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P11

Pres. Weah

"Weah has failed..."

-Says VP Boakai as he backs protest

Taylor set freed



Ex-Pres. Charles Taylor



Agnes Taylor

P11

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Continental News

South African explorer completes epic North Pole trek

Two explorers who trekked hundreds of miles at the North Pole and were running out of food have reached safety after an epic journey across the ice.

South African Mike Horn and Norwegian Boerge Ousland covered about 1,800km (1,120 miles) on treacherous drifting ice in the past couple of months.

Because of delays, they had been expected to run out of food by Friday.

However, they managed to meet up with two Norwegians sent to rescue them despite a local storm. The latest Instagram update on Sunday showed a picture of the four men on their way to the Norwegian polar research ship, the Lance, which was due to pick them up.

Skip Instagram post by mikhornexplorer

An earlier entry described how the two pairs had got closer and closer to each other until they spotted each other's

headlamps in the distance and began shouting "cries of joy".

The men are now recuperating on the Lance, which will make its way out of the ice to the Pangaea, another ship which will collect them to bring them back to

Svalbard, a Norwegian Arctic archipelago.

The Norwegian pair - Bengt Rotmo and Aleksander Gamme - set off on Tuesday, carrying food for the Horn-Ousland team.

Expedition organiser Lars

Ebbesen, who was maintaining contact with both teams via satellite phone, told the BBC on Friday that the Horn-Ousland team did not want to be rescued by helicopter, but that they agreed to meet up with the Norwegian pair.

At that point, the wind was building up and they had little food. If they had got trapped, they would not have had enough food to last. The pair set off on 23 September and should have completed their trek in mid-November. They spent weeks alone on the ice in the dark - in the Arctic winter, there is no daylight.

The pair faced many obstacles, including fluctuating temperatures on the ice - from -40C to +2C (35F), a sign of climate change, according to Horn.

Sometimes at night, when they were camping, the drifting ice moved them backwards, adding to the distance they had to cover. Thinner polar ice than normal

also added to the risks and slowed them down.

At one point, Horn fell into the icy water resulting in frostbite to his hands and nose. The pair had lost a lot of weight, and were feeling weak and tired by the end of the journey, he said. A key aim of the expedition was to collect data on the Arctic ice melt, which scientists attribute to global warming.

The journey began on the Alaskan side of the North Pole and was due to end in Svalbard. Mike Horn, 53, became famous after completing a solo journey around the equator without motorised transport in 1999-2000.

In 2004, he completed a two-year solo circumnavigation of the Arctic Circle, and in 2006, along with Borge Ousland, became the first man to travel without dog or motorised transport to the North Pole during winter, in permanent darkness. BBC



Mike Horn poses in front of the Lance icebreaker boat

Deadly flooding in Uganda kills at least 16

Flooding in Uganda has claimed at least 16 lives, the Red Cross says, as the region reels from weeks of rain. Rescuers have been recovering the bodies of victims swept to their deaths by the flash floods in the western Bundibugyo area, the aid group said.

Homes have been washed away and a number of roads blocked or destroyed.

Large parts of east Africa have suffered floods and

landslides in recent weeks. Hundreds have died and millions have been displaced.

The events have been linked to an unusual weather phenomenon in the Indian Ocean. Meanwhile, in Somalia, the authorities are trying to assess the damage caused by tropical storm Pawan, which brought wind and torrential rain to part of the northern coast on Saturday, cutting communications with the town of Eyl. Heavy rain has been

battering the country for weeks, and intensified overnight on Friday into Saturday.

Police, military, aid agencies and community members are assisting with search and rescue operations in more than a dozen affected areas.

Rain is hampering communications in the locations in the remote west of the country, AFP news agency reported. The Red Cross said its

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volunteers continued to recover more bodies, including some trapped in cocoa trees in the Bundibugyo hills, describing the events as "devastating". Last week landslides caused by heavy rain claimed a number of lives in the east of the country. Uganda's disaster management agency has advised people not to walk, ride or drive across any flooded roads or bridges, and to keep away from river banks and steep slopes. Somalia's north-eastern Puntland state had been bracing for Cyclone Pawan, which was downgraded to a storm before it made landfall in an area already suffering the impact of recent high winds and flooding.

At least one person is reported to have died after a fishing boat capsized, while in the Eyl area, a child was reported to have died from exposure after houses and livestock were washed away. BBC Africa correspondent Ann Soy says it appears most people had fled or been evacuated from Eyl, a small coastal city, but buildings were destroyed and communications

infrastructure was damaged. Some roads in Puntland have been destroyed making transport difficult. Flights into and out of Gorowe were suspended all of Saturday, but they have now resumed.

There are numerous reports of loss of livestock to floods in villages, something that threatens the livelihoods of local communities, our correspondent adds. Heavy downpours have devastated parts of East Africa over the last two months, with the Horn of Africa seeing up to 300% above average rainfall between October and mid-November, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network.

Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia and South Sudan have been particularly badly affected, with flash floods and landslides hitting communities across the region.

Almost 300 people have reportedly died and 2.8 million people have been affected, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. BBC



Red Cross volunteers are assisting with relief and recovery efforts in Uganda

EDITORIAL

Weah must listen to the voice of wisdom

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH WEAH, currently under mounting pressure to pay salary and improve governance is being advised to allow dissatisfied Liberians express their grievances thru public protest, rather than denying them the right as enshrined in the Constitution.

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT and current leader of the ex-ruling Unity Party Joseph Nyumah Boakai says it is important that aggrieved citizens exercise their constitutional right of assembly and freedom of expression, and the government is obliged to provide security and protection.

IN A DARING letter to President Weah, the man defeated twice at the polls by the former soccer celebrity in 2017 further urges the Weah administrating to its obligation to civil servants, currently planning go-slow in demand of monthly salary, saying "these patriotic citizens have played their part. They deserved the dignity of their labour and the right to provide for their families.

THIS IS THE first time the 75-year-old statesman, who served as Vice President for two terms under former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been so frank to the Weah administration on prevailing economic situations in Liberia.

WE CHALLENGE THE ruling Coalition government to take the letter in stride and begin to act to addressing citizens' concerns, because this was the social contract they signed with Candidate George Manneh Weah (now President) at the ballot box in 2017.

A LOCAL GROUP under the banner Council of Patriots or CoP recently wrote the Ministry of Justice, requesting for security for its planned protest dubbed "Weah must step down" slated for 31 December. The CoP is led by talk show host Henry Costa.

IN ITS 07 June protest held in Monrovia, the group read several counts to the government subsequently, calling for respect for the rule of law and honest fight against corruption, among others.

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT continue to turn blind eyes on these issues especially when they ways in which it conducts its activities in public leave room for suspicions. Mr. Boakai also points to US\$25 million that the administration from the reserves to mop up excess liquidity in the economy plus the 16 billion newly printed Liberian bank notes that is yet to be properly accounted for.

WE CONSIDER THE call from the former Vice President as a voice of wisdom, coming from an elder who had served two previous administrations and has wealth of experience, working in government unlike Mr. Weah.

PRESIDENT WEAH SHOULD put ego aside, and listen to aggrieved citizens, including civil servants so that, together a common ground can be reached for the good of all and posterity.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

COMMENTARY

By Sami Mahroum

The Arab World Needs a Brexit Debate

The Arab world has witnessed at least one big Brexit-like event every decade since 1948 - and these political, economic, and social ruptures never seem to heal. The impact of these self-inflicted disasters is now painfully evident, and ongoing street protests in several countries suggest that a moment of reckoning may have arrived.

BARCELONA - For the last three years, a bewildered world has watched the countdown to the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union, better known as Brexit. Leaving the EU will likely affect the British economy severely. Yet, from an Arab perspective, the UK's prolonged Brexit debate is not a sign of political breakdown. On the contrary, only a country with the UK's deeply embedded political maturity could even hope to withstand such a vast rupture in legal, commercial, and even social relationships that have been built up over the last half-century.

