécialistes qui ont consacré leur carrière à un problème spécifique et non d'experts cherchant à faire valoir une ligne politique.

Nous devons, par conséquent, combattre la tendance perturbatrice de certains gouvernements européens à s'attribuer le droit de décider des questions scientifiques et à faire de leurs partisans les arbitres de la vérité. Nous devrions aussi nous demander si les nouveaux instituts de recherche et les nouvelles universités, établissements régis dans certains de ces pays par des critères idéologiques, ont bien leur place dans le réseau d'universités et d'institutions de recherche européennes.

Les chercheurs en sciences sociales et d'autres disciplines de l'ancienne Europe communiste travaillent une fois encore dans un climat intellectuel chaque jour plus oppressant. Nous ne devons pas les laisser défendre seuls la quête démocratique du savoir contre ceux qui voudraient décider par décret quelle est l'arme qui tira le coup de feu de Sarajevo.

PERSPECTIVES

With Bai M. Gbala, Sr.
July 18, 2018

Public Policy . Economics . Democratic Politics . Political/Economic Decentralization . Public Dishonesty . Dual Citizenship

Democratic Governance and National Development in Post-war Liberia: A Lesson for Nigeria

By: Josephus Moses Gray

Assistant Professor of International Relations

Kindly permit me to start my presentation regarding the theme of today's forum: "Democratic Governance and National Development in Post-war Liberia--A Lesson for Nigeria," with the renowned quotes of three former Presidents of Liberia, Ghana and Tanzania. In the remarkable words of Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia: "Africa is not poor; it is poorly managed" saying that conflicts and crises have affected the standard practices of governance and establishment of sustainable economic growth on the African continent. She recalled that: "Although some countries have recovered from civil wars, governance remains a challenge on the continent. This speech presents the highlights of the speech delivered at the Forum held at the University of Liberia Capitol Hill Campus, February 26, 2019.

In the famed words of ex-president of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings (2008), "most of our peoples have already noticed that the new system of governance on the African continent is being severely tested by the lack of good faith in certain leaders and administrations". While the notable words of former of Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere (1998), "Africa needs to improve governance everywhere in Africa in order to enable our people to build real freedom and real development for themselves and their countries" He said: "Nation's constitution must provide methods by which the people can, without recourse to violence, control the government which emerges in accordance with it and even specify the means for its own amendment".

The comparative analysis of the statements of the three illustrious African presidents, have shown that Liberia is no exception to both internal and external factors that pose serious threat to the practice of democratic governance on the continent; but at the same time Liberia is recognized for practicing democratic governance as the pioneer and touch-bearer of democracy on the African continent evidence by the 187 elections that brought the father of Liberian nation, Joseph Jenkins Roberts to power. While to some extent, the Liberian democracy has experienced numerous interruptions, purposely due to internal and external political elements.

Before continuing further, let me recognize the presence of Dr. Ophelia Inez Weeks, President of the University of Liberia, Vice Presidents of University of Liberia, Directors of the University of Liberia Graduate and Professional Studies Programs, Deans and Heads of Departments of the University of Liberia, Maj/Gen) Prince C. Johnson, III, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Head and Members of Delegation of the Nigeria Defense College, Student Representatives of University of Liberia, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am grateful to the University of Liberia for the honor to join distinguished professors and other individuals of high academic and professional disciplines. I graciously accepted the invitation not only because I felt that such an occasion should always be cherished. This is a cause that is so dear to my heart. I've been looking forward to this exceptional forum. I am therefore humbled by the opportunity to share some of my thoughts and convictions regarding the theme of today's forum: Democratic Governance and National Development in Liberia. A Lesson for Nigeria

Our presence here today bears a very great responsibility because we are representing our beloved countries, our histories, the ideals and with high demands and determination, our beloved and great institutions: The University of Liberia and the National Defense College of Nigeria. This paper consists of my reflection and convictions regarding the serious attention that is being placed currently on the practice of democratic governance in the country, as a result on the impact of government on national development.

Liberia, the first independence Republic in Africa, and Second black Independence Republic in the world, has strongly committed itself to promoting democratic



The Author

governance on the continent. While the concept of democracy can be traced to the ancient Greeks and precisely the city-state of Athens in the fifth century B.C, democracy in Africa can also be traced to Liberia.

Before I go any further, let me recall that the First Elections that took place on the African Continent was held in Liberia, on 21 September 1847; Joseph Jenkins Roberts was elected as the first President upon Independence in 1847. Since then, Liberia has been judged by the world to be pioneer of democracy in Africa.

Also Liberia is the first country in Africa for Newspaper to appear on the Newsstand or to be published. The Liberian Herald first appeared on the newsstand on February 16, 1826. Again, Liberia is the first country in Africa to allow women to vote in a democratic election, while in 2005 Liberia made history to elect a woman's as president.