The Arab world, by contrast, has witnessed at least one big Brexit-like event every decade since 1948 - and these political, economic, and social ruptures never seem to heal. The first such episode was the establishment of Israel and the resulting Palestinian "Brexit" from the territory that became the Jewish State. Much of historic Palestine was abandoned, and its people were destined to live in refugee camps for decades to come. An entire Arab economy disappeared, and Israel was boycotted by its Arab neighbors.

Then, from 1952 until 1970, Egypt under President Gamal Abdel Nasser embarked on an economic nationalization experiment that championed import substitution and greatly weakened the country's commercial ties to the rest of the region. And when Nasser's successor Anwar Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Arab countries punished Egypt with an economic and political boycott.

During the same period, several other leading Arab states, including Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Algeria, were inspired by the Soviet economic model and restricted private-sector trade and investment. Unlike the 15 republics that made up the Soviet Union, the Arab world's Soviet-inspired regimes did not trade among themselves; in fact, some, like Iraq and Syria, boycotted each other.

When the Arab world's political economy was not breaking down or heading toward autarky, geopolitics inflicted further damage. In 1990, Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait, at the time the Arab world's most dynamic economy, depriving the country of its sovereignty. Iraq was put under international sanctions as a result, and United States-led forces subsequently liberated Kuwait. And, of course, in 2003 a US-led coalition invaded and occupied Iraq, a decision that plunged the regional order into turmoil and continues to affect it today.

During the Arab Spring from 2010 to 2016, the region experienced an accelerated chain of Brexit-like events as protesters in several countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and, eventually, Iraq) sought freedom from regimes that many considered illegitimate. Meanwhile, political tensions elsewhere closed the Algerian-Moroccan border to

business, severed commercial links between Qatar and several Gulf countries, and isolated Iran economically.

Arab "Brexit" come with little warning, negotiation, parliamentary deliberation, or media debate, and usually persist for decades. But the impact of these self-inflicted economic disasters is now painfully evident.

In fact, ongoing street protests, strikes, and violence in several Arab countries suggest that a moment of reckoning may have arrived. This unrest could unleash an Arab Spring 2.0, this time focused, one hopes, on prosperity rather than power.

That certainly seems to be the message in Baghdad, Beirut, and other cities around the region, where protesters are calling for politicians to step back and let technocrats take the lead. Although it may be naive to expect policy experts to behave better than professional politicians, Arabs are fed up with opaque political systems in which they have little if any influence over decisions affecting their lives.

An Arab Spring 2.0 should therefore ignite a debate about the sort of economic future citizens want, how they interact with their own governments, and their countries' relations with neighbors. In short, after decades of their own dead-end Brexits, Arabs need to discuss the same issues that British voters have been addressing since the June 2016 referendum.

That means opening up the policymaking process to society-wide debate and advocacy. Broader engagement with the region's homegrown technocratic talent may produce much-needed policy innovators. Although the Arab world currently lacks strong and active think tank-like institutions that galvanize experts' advocacy (like those who have shaped the fates of other countries during severe crises) that need not always be the case. After all, policy engagement is not just about elections and representation, but also about careful analysis and informed advocacy.

In the Republic, Plato writes that, "There can be no good government until philosophers are kings and the kings, philosophers." At the same time, there is of course no guarantee that Arab technocrats won't turn into ruthless politicians themselves. Both Hitler and Stalin, for example, manipulated science to justify major social engineering projects that killed millions of people.

But without some effort to depoliticize public policymaking and put social engagement before political enforcement, more Arab Brexits, and continued economic malaise, are a certainty. Protesters in Baghdad, Beirut, and elsewhere are calling for participatory politics and open debate. Their call must not go unanswered.

O-PED

By Marcel Fratzscher

The ECB Needs a New Mandate

BERLIN - The European Central Bank's decision in September to pursue more monetary-policy easing was controversial, with one board representative, from Germany, resigning over the move. But one of the most remarkable features of the ECB's position has not gotten enough attention: the admission that inflation expectations have become de-anchored, and that without fiscal-policy support, the central bank will probably fail to fulfill its price-stability mandate for the foreseeable future.

In fact, many observers, and even several members of the ECB's Governing Council, now argue that the bank needs to adapt its mandate with a new definition of price stability in mind. They are right - but there is one crucial caveat.

Since central-bank independence was strengthened in the 1990s, it has become clear that, in normal times, the specific mandate does not matter much. The United States Federal Reserve managed to guide expectations and achieve price stability with its dual mandate (price stability and maximum employment) just as well as the Bank of England or the ECB, with their narrower price-stability mandates.

After the global financial crisis, however, the traditional mandate proved inadequate to cope with large-scale financial instability, fickle market confidence, and political paralysis. Developed-country central banks had to devise policies on the fly, without a guiding framework. Each in its own way pursued unprecedented monetary easing, massively expanding its balance sheet, in order to provide much-needed support to the economy.

In many ways, these measures succeeded: monetary expansion played a major role in pulling the economy back from the brink. But, over time, central banks' capacity to affect the real economy declined. Today - and for the foreseeable future - domestic inflation is increasingly affected by global, rather than local, developments, and financial (in)stability and fiscal policy are far more influential than monetary policy.

For the ECB, this generates a particularly serious challenge. After all, unlike other central banks, it must account for the preferences of 19 sovereign national governments, with little to no structural or fiscal-policy coordination. The eurozone is also highly fragmented financially, lacking a common capital market, a unifying safe asset, or macroeconomic stabilization tools.

The ECB needs a more realistic and flexible mandate. Given the eurozone's fragmented nature, that mandate should probably still be centered on price stability. But it should also recognize that the current definition of price stability - "below, but close to, 2% inflation over the medium term" - is too narrow.

A broader definition is needed, according to which the ECB pursues a symmetric inflation target of 2%, within a 1.5-2.5% band, over a longer time horizon. Some advocate an even higher target: for example, Olivier Blanchard, a former International Monetary Fund chief economist, has proposed re-anchoring expectations at 4%. A different proposal, from New York Federal Reserve President John Williams, is to target a price level, rather than an inflation rate.

A commitment to more broadly defined price stability in the long term would give the ECB more space during times of crisis, thereby enabling it to account better for risks to financial stability and the real economy. This would help it to stabilize prices more quickly, bolstering its credibility.

By contrast, when the ECB consistently fails to meet its price-stability objective - as it has for the last five years - it loses credibility. And, indeed, the ECB has faced harsh criticism - sometimes warranted, often not - over its implementation of untested expansionary monetary policies since 2008, partly because the measures were often poorly understood by the public. The loss of credibility has undermined the ECB's capacity to fulfill its objectives, creating a vicious circle that threatens its de facto independence.

This is why the timing of any mandate change must be chosen very carefully. If the ECB tries to move the goalpost while it is missing the shot, the short-term blow to its already diminished credibility could be serious. Given this, the ECB must work to strengthen its standing before it adjusts its mandate, including by attempting to reach the existing price-stability objective after years of failure.

At the same time, the ECB must communicate better what its capabilities are. Some have urged the ECB to try addressing the solvency problems of banks or governments during the crisis. Others would like the ECB to discipline governments to do the "right" thing and consolidate spending. A central bank must do neither and would utterly fail if it tried. But these attempts have hurt the ECB's standing, particularly in Germany, and have diminished its credibility.

Clarifying the contents of the ECB's policy toolbox - including sovereign-bond purchases and other non-standard measures - would go a long way toward protecting the ECB from such attacks in the future. And when the time comes to shift its objectives, the ECB must communicate the change - which, to be sure, may not need to be as big as many believe - clearly and thoroughly.

US President John F. Kennedy was right: the time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining. The ECB cannot revise its mandate until the current storm has passed. But, with water pouring in, it can't afford to wait very long. The sooner the ECB does what is needed to restore its credibility, the sooner it can do what is needed to protect itself from future storms.

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OPINION

By Biniam Bedasso

Ethiopia's Peace Prize Challenge

ADDIS ABABA - As Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed collects this year's Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, his country is at a crossroads. In one direction lies a democratic transition, via a successful general election scheduled for May 2020. The other path would lead the country to instability, ethnic violence, and possibly a return to repressive authoritarianism.

For the last decade, Ethiopia has experienced strong, broad-based economic growth. The government has built on those gains, investing in infrastructure development and expanding social services, such as health care and education. Moreover, since April 2018, when Ahmed peacefully took power following the unexpected resignation of his predecessor, the government has been restoring political and economic freedoms.

Ahmed lifted the country's state of emergency, ordered the release of thousands of political prisoners, allowed exiled dissidents to return, removed bans on political parties, and unblocked previously censored media. He also reached an agreement with Eritrea to end a 20-year military stalemate following their 1998-2000 border war - the reason for his Nobel Prize.

Yet, as these reforms have taken hold, Ethiopia has faced an uptick in ethnic violence. Most recently, 86 people were killed when protests erupted after a prominent activist alleged in a social-media post that the government was attempting to withdraw his security detail in a plot to silence him.

This unrest is the result of an economic and political chain reaction much like those seen in Chile, Hong Kong, and Lebanon, and to some extent, even in places like the United States and the United Kingdom. A large share of the population feels economically excluded and politically invisible, so they attempt to assert their status in society by throwing their support behind nationalist or sectarian causes.

In Ethiopia, economic growth occurred against a backdrop of intense social and political repression. Civil society was hollowed out, and unscrupulous interest groups hijacked the state's development agenda. Young people often lacked the skills or connections to secure decent employment.

At the same time, however, young people were educated enough to recognize the imbalances and to mobilize on social media. And with their newfound freedoms - restored faster than effective institutions could be built - they could turn organization into action. With state power eroded and the ruling coalition fragmented, the government was unprepared to handle the groundswell of discontent, fueled by unresolved issues with deep historic and emotional roots.

In recent years, polarization has severely strained the mature institutions of Western democracies. Imagine the damage it can wreak in a country that lacks autonomous law enforcement or a functioning civil society. Despite ongoing reforms, Ethiopia still has not completed a transition from the rule of party to the rule of law.

Of course, social mobilization is a feature of a healthy democracy. But, after decades under an authoritarian government, most Ethiopians are not protesting for a particular cause or economic-policy change. From their perspective, securing political power for their group is the only way to protect their social and economic interests, so each group is maneuvering to restructure the political order to its advantage ahead of next year's election - Ethiopia's first since the transition to democracy began. In anticipation of a winner-take-all election, mistrust is rampant.

Nationalism tends to weaponize nuanced policy arguments. Instead of speaking clearly on today's economic issues - say, identifying the successes and failures of the last few decades - nationalist leaders often blend them into narratives about longstanding cultural and historical grievances, thereby creating the illusion that their camp's interests are aligned across all spheres.

This ham-fisted approach can also be seen in attempts by some parties to make the upcoming election all about Ethiopia's contentious federal system, which is constituted along ethnic lines. But an election is no way to decide fundamental questions of institutional structure, especially in a country with weak rule of law and rampant ethnic tensions.

Even in more developed democracies, from Hungary to Venezuela, the ballot box has proved capable of producing outcomes that leave societies more polarized and volatile. But when, say, the United Kingdom votes to leave the European Union, there is little doubt that its democracy will survive, even if the country takes a beating. The UK Supreme Court's decision that Prime Minister Boris Johnson had acted unlawfully in suspending Parliament - a move designed to push through a no-deal Brexit - exemplifies the resilience of the country's institutions.

Ethiopian democracy could not survive a US President Donald Trump any more than it could survive a Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. That is why Ethiopian political leaders must urgently negotiate an agreement on the basic rules of the game for the post-election order. Parties should then focus their campaigns on concrete policies that might address the economic and social issues at the root of the unrest. Once the new government is in place, fundamental institutional issues should be addressed transparently and cooperatively, in a deliberative forum.

Voting is critical to a democracy, but it is no panacea. Sometimes, what is needed is consensus-building. Only by recognizing this can Ethiopia's political elites avoid wasting this historic opportunity to consolidate democracy.

PERSPECTIVES PERSPECTIVES

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

ON "WHAT IS WRONG WITH LIBERIANS?"

CITIZENS OF THE 17-TRIBE LIBERAN NATION-STATE WITH CONTINUOUS 172-YEAR SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC&POLITICAL QUAGMIRE, SINCE 1847: A PROPOSAL FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE

-A REPEAT

Introduction

Today, high-lighting national developing events are political violence, personal injuries and disappearances, destruction of private and public properties, including one of the most disgraceful, dishonest national/international SCAM, the theft/sale of Liberian passports to foreign nationals by the nation's (Liberia's) Passport Director. The impact of these developments dragged the un-divided attention of the law-abiding majority of the Liberian people, the media and discussions at posh restaurants, Fufu and soup cook shops, barber shops, beauty salons, dinner tables, street corners intellectual encounters and the nation's grapevine rumor mills.

Quite recently, some of Liberia's diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Liberia's eyes/ears to the world community of the Comity of Nations, were investigated for reportedly stealing hundreds of thousands of US dollars donated to Liberia by the Empire of Japan, right under the eyes of the past President at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The defendant-officials argued that the official with responsibility for management of the Japanese grant fled Liberia to the USA where he is, allegedly, a Resident Alien. It is, perhaps, a possibility that some of our major diplomats at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are citizens of foreign countries!

In an article entitled "What is wrong with Liberians", the same as the questioning headline above (Analyst Liberia, June 12, 2013), while Author Raymond Leslie Buell posed the question, "What is wrong with Liberia, the nation state?" as the subject of Chapter 2 of his epic book (Liberia: A Century of Survival, 1847-1947). The book was published on the 100th birth anniversary of 1947 and the founding of the Liberian State in 1847. This was a rhetorical question, answer to which was, or is, the subject and analysis of Mr. Buell's book. This book, we argued, is perhaps, the best assessment of the social, cultural, economic and political activities/operations by Liberia during its first one hundred years as a sovereign, independent state.

At that point on June 12, 2013, we chose to navigate the critical issues raised and facing our country, Liberia, in an attempt to seek answer(s) to 'what is wrong with us, Liberians, rather than, What is wrong with Liberia', the state and land mass.

Government ad Governance

Since July 26, 1847, the founding of the Republic of Liberia, Government & Governance have become a profound nightmare - a Quagmire - an awkward, hazardous, complex and complicated situation; a muddled up, mixed-up and messed-up predicament; a difficulty, quandary, entanglement, imbroglio and a socio-economic fiasco in our Liberia's social, cultural and political affairs throughout succeeding political administrations up to these days, including the previous twelve-year administration, characterized by ACDL civil war, political and economic mismanagement up to this day.

As it has been and is the case of all nations as Liberia, the Wrongs are many ("to err is human"), but the Wrongs of Liberia are the most major, unique, profound and pervasive; they affect, with drastic, negative economic and deadly impact, the entire spectrum of the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Liberian society. From the Churches, schools (kindergartens to university); private business corporations (for-profit and not-for-profit); secret brotherhood societies (the Masonic Craft, for example); all other related social organizations and, most importantly, the government and officials of the three branches of government.

Significantly, the staff, operating members, congregations, students of schools, churches and all others are, in turn, members of the social, cultural economic and political institutions of the society to which they are exposed to learn, experience and internalized dishonesty, decadent moral rectitude, rejection of honest manual labor, expect government to do and provide everything for the rest of their lives.