Unfortunately, two separated elections in Liberia have been recorded in the pages of history. In the 1927 Election, out of 15,000 registered voters, the incumbent Charles D. B. King garnered 243,000 votes against his opponent who received 9,000 valued votes. While in the 1975 Election, President Tolbert received 100% of the valid votes. Another unfortunately incident in the nation's democratic system took place in the year 1870, the undemocratic removal of former President Edward J. Roye through mob action from office.

Notwithstanding, the nation has undertaken several tangible interventions that have resulted to boosting national capacity and political wills to avoid potential crises to multi-party democracy in the country. However, democratic governance and national development can be achieved by instituting the right policy at the right time by the right people at the right place through the right institutions.

Summary of the Speech

My thoughts and convictions on the theme of the forum are being presented from the perspective of a power-point for the broad participation of all while a comparative analysis of the subject highlights, as concerns; the core concepts and principles of Democratic Governance and National Development in Liberia; it goes further to discuss Liberian political system and gives the overviews of the current Liberian electoral situation. Among other issues the presentation covers include the concept of democracy being practiced in Liberia and its intricacies, role of elections in the Liberian democratic society, while the significance of the rule of law and justice, human rights, and concludes with a summary of the government "pro-poor agenda", which is a new working development tool of the Liberian government and ends with recommendations.

Brief background of Liberian political system:

For instance, Article 1 of the Liberian constitution provides that "All power is inherent in the people, while Article 3 states: Liberia is a unitary sovereign state. The article further states: The form of government is Republican with three separate coordinate branches: The Legislative, Executive and Judiciary, consistent with the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances.

Under our democratic governance system as relates the separation of powers and doctrine of check and balance, Legislative Power is implemented by the National Legislature as the legitimate representation of the people. The Legislature of Liberia consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives, both of which must pass on all legislations. In the present legislative period of 2019, the 54th National Legislature is composed of: 103 Members; out of these 29 Senators-(currently 28 males and 1 female, instead of 30 senators due to the recent passing of Senator Geraldine Doe-Sheriff); 73 Representatives (currently 9 females and 64 males), thus bringing the total males to females in the National Legislature are 93 to 10 or a ratio of ten to one.

In the Liberian presidential system of government, the president functions as Head of State, Head of Government and at the same time as Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL); the President is elected directly by the people every six years. Consistent with the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances doctrines, cabinet ministers are nominated and appointed by the President upon the confirmation by the Senate. Presently, the cabinet consists of 24 individuals of whom Three (3) are females and twenty-one (21) males.

According to the Liberian constitution, the Judicial power is vested in a Supreme Court and such subordinate courts, while the Supreme Court comprises: One Chief Justice and four Associate Justices; currently consists of two females and three males. The Judiciary is supposed to be independent. Article 1 of the Liberian Constitution provides that: 'All power belongs to the people and noted that they have the right to call for a constitutional referendum when their safety and happiness so require. Article (2) provides that: 'This Constitution is the supreme and fundamental law of Liberia and its provisions shall have binding force.

The Political History of Liberia

Liberia's political history as concerns democratic governance from the period of Independence to presence has experienced several difficulties resulting to several factors-both internal or external political maneuvering and arms twisting. The root of democracy on the African continent can be attributed to the founding Fathers of Liberia. The First Elections on the continent took place 21 September 1847 less than two months following Liberia's independence with Joseph Jenkins Roberts elected as the first President in 1847.

The opposition political party also has its root in Liberia---the first opposition political party was established in Liberia and participated in the 1847 election. The two parties that took part in the 1847 election were the Pro Administrative Party headed by J. J. Roberts and Anti-Administrative Party headed by Thomas Buchanan; interestingly, both served as governors of the Commonwealth of Liberia.

As touch-bearers of democracy in Africa, the founding fathers of Liberia were successful in building three (3) political institutions, sometime called Systems: The state....sheltered by internal and external sovereignty; rule of law (established Constitution) and democratic governance (accountability and inclusiveness).

TO BE CONT'D

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Sirleaf, others locked-up!

By Winston W. Parley

The son of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf', Central Bank Deputy Governor Charles E. Sirleaf, former CBL Executive Governor Milton A. Weeks and CBL Director of Banking Dorbor Hagba have been locked up. The trio were locked-up on Monday at the Monrovia Central Prison after they failed to file criminal appearance bonds.

The trio appeared in Court Monday March 4, following their arrests Thursday February 28 through Friday March 1, for their roles in the "missing 16 billion" Liberian bank notes which both local and international investigators now put at over 18 billion.

The premises of the Temple of Justice, Liberia's High Court was packed with both observers and family members of the arrested individuals. Among those family members recognized at the court included Dr. James A. Sirleaf, former Public Works Minister Dr. Antoinette Weeks, University of Liberia President Dr. Ophelia Inez Weeks and former Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) Commissioner, Angeliwe Weeks, among others.