The major founding, ruling political class of the Republic and its descendants had been, and are morally-dishonest and corrupt, with some elements lazy, reject manual labor of the agricultural enterprise. The prevailing Liberian government ruling class has, now, monopolized corruption, the universal vice found on all continents, in every country, society and culture, irrespective of political/economic development and affluence.

Some administrations of the past cancelled several, questionable, rental contracts between the Government of Liberia and some high officials of government for mansions, hotels and other real estate properties developed with stolen public resources for which exorbitant rents were being paid to the same officials. Buildings and real estate development of this sort were and are regarded as "national development". Rather than arrest, trial, conviction and punishment,



these officials were and are commended and rewarded with higher promotions to carry on their corrupt, dishonest enterprise. Hence, it is reasonably factual to argue that the Tubmans and other TWP Big Whigs own most of the Monrovia area real estate in Mamba Point, Sinkor, Paynesville ELWA Junction and the RIA Highway and Cooper Beach estates, etc., etc.

Today's ruling political class, particularly, lawyers and lawmakers, are the most-often law-breakers in Liberia. Judges, prosecutors, practicing attorneys, court officials, juries, national police, national defense, security and Liberia immigration service officials are all, profoundly, dishonest and corrupt. In fact, the National Legislature debates and passes laws with loop-holes intended for selective obedience/disobedience.

Historically, the Republic of Liberia ruling groups have been, and are, very conscious of Social Class stratifications, adopted and thrive on such divisive systems as Americo/Congo Liberian versus Country/Indigenous-Liberian Divides, a political, undemocratic and ritualistic adventure. Some examples:

a) The African tradition of Ethnic/Tribal Bigotry - fear, rivalry, jealousy, segregation/discrimination, based on myths/superstitions and antagonisms bordering on hate which, often, led to tribal wars has been encouraged, adopted and is, now, unwritten, major government Policy which led to the decades of Liberia's recent, modern civil

war of mass destruction;

- b) The National Legislature recently impeached, reluctantly, an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court for abuse of his judicial power as the-then "Justice in Chambers" by issuing Writ of Prohibition which prohibited the Liberian Government from collecting US \$31 million from 2 petroleum importers (proved to be the Associate Justice's business partners) who collected this sum from the public at the gas pump, but due and payable to the government;
- c) The Prohibition was approved by all 5 Justices, including the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who presided over the Senate Impeachment trial. But Liberian Lawyers, members of the politically-powerful Liberia National Bar Association, have registered opposition to the impeachment. This, indeed, trial/impeachment provided a peak at the iceberg of the dishonesty and corruption of the Liberian judiciary process;
- d) One Senator refused to support impeachment, because it (the impeachment) failed to include all five of the Justices, including the Chief Justice and the retired Associate Justice who

was one of those who approved the illegal Prohibition. The Senator declared, also, that "Liberia is a Lawless country";

- e) The Liberian Senate routinely ignores, disregards and disobeys the PPCC Act which requires public bidding in awarding public procurement contracts, apparently, because of demands for kickbacks. The Senate, for example, purchased 30 top-of-the-line, expensive automobiles for itself without the required public bidding.
- f) Liberia's historical tragedy has been compounded, continues to be, such that the source of Liberia's only informed and highly-educated Liberian political ruling Class, the MBAs, MSCs, LLMS, PhDs, including those who fled the towns & villages of Rural Liberia, the political Class of Leaders which should and must lead, teach and encourage the citizens to be independent and resilient, but has become the opulent swimmers in the pool of corruption, dishonesty and of lies, deceit, thievery, war & economic crimes. And
- g) The Super Ministry of State for Finance & Development Planning actually plans and develops nothing, but continues to be the Center known, historically, for "get-rich-quick schemes of stealing and stealing with the Liberia Revenue stealing Authority in cooperation/coordination", with beliefs that taxes collected are for the exclusive, personal use by the officials of government.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Lawmakers in coupon row

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Bong County Representative Josiah Marvin Cole and his colleague from Montserrado County District#7 have been in tussle over gasoline coupons intended for members of the House and staffers at the Capitol.

The New Dawn gathers

Representative Solomon George and Representative Cole locked in a serious argument, raining insults at each other in the public glare.

Representative George, widely known as a 'no nonsense' man immediately confiscate Cole's mobile phone, demanding his remaining coupons or else, he (Cole)

The House of Representatives had not received gasoline allotment since May this year with the current consignment being the first in many months.

However, Rep. Cole, who works closely with the procurement department, had distributed the coupons unequally among lawmakers, heads of departments and



Rep. Josiah Marvin Cole



Rep. Solomon George

that Representative Cole, who co-chairs the House's Committee on Rules, Order and Administration, allegedly reduced the quantity of coupon slips for some lawmakers and diverted same to his personal use.

It all started when Montserrado District#7

would not get his phone back. The confusions lasted about ten minutes in the newly constructed annex of the Capitol before Speaker Bhofal Chambers and other leaders of the House of Representatives intervened in releasing Cole's phone from a rather angry Solomon George.

staffers, when some lawmakers suspected their allotments were tampered with thus, raising concern. The Rules, Order and Administration committee is responsible for purchases at the House of Representative



Citizens urged to transform Liberia through integrity

By Winston W. Parley

Citizens have been admonished here to transform Liberia through integrity as a way of building and changing the country, as female Liberian nurse Madam Musu Mulbah and four others from different

sectors are celebrated as [honest] civil servants and winners of the 2019 Integrity Icon.

Integrity Icon, which was earlier called Integrity Idol, is an annual award given by Accountability Lab to winners following their vetting process

by jurors picked from anti-graft institutions and international partners.

Delivering the keynote speech at the iccampus up Carey Street, Friday, 6 December, General Auditing Commission (GAC) Auditing General Madam Yusador Gaye suggests that Liberians have to lead by example and stop defending people when they do wrong things.

"We have to attack this thing like a disease ...; we have to look at it and do it ourselves as Liberians, and not looking for our donor partners to do it for us," she says.

The Liberian Auditor General urges that Liberians have to learn to do the right thing when no one is looking, saying it has to be looked at it by sector.

Madam Gaye adds that integrity should be approached at every level, treating others

Transco CLSG Delegation expected in Monrovia for update

Donors of the Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana (CLSG) Interconnection project will meet in Monrovia on Monday and Tuesday, December 9-10, 2019 to receive update from the Management of TRANSCO CLSG on the transmission of affordable and reliable electricity to millions of citizens in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

CLSG Interconnector Project is a landmark cross-border project involving the construction of a transmission line of over 1,300km, with the aim to interconnect the CLSG countries' energy systems into the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) regional energy network.

The meeting is expected to be held under the auspices of TRANSCO CLSG management.

A crucial report on the progress and challenges in the implementation of the CLSG project will be delivered during the meeting.

The annual meeting is being organized within the framework of the implementation of the CLSG interconnection project, to provide updates to

stakeholders including the donors and the governments of the CLSG countries.

The World Bank (WB), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the German Development Bank (KfW) are among the stakeholders attending the meeting.

Mr. Mohammed M. Sherif, the General Manager of TRANSCO CLSG, is leading a high-profile delegation to the meeting in Monrovia.

Accompanying him are the Director of the Project Implementation Unit, Mr. Entienne Bailly and the Director of Finance and Administration, Jigba Yilla along with senior level managers of the company.

Following key discussions in Monrovia, the visiting delegation and implementing companies will travel to several project sites including the transmission site in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County and the Mount Coffee power plant.

The team will inspect the level of work being done at these landmark power installations.—Press release



accountabilitylab

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

Public Service Announcement

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND ALL OUR CLIENTS & READERS THAT THE BUSINESS AND NEWSPAPER OFFICES OF THE NEW DAWN NEWSPAPER HAVE BEEN RELOCATED ON UN DRIVE OPPOSITE THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION (NIC), BEHIND PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY.



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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Scorecard helps improve business environment

-spurs investment in ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, with the technical support of the World Bank Group's Advisory services, has completed the implementation of an

consumers.

The Scorecard was launched in 2017 under the Improved Business and Investment Climate in West Africa Project, an initiative funded by the European Union

countries' investment climate - notably on barriers to investment entry - and helps to identify reforms to be implemented, focusing on the legal and regulatory mechanisms needed to address those challenges for private sector development. The Scorecard then monitors implementation of these reforms.

The implementation of the Scorecard has strengthened the existing public private dialogue platform in the six pilot countries. It also gathered substantial knowledge on the implementation of business-friendly reforms, that will benefit the remaining member countries. The ECOWAS Commission presented the key learnings from the implementation of the Scorecard during a workshop in Dakar.

Mamadou Traore, Commissioner, Industry & Private Sector Promotion, ECOWAS, said: "The Scorecard tracks countries' efforts to enhance investment between member states. It will foster peer learning and accelerate implementation of our



investment climate Scorecard to help attract private investors and enhance cross-border investments in ECOWAS' 15 member countries, which are home to more than 350 million

and implemented by the World Bank Group. It was piloted in six ECOWAS member countries - Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The Scorecard identifies bottlenecks in



UL Alumni urged to be innovative

By Winston W. Parley

The Dean of Students' Affairs at the State-run University of Liberia, Alumnus Saydah Taylor is calling on members of the University's Alumni Association to be innovative and creative in creating symposiums and workshops that will advance the best interest of the university.

Delivering a keynote speech Friday, 6 December at the UL Auditorium on Capitol Hill during the Alumni Homecoming Day, Madam Taylor says the University needs its Alumni now for support.

"This Association has a very important role to play in making sure that the University, our University achieves its all-important 2030 goals," she tells an audience comprising members of the Alumni Association of the University of Liberia (AAUL) and the prospective graduates.

She urges the need for AAUL to organize and continue to build an effective association that is second to

none.

The Guest speaker suggests that through twist and turns, UL has come a long way and has

She recalls that Liberia College, which later became the University of Liberia was closed due to conflict in the early age of its founding, In



faced serious challenges since its establishment in its commitment to academic freedom, moral and ethical values.

1984, she notes that the University was closed when students and faculty who were



GoL asked to remove 3-year old corpse at mortuary

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A local mortuary in Kakata, Margibi County is angry with the Liberia National Police (LNP) for keeping a dead body at its premises for three years, creating serious health hazard not only to operators there, but ordinary residents.

The incident involves the body of a notorious Nigerian armed robber, who was reportedly killed in a gun battle with state security on 24 July 2016 while armed robbing a branch of Eco-Bank Liberia Limited in the county.

Credible information received speaks of the arrest, detention, and subsequent trial of three accomplices by the Margibi Circuit Court and

funeral home had planned to publicly dispose of the body at the venue of the County Sitting but after interventions by some prominent individuals in the society, the was abandoned.

Saturday adds that he has requested the government to bury the body or provide him a clearance, permitting the funeral home to get rid of the corpse, but government is yet to respond, while the overstayed corpse languishes at the funeral home thereby creating public outcry in Kakata City.

A spokesperson of the community Mr. Kpannah K. Yusufu, threatens that if nothing were urgently done by



Police Boss, Patrick Toe Sudue

subsequently sentenced.

As a result of the situation, the proprietor of the Solomon Tubee Funeral Home in Gbafelia Community Mr. Saturday Tubee laments the government initially owed him US\$80,000 but has paid US\$20,000, promising to clear the balance and take delivery of the corpse.

He told reporters during Margibi County Sitting recently in Kakata that he had communicated with relevant authorities in the county, including Monrovia about the danger posed by the presence of the body at the funeral home due to its present state.

According to him, the

the government to bury the body, residents would demand the funeral home to dispose of the body to avoid a potential health problem.

Mr. Yusufu says it was unfair and unrealistic for the government to continue to keep the body in the community with a little over 50,000 inhabitants, a situation that seriously worries dwellers who depend on clean and fresh air to survive.

He notes the funeral home did extremely well by preserving the body up to present, adding that no funeral home in Liberia could have done in the absence of money. -

Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Français

Imprimer de nouveaux billets est prématuré, estime le nouveau patron de la Banque Centrale

Le nouveau gouverneur exécutif de la Banque centrale du Libéria, J. Aloysius Tarlue, qui fait actuellement face à une audience de confirmation, a mis en exergue la nécessité de mettre en place un mécanisme de contrôle, de renforcer le système interne et de renommer la Banque centrale avant de procéder à l'impression de nouveaux billets de banque.

Faisant face au comité sénatorial sur les banques et de la monnaie au Capitole le jeudi 05 décembre, M. Tarlue a dit vouloir restaurer la confiance dans la Banque Centrale du Liberia et dans l'ensemble du système bancaire du Libéria, s'il est confirmé.

« Cela se fera par le biais des réformes visant à améliorer la gouvernance, à garantir la solidité technique des politiques et à assurer la viabilité financière de la CBL et, surtout, à veiller à ce que la CBL se concentre sur la mise en œuvre des politiques monétaires visant à maintenir l'inflation à un niveau plus bas, à stabiliser

l'échange. Nous veillerons également à ce que le Libéria dispose suffisamment de devises étrangères », a-t-il promis.

Selon Tarlue, en ce qui concerne l'amélioration de la gouvernance, une priorité essentielle sera de promouvoir l'indépendance de la Banque centrale, d'où la nécessité de revoir sa loi afin de la modifier

si nécessaire. « Les fonctions d'audit et de contrôles internes seront renforcées. Les décisions politiques clés seront prises et mises en œuvre avec l'approbation du conseil des gouverneurs. Nous renforcerons le département de recherche de la banque afin que les décisions politiques soient éclairées par une analyse et des preuves

appropriées. Nous veillerons à ce que la CBL se concentre sur la mise en œuvre des politiques monétaires visant à maintenir l'inflation à un niveau bas, à stabiliser le taux de change et à faire en sorte que le Libéria dispose suffisamment de devises étrangères », a-t-il ajouté.

Selon lui, l'objectif de son administration sera de retrouver puis de maintenir la stabilité des prix : « Par cela, je veux dire réduire le taux d'inflation à un chiffre au fil du temps. Cela est nécessaire car les Libériens les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables gagnent et dépensent

principalement en dollars libériens. Cela signifie que, au cours des deux dernières années, l'inflation a atteint un taux annuel d'environ 30%. »

Le gouverneur exécutif désigné a déclaré en outre que pour parvenir à la viabilité financière de la CBL, son administration entreprendrait un examen stratégique et fonctionnel des opérations de la CBL, notant que la Banque subit actuellement des pertes opérationnelles en raison de diverses inefficacités, dont par exemple le nombre pléthorique d'employés au niveau de la banque.



Côte d'Ivoire : décès de l'ancien ministre Charles Diby Koffi

En Côte d'Ivoire, la classe politique est en deuil. Le président du Conseil économique, social, environnemental et culturel Charles Diby Koffi est décédé le 7 décembre à Abidjan à l'âge de 62 ans. Ce pilier du Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) a traversé la scène politique ivoirienne, notamment en tant que ministre de l'Économie et des Finances sous Laurent Gbagbo et Alassane Ouattara.

Les compétences de Charles Diby Koffi lui ont valu la reconnaissance des trois piliers de la politique ivoirienne, à savoir les ex-chefs d'État Laurent Gbagbo, Henri Konan Bédié et l'actuel président Alassane Ouattara. Né à Bouaké en 1957, ce technocrate fait carrière dans la finance, avant d'obtenir son premier poste gouvernemental en 2005 en tant que ministre délégué chargé de l'Économie et des Finances sous l'ère Gbagbo. Le fondateur du Front populaire ivoirien (FPI) lui confiera les pleines fonctions de ministre dans le même département deux ans plus tard. Grand serviteur de l'État, il a mené jusqu'au bout le bon combat.