The current and former CBL officials' arrests follow the release of separate reports into the finding of the "missing 16 billion" Liberian bank notes



by United States Embassy near Monrovia and the government.

They face charges ranging from economic sabotage, misuse of public money, illegal disbursement of public money to criminal conspiracy and criminal facilitation.

The parties are being represented in court separately by different lawyers from different law firms.

The Monrovia City Court was jam -parked when the officials made their first appearance, and scores of eager Liberians who could not make their way into the court, waited outside to see the

defendants come out.

On their way to the Monrovia Central Prison where they will remain until their criminal appearance bonds are filed, each of the accused was handcuffed and escorted outside by riot police and court officers, while some angry bystanders jeered at the defendants.

Earlier in the courtroom, Monrovia City Court Stipendiary Magistrate Kennedy Peabody, informs the defendants that the charges against them are bailable.

He says the accused are entitled to bail; to choose to request the state to produce

the evidence it has against them preliminarily in the court; and they could exercise their rights to speak or be silent.

Magistrate Peabody, however, informed the defendants that they are required to satisfy the statute by filing the appropriate criminal appearance bond to commensurate with the crimes charged, or be incarcerated at the Monrovia Central Prison if they failed or refused to proffer the required bonds.

Mr. Sirleaf and Mr. Hagba were arrested Thursday, 28 February, hours after the United States Embassy and the Presidential Investigative Team (PIT) released their reports, while Mr. Weeks was later arrested Friday.

The trio are expected to give account of the excess amount of money that were printed and their roles in the alleged missing money saga.

The PIT says CBL reported 15,606,000,000 (15.6bn) Liberian banknotes as the total amount printed, shipped by Crane Currency AB and received by the CBL between July 2016 and April 2018.

But the head of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and member of the PIT Mr. Alex Cuffey says analysis of the packing list submitted by the CBL reveals that the amount of 18,151,000,000 (18.1bn) Liberian dollar banknotes were printed and shipped by Crane Currency.

According to Mr. Cuffey, this leaves a variance of 2,645,000,000 (L\$2.6bn) Liberian dollar banknotes that is yet to be fully accounted for by the CBL.

The firm hired by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to help investigate the money issue separately, Kroll Associates Inc., established that the CBL entered into a contract with Crane AB on May 6, 2016 to print new banknotes totaling LRD 5.0 billion. eleven days prior to the CBL receiving full Legislature approval to print new banknotes.

The USAID report further indicates that the Legislature's approval was not granted in the same manner as 2016 for the CBL to print a second tranche of new banknotes. totaling LRD 10.0 billion in 2017.

It adds that Crane AB was awarded the second contract in June 2017 by the CBL to print new banknotes totaling LRD 10.0 billion, four weeks before two officials from the Legislature requested that the CBL replace all legacy banknotes.

The report says a letter dated July 19, 2017 from the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives Mildred Sayon and the Secretary of the

Senate Nanborlor Singbeh provided an instruction to the CBL to "...replace the legacy notes completely with newly printed banknotes" but with a clear caveat that the CBL provide the Legislature with details of the quantity and denominations of the new banknotes "...prior to the printing" of the new banknotes.

The CBL did not provide the Legislature with details of the quantity and denominations of the new banknotes prior to the printing and shipping of new banknotes, the USAID report finds.

The actual value of new banknotes printed by Crane AB to Liberia totaled LRD 15.506 billion, the report says, adding that the new banknotes totaling LRD 0.506 billion were printed by Crane AB above the initial contractual amount of LRD 15.0 billion.

According to the USAID report, under the direction of the Minister of Finance, the President's Economic Management Team also conducted a separate USD 25.0 million exercise to "mop-up" excess LRD banknotes with USD banknotes.

At the time of Kroll's review, this resulted in LRD 2.3 billion (USD 15.0 million)³ being purchased by the CBL from local businesses and foreign exchange bureaus, in an attempt to address the depreciation of the Liberian Dollar, the USAID report says.

It reveals that this action was undertaken by the CBL without a clearly documented strategy.

Kroll's independent counts of the physical cash balances in each of the CBL's three operational vaults could not be reconciled with the CBL's corresponding financial accounting records.

Kroll established that of the new banknotes printed and shipped by Crane AB totaling LRD 15.506 billion, the CBL had injected new banknotes totaling LRD 10.146 billion into the Liberian economy without removing from circulation (and destroying) the equivalent quantity or value of legacy banknotes (the old money).

The prosecuting team representing the Ministry of Justice in the case include Solicitor General Cllr. J. Darku Mulbah; County Attorney for Montserrado County Cllr. Edwin K. Martin and City Solicitor Atty. J. Wilson.