Mes condoléances à sa famille et à ses proches. Reposez en Paix cher Aîné!

Charles Diby Koffi gardera sa place sous la présidence d'Alassane Ouattara jusqu'en 2012, avant d'endosser le costume de ministre des Affaires étrangères. Limogé du gouvernement en 2016, l'économiste a pris la tête du Conseil économique, social, environnemental et culturel la même année. Un poste qu'il a occupé jusqu'à son décès ce samedi à Abidjan.

Élu député PDCI de Bouaflé dans le centre du pays en 2011, ce haut cadre est bombardé cinq ans plus tard à la vice-présidence du parti historique par Henri Konan Bédié. Directeur général du Trésor public, président du Conseil des ministres de l'Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA), et du conseil des gouverneurs de la banque d'investissement de la Cédéao, il est considéré comme le « meilleur ministre des Finances d'Afrique » en 2010 selon le Financial Times. Charles Diby Koffi a longtemps été vu comme un présidentiable par les observateurs de la vie politique ivoirienne.

Le président de la chambre des Représentants met en garde les députés

Le président de la Chambre des Représentants, Bhofal Chambers, a mis en garde les députés contre des propos dégradants et des accusations fausses à l'encontre du régime en place. La mise en garde du numéro un de la chambre basse fait suite à une plainte du député Dixon Seboe contre

le député du district 10 du comté de Montserrado.

Dans un courrier qu'il a adressé à l'Assemblée plénière jeudi, le député Dixon Seboe du district 16 a accusé son collègue, le représentant Kolubah du district 10 du comté de Montserrado d'avoir tenu des propos incendiaires et incité le peuple à la haine à l'égard du

régime du président George Weah.

Selon lui, le mercredi 4 décembre 2019, lors d'un entretien avec OK FM, le député Kolubah a affirmé qu'il a été informé par des sources dignes de foi que le gouvernement du Libéria a imprimé les billets de banque et les a introduits dans le pays via Kenya Airways.

Selon le représentant Seboe, le représentant Kolubah a également accusé le gouvernement Libérien, y compris tous ses fonctionnaires, de s'être livré au blanchiment d'argent, sans donner la moindre preuve.

Le député Seboe, qui préside le comité parlementaire sur les banques et les devises, a averti que des propos de ce type non seulement risquent de mettre en péril la sécurité des banques commerciales, car les usagers pourraient précipitamment retirer leur argent en dollar libérien qui est déjà rare, mais aussi cela constitue un grave risque politique. Il a demandé à

l'assemblée Plénière de la chambre basse de prendre les mesures appropriées contre le Représentant Yekeh afin qu'il ne tienne pas des propos dont l'objectif principal est d'embarrasser le gouvernement.

Mais le représentant Kolubah a nié avoir accusé le gouvernement à tort,

précisant qu'il avait dit à OK FM qu'il avait dans son téléphone des photos et des vidéos qui montrent que le gouvernement a apporté de l'argent dans le pays, et que s'il s'avérait que le gouvernement a imprimé de l'argent sans que l'Assemblée législative en soit informée, alors il s'agirait du blanchiment d'argent.



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Français

Editorial

Perte de son poste permanent à l'OMI, un désastre pour le Libéria

Le Libéria ne siègera pas au Conseil de 40 membres de l'Organisation maritime internationale (OMI) dans les deux prochaines années après que le pays a été battu lors des élections et relégué au rang de simple membre à Londres.

Le président de l'Autorité maritime du Libéria, le Dr James F. Kollie, a confirmé la perte dans un récent post, concédant : « Nous avons mené une grande bataille aujourd'hui à l'OMI, mais nous avons perdu. Le Libéria ne sera pas membre du Conseil cette biennale (2020 à 2021). Cependant, nous mettrons les morceaux ensemble et reviendrons pour un autre combat. Chapeau à l'équipe de Londres et à tous ceux qui nous ont soutenus. »

Selon le rapport, l'élection du Conseil a eu lieu le vendredi 29 novembre 2019, et le Libéria s'est classé 24e sur 24 États membres qui se sont présentés pour la catégorie C du Conseil, recevant 100 voix. Cette défaite signifie que le Libéria n'aura pas de voix au Conseil dans les deux prochaines années et devra compter sur d'autres nations pour parler en son nom, bien qu'il dispose de la deuxième plus grande flotte mondiale de navires sous pavillon de complaisance.

Mais tout cela n'a pas été une surprise. Le chef de mission permanent du Libéria auprès de l'OMI, Maître Isaac Jackson et l'administration Weah ont été en désaccord après que le président George Manneh Weah a nommé un proche, Moses Owen Brown, à sa place, bien qu'il s'agît d'un poste permanent.

Mais l'avocat Jackson a saisi la Cour suprême et a gagné le procès, mais depuis lors, le gouvernement a refusé son soutien, le privant de salaires. Nous avons appris que Jackson n'a pas été payé depuis 10 mois, y compris le loyer, et que les autorités de Monrovia ont refusé de renouveler son passeport officiel.

Une maison divisée contre elle-même ne peut pas tenir. Le Libéria s'est rendu aux élections de l'OMI divisé. Comment la mission permanente du pays, censée faire pression sur d'autres nations pour obtenir son soutien, peut-elle être seule ? L'administration Weah semble avoir abandonné la mission à l'OMI, uniquement pour des raisons politiques. C'est triste !

Nous avons intérêt à ne pas placer notre intérêt personnel au-dessus de l'intérêt national en tant qu'individu. Comment expliquez-vous le fait que nous disposions du deuxième plus grand registre de flotte mondiale et soyons exclus du Conseil qui exerce une grande influence sur les questions maritimes mondiales ?

Notre présence et notre participation à des instances internationales ne doivent pas être éclipsées par des motifs égoïstes. Peu importe qui est nommé comme chef de mission permanent à l'étranger par quelque administration que ce soit, l'État est une continuité, surtout quand il s'agit d'un poste permanent. C'est une question de respect de la Constitution et des statuts qui régissent l'existence même de l'État.

Nous espérons qu'avec cette défaite, les Libériens se ressaisiront pour réunir plus de soutien dans le cadre de son engagement sur le plan international. Le gouvernement devra aussi prendre l'initiative de soutenir la personne qui le représente là-bas sans tenir compte de son appartenance ethnique, religieuse, politique et sociale.

Nous croyons fermement qu'avec un effort dans le sens d'une collaboration, le Libéria sortira fort de cette défaite et sera bien plus préparé pour les prochaines élections au Conseil de l'OMI en 2021 pour regagner son siège qui lui revient de droit sur cette plateforme internationale vitale.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Sami Mahroum

Le monde arabe a besoin d'un débat du Brexit

BARCELONE - Depuis les trois dernières années, un monde confus assiste au compte à rebours du rebours de la sortie du Royaume-Uni de l'Union européenne, mieux connu sous le nom de Brexit. La sortie de l'UE va probablement avoir une grave incidence sur l'économie britannique. Pourtant, d'un point de vue arabe, le débat prolongé sur le Brexit n'est pas un signe d'échec politique. En revanche, seul un pays ayant une maturité politique aux racines aussi profondes que le Royaume-Uni peut espérer résister à une telle rupture dans les domaines juridique, commercial, voire même dans celui des relations sociales mises en place au cours du dernier demi-siècle.

Le monde arabe, en revanche, a été témoin d'au moins un grand événement comparable au Brexit chaque décennie depuis 1948 - et ces ruptures politiques, économiques et sociales ne semblent jamais guérir. Le premier épisode a été la création d'Israël et le « Brexit » du peuple palestinien hors du territoire qui est devenu l'État juif. Une grande partie de la Palestine historique a été abandonnée et ses habitants ont été destinés à vivre dans des camps pour les décennies à venir. Tout une économie arabe a disparu et Israël a été boycotté par ses voisins arabes.

Puis de 1952 à 1970, l'Égypte sous le président Gamal Abdel Nasser s'est lancée dans une expérience de nationalisation de son économie, qui défendait la substitution des importations et qui a considérablement affaibli les liens commerciaux du pays avec le reste de la région. Lorsque Anouar el-Sadate, le successeur de Nasser, a conclu un traité de paix avec Israël en 1979, les pays arabes ont puni l'Égypte par un boycott politique et économique.

Au cours de la même période, plusieurs autres grands États arabes, notamment l'Irak, la Syrie, la Libye et l'Algérie, se sont inspirés du modèle économique soviétique et ont restreint le commerce et les investissements du secteur privé. Contrairement aux 15 républiques qui composaient l'Union soviétique, les régimes du monde arabe, inspirés par les régimes soviétiques, n'ont pas développé le commerce entre eux : en fait, certains comme l'Irak et la Syrie se sont boycottés les uns les autres.

Lorsque l'économie politique du monde arabe n'est pas tombée en panne, sans pour autant prendre le chemin de l'autarcie, la géopolitique a infligé d'autres dommages. En 1990, les troupes irakiennes ont envahi et occupé le Koweït, qui était à l'époque l'économie la plus dynamique du monde arabe, privant ainsi ce pays de sa souveraineté. Suite à cela, l'Irak a subi des sanctions internationales et des forces armées sous commandement américain ont libéré le Koweït. Bien évidemment, en 2003, une coalition dirigée par les États-Unis a envahi et occupé l'Irak : une décision qui a entraîné l'ordre régional d'alors dans la tourmente et qui continue de l'affecter jusqu'à présent.

Durant le Printemps arabe de 2010 à 2016, la région a connu un processus accéléré de Brexit en chaîne, lorsque des manifestants dans plusieurs pays (Tunisie, Égypte, Libye, Syrie, Yémen et finalement Irak) ont recherché une liberté que de nombreux régimes considéraient comme illégitime. Pendant ce temps, les tensions politiques dans le reste du monde ont fermé la frontière entre l'Algérie et le Maroc aux affaires,

ont rompu les liens commerciaux entre le Qatar et plusieurs pays du Golfe et ont isolé l'Iran sur le plan économique.

Les « Brexits » arabes surviennent sans mise en garde, sans négociation, sans délibération parlementaire ni débat médiatique et persistent habituellement des décennies durant. Mais à présent, l'incidence de ces catastrophes économiques auto-infligées saute douloureusement aux yeux.

En fait, les manifestations actuelles, les grèves et la violence dans plusieurs pays arabes semblent indiquer l'heure d'une prise de conscience. Ces troubles pourraient provoquer un Printemps arabe 2.0, centré cette fois, nous l'espérons, sur la prospérité plutôt que sur le pouvoir.

C'est le message qui semble se faire entendre à Bagdad, à Beyrouth et dans d'autres villes dans la région, où les manifestants réclament que les politiciens prennent du recul et laissent les technocrates prendre la direction des opérations. Bien qu'il puisse sembler naïf de s'attendre à ce que des experts en politique se comportent mieux que des politiciens professionnels, les Arabes en ont assez des systèmes politiques opaques dans lesquels ils ont peu sinon aucune influence sur les décisions qui affectent leur vie.

Un Printemps arabe 2.0 devrait donc déclencher un débat sur le genre d'avenir économique que veulent les citoyens, sur leur mode d'interaction avec leurs propres gouvernements et sur leurs relations avec les pays voisins. Bref, après des décennies d'impasse de type Brexit, les Arabes doivent débattre des mêmes questions que celles auxquelles les électeurs britanniques sont confrontés depuis le référendum de juin 2016.

Cela implique l'ouverture du processus de prise de décision politique vers un débat et une prise de position à l'échelle de la société. Un engagement plus large auprès des talents technocratiques peut permettre d'y distinguer ces innovateurs politiques dont la région a si cruellement besoin. Bien que le monde arabe manque actuellement d'institutions fortes et actives du type des groupes de réflexion qui galvanisent la prise de position des experts (comme ceux qui ont façonné le destin d'autres pays au cours de crises graves), cela n'est pas toujours le cas. Après tout, l'engagement politique n'est pas seulement une affaire d'élections et de représentation, mais concerne également une analyse attentive et informée des activités de prise de position.

Dans La République, Platon a écrit : « il n'y a pas de bon gouvernement tant que les philosophes ne sont pas rois et les rois, philosophes. » En même temps, il n'y a bien sûr aucune garantie que des technocrates arabes ne deviennent pas eux-mêmes des politiciens sans scrupules. Hitler et Staline, par exemple, ont manipulé la science pour justifier de grands projets d'ingénierie sociale qui ont tué des millions de personnes.

Mais sans un certain effort visant à dépolitiser les politiques publiques et à placer l'engagement social avant la garantie de l'application de mesures politiques, de nouveaux Brexits arabes, ainsi que le maintien du malaise économique, sont une certitude. Des manifestants à Bagdad, à Beyrouth et ailleurs appellent à une politique participative et à un débat ouvert. Leur appel ne doit pas rester sans réponse.

Scorecard helps

Cont'd from page 7

commitments to create a single investment destination - through growing the private sector and delivering benefits to consumers."

All 15 ECOWAS member countries have endorsed the Scorecard and agreed to its implementation in each country.

For Irène Mingasson, European Union Ambassador to Senegal, "The fact that the EU is financing this Project is testimony of the EU's commitment to improving regional private sector competitiveness through the facilitation of trade and investment. Our support to improving investment conditions is part of the overall EU priority support to the ECOWAS and West Africa which has been ongoing for quite some time and we are committed with the new Africa-Europe Alliance to increase our support for boosting strategic investment and strengthening the role of

the private sector to create jobs."

Faheen Allibhoy, IFC Senegal Country Manager, IFC/World Bank Group, said: "Fostering a conducive business environment across the ECOWAS block is critical to allow the private sector in West Africa to become more competitive, expand beyond national markets and create more jobs and opportunities. The Scorecard targets reform efforts in order to attract and retain more private investment across the ECOWAS space."

Going forward, the ECOWAS Commission will coordinate the implementation of the Scorecard in all the member countries and ensure its sustainability. The Commission will also ensure the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Investment Policy and the ECOWAS Common Investment Code. -**Press release**

UL Alumni urged

Cont'd from page 7

protesting the arrest of two of UL faculty members were attacked by soldiers under the command of Master Sargent Samuel Kanyon Doe.

Meanwhile, Madam Saydah Taylor has lauded the former President of the University, Dr. Emmet A. Dennis for revitalizing the Alumni Association, encouraging the Alumni in fund raising and forming a committee which has been very active and instrumental in raising funds.

Earlier, Dr. Jonathan Taylor, UL Vice President for Graduate Studies, officially presented to AAUL President Mr. John Davis, II, members of the Centennial Graduating class whom he says will be officially inducted on Wednesday, 11 December during the centennial

commencement convocation.

For his part, the Vice President for UL Relations Atty. Norris Tweah expresses excitement on the graduation of the largest class in the University's history.

"So we are very, very happy, excited that after 1866 we are now celebrating the largest class. This is history in history," he says.

AAUL President Mr. Davis expresses delight to receive the new members of the Association, and encourages them to give their support to the Institution. The President of the AAUL in the Americas Mr. Melvin D. Howard pledges the continuous support of his team in the Americas, and also encourages Alumni members here in Liberia to give financial and moral support to the university.

Oil blocks

Starts from back page

re-demarcation process, resorting into nine (9) blocks within the Harper Basin and 24 blocks within the entire Liberia Basin. The Harper Basin, which covers nine blocks from LB-25 to LB33, will be tendered during the 2020 licensing round.