Cllrs. James E. Pierre, J. Johnny Momo and Amara Sheriff represent defendant Charles E. Sirleaf while co-defendant Milton Weeks is represented by Cllr. Abraham B. Silah Sr of the Heritage Partners and Associates Inc.

Further, co-defendant Dorbor Hagba is represented by Cllr. Augustine C. Fayiah and Atty Rose Stryker.

Lawmakers to mount protest

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Information within the corridors of the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill indicates that members of the newly formed 'Independent Legislative Caucus' have threatened to boycott legislative session today, Tuesday, 5 March until their demands are met.

The Independent Legislative Caucus comprising 42 Representatives from the House alone are demanding Speaker Bhofal Chambers' leadership to pay their two years scholarship allowance, which amounts to US\$4,000.

They are further demanding payment of their four months gasoline allowance, one month salary and ten months constituents' allowance.

Failure to satisfy these demands, the NewDawn gathers that members of the Independent Legislative Caucus at the House of Representatives are determined to see that the House of Representatives does not function.

A ranking member of the 'Independent Legislative Caucus and Montserrado County Electoral District #15

Rep. Adolph Lawrence, told this paper Monday, 4 March on Capitol Hill that it is unfortunate for the government through the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) to boast of overly generating revenues, but members of the first branch of government cannot get their just benefits and salaries.

Rep. Lawrence whose wife Nyonblee Kangar - Lawrence is a senator, laments that it is unfortunate that members of the House of Representatives cannot get their just benefits while salaries, gasoline, scholarship allowance and other benefits are given regularly to their counterparts in the Senate.

Meanwhile, members of the Independent Legislative Caucus are expected to hold a strategic meeting today, 5 March to discuss their next rule of engagement with the Chambers leadership at the House of Representatives.

They are also expected to discuss their approach to the situation if the leadership of the House fails to adhere to their demands.

When contacted via mobile phone, Speaker Chambers' private and official numbers

rang on several occasions without a response to our staff.

A group of aggrieved members of the House of Representatives organized themselves into a group now called Independent Legislative Caucus on 20 January this year.

The group's chair, Nimba County Rep. Larry Yonquoi says, they aim at bringing about independence and credibility to the House of Representatives.

Since he assumed the Speakership, Bhofal Chambers has always been in the line of fire either for the way he proceeds as the Presiding Officer or his intolerant posture against his colleagues.

He faces criticisms for allegedly using his power as Speaker to try to silence his colleagues at the House, mainly those he considers opposition because of their independent views.

Chambers, as a bitter opposition lawmaker during the administration of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, saw nothing positive in what the former president's regime did. --**Edited by Winston W. Parley**

Mbappe will become one of the best in history – Neymar



Paris Saint-Germain star Kylian Mbappe will become one of the best players in football history, according to Neymar.

Mbappe has flourished since moving to PSG in 2017 after breaking through with Monaco the year before.

The 20-year-old has scored 50 goals in all competitions

with PSG following his brace in Saturday's come-from-behind 2-1 Ligue 1 win against Caen.

The PSG and France sensation already has a World Cup medal and two Ligue 1 titles to his name, as well as Coupe de France and Coupe de la Ligue honours.

Neymar - who is recovering from a metatarsal injury -

heaped praise on his PSG team-mate and fellow forward.

"The relationship I have with him is the best possible, both inside and out of the pitch," Neymar told Brazilian broadcaster Globo.

"I call him 'Golden Boy'. He's a boy for whom I have a very special affection, who will become one of the best players in football history, and I try to help him in the best way possible.

"Whatever attitude he has in training or in the game I come and talk to him, or he comes to talk to me. It is as if he were a brother. By competition, this is not what leads us to winning titles, thinking of individual titles... it is not because of that.

"We do not envy each other. When he scores a goal, he wants to give me a pass, when I give him a pass, I want him to score a goal too. We have this partnership, as I had with Lionel Messi as well [at Barcelona]."

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Gabonese footballer collapses and dies during league fixture

A player in the Gabonese first division, Herman Tsinga, collapsed during a game over the weekend and was pronounced dead later, local media reported on Monday.

The Gabon Football Federation, FEGAFOOT, is now saddled with the seventh such incident in 12 years, a local daily newspaper, The Union

said. Tsinga, a striker for Akanda FC, collapsed in the 23rd minute of the match with Missile FC on Saturday in the capital Libreville, the newspaper reported.

The 30-year-old received a cardiac massage by a military doctor, but died on his way to hospital. An amateur video posted on Twitter showed the confused reaction after Tsinga collapsed on the edge of the centre circle.

According to The Union, neither of the two ambulances at the scene had the defibrillator or oxygen mask necessary "to save the life of the player".

The match was part of the second round of the championship, which was able to resume in February after a gap of eight months when Gabon Oil Company agreed to sponsor the competition.



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