The statement says this is a watershed moment for Liberia and the LPRA is excited to reach an agreement with all parties, including TGS and NOCAL in promoting Liberia's offshore average and attracting investments that would support for the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) under

the leadership of President George Manneh Weah.

Meanwhile, a formal announcement on the actual licensing data in 2020 will be made shortly by President Weah, based on recommendation from the LPRA, working in concert with NOCAL and TGS.

Liberia had sold several oil blocks during the former Sirleaf administration but the ex-regime said deposits found did not meet commercial value, and the NOCAL became insolvent under Mr. Robert Sirleaf, son of Madam Sirleaf, and she took full responsibility under her watch. -**Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Citizens urged

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as you want to be treated.

"We have to be able to lead by example so that when someone is doing wrong we don't support that. And this is something that we do here in Liberia. We know that that thing is wrong, but then we try to say ... let us forgive that person," Madam Gaye notes.

She urges the involvement of everyone from the bottom to top, including kids, market women, students and workers while also recommending the use of radio programs that promote integrity.

This year, Madam Musu Mulbah, a nurse working at the C.B. Dunbar Hospital in

Gbarnga, Bong County, obtained the highest votes for the Integrity Icon award, followed by Mr. Ord - Sied Jlateh of the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA).

The other three winners include Mr. Samuel G. Ford, an Assistant Commissioner of Police at the Liberia National Police, Madam Oretha Thomas of the Ministry of Gender and Mr. Henry Sele of the Ministry of Agriculture.

All of the winners were gownned and certificated by Accountability Lab, as a way of encouraging integrity among civil servants here.

Giving the overview of the program, Mr. Lawrence Yealue

says transforming Liberia with integrity will definitely mean building and changing the country, regardless of all that is happening.

He recalls that in preparation for the event, volunteers of Accountability Lab went out in the field from various ministries to agencies, riding motorbikes to get information on those that were nominated for the awards.

Following the nominations, he says nominees were vetted by jurors drawn from anti-graft agencies including the General Auditing Commission, Liberia Anti-corruption Commission and the international community. The

Lawmakers in



Cont'd from page 6

sDuring the 2018 national budget, each lawmaker was entitled to US\$2500 worth of coupons, but due to prevailing economic constraints characterized shortage of local bank notes and delays in payment of salary, government sliced this amount by 50 percent.

The Liberian government spent over US\$287, 000.00 monthly on petroleum products from Super Petroleum, a local vendor here.

Meanwhile, the leadership

of the House has set up an investigative team that is currently probing Rep. Cole.

When contacted via mobile, the Bong County lawmaker he admitted to facing some internal investigation, but not about coupon slips.

According to him, someone in the midst had attempted taking about US\$13,000 intended for coupons for personal use, which was discovered and reported immediately to the leadership, clarifying it has nothing with his personal

involvement in theft.

"Anybody tells [you] that is false and misleading. There were some misunderstanding but we have resolved it. In fact, I discovered US\$13,000 that was intended for coupon and that money was put back. It is true about some internal investigation, but not about coupon theft," he said.

When Speaker Chambers was contacted via mobile concerning the information, his phones rang endlessly without picking up the call. -**Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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“Weah has failed...”

Former Vice President Joseph N. Boakai says President George Weah has failed the Liberian people and insists that the government should provide protection for protesters on December 30th to express their constitutional rights.

“The President has failed the Liberian people and that instead of addressing them he has deferred to surrogates who have resorted to inflammatory language to find scapegoats and to add fuel to the fire,” Mr. Boakai said in a widely circulated nationwide address Friday.

“As regards the December 30th Protest, it is important that aggrieved group of citizens exercise their constitutional right of assembly and freedom of expression. The government must perform its obligation to provide security and protection. On the go-slow by civil servants, government must meet up with its



Pres. Weah

obligation. These patriotic citizens have played their part. They deserve the dignity of their labour and the right to provide for their families,” the former Vice President said.

Mr. Boakaiearlier painted a

gloomy picture about the country’s current situation describing Liberia as “a rudderless ship adrift on a turbulent sea hurtling towards disaster.”

Mr. Boakai was defeated by

President Weah in the 2017 election’s presidential rerun. He says events such as the nonpayment of civil servants, teachers and other professional groups salary arrears and the treats of go slow action coupled with the planned December 30th Weah step down campaign are compelling indications that the country is headed for trouble if steps are not taken to address these issues.

“The Liberian people and the world continue to demand full accountability and action regarding the missing L\$16 billion and the US\$25 million allocated for mopping up excess liquidity.

Economic hardship continues to impact lives throughout the country. The banks are failing their obligations to depositors. Families are sleeping hungry while students are being thrown out of school for non-payment of tuition and fees. Overall school enrolment has drastically declined compared to previous years while hospitals and healthcare facilities are struggling to attend to the sick due to lack of basic equipment and supplies. Businesses are closing. Inflation is running high while unemployment defies gravity.

In the face of this mounting

crisis, the people and our partners look up to the President for assurance. But, the President has failed to address his people and has instead deferred to surrogates who have resorted to inflammatory language to find scapegoats and to add fuel to the fire.” The former Vice President said.

He also questions the government’s request to print additional money in the face of structural deficiencies and governance abnormality highlighted by both the PIT and Kroll Reports.

“Moreover, the government has not given convincing reasons nor has it put in place adequate guarantees for accountability. We are all sitting on a tinderbox.” He said.

However, he said there was a need for all sides to exercise restraint and to work within the confines of the Constitution.

“We must not overturn the apple cart. Liberians have demonstrated that they are capable of conducting peaceful protests. Equally, Government has proven its ability to provide security and protection for all. Let each and every Liberian play his or her part to preserve this sacred heritage of ours. The Republic of Liberia is bigger than any one individual. Let us all work together,” he concluded.

Taylor set freed

Agnes Taylor, the ex-wife of the jailed former Liberian president Charles Taylor, is to be freed from prison after an Old Bailey judge dismissed a series of torture charges against her, the UK Guardian has reported.

According to the Guardian on Friday, prosecution, which related to offences allegedly committed during the west African state’s civil war in 1990, had been repeatedly delayed following several years of legal argument that eventually reached the UK’s supreme court.

Taylor, 54, from Dagenham, east London, had been working as a senior lecturer for Coventry University. She was charged in 2017 and denied all wrongdoing, but had been held in Bronzefield women’s prison awaiting trial, which had been due to begin in January next year.

Because they are deemed to be so serious, charges of

torture - like war crimes - can be tried in UK courts under universal jurisdiction, wherever any offences are said to have occurred.

Taylor, wearing a green jumper and pearl necklace, appeared at the Old Bailey on Friday via video link from Bronzefield prison to hear Mr Justice Sweeney dismiss all the charges against her. The prosecution indicated it would not appeal.

The Old Bailey had previously heard one count related to the alleged torture of a pastor’s wife by tying her up and her witnessing the shooting of her two children.

A further three of the eight torture charges related to “severe pain or suffering” allegedly inflicted on a 13-year-old boy. A conspiracy to torture charge related to allegations of rapes by National Patriotic Front of Liberia forces in a village.

She had been accused of committing the crimes while serving as a public official or

acting in an official capacity.

Charles Taylor was Liberia’s president from 1997 to 2003. He is serving a 50-year sentence in a British prison after being convicted in 2012 at an international tribunal in The Hague of aiding and abetting war crimes in Sierra Leone. Up to 250,000 people are believed to have been killed during the conflict in West Africa, partially over “blood diamonds”, between 1989 and 2003.

The former president has appealed to the UN-backed tribunal to be allowed to serve his sentence in Africa. Taylor has been held in Frankland prison, near Durham.

Responding to the collapse of the trial, Charlie Loudon, the international legal adviser at the charity Redress, which intervened in the Supreme Court proceedings, said: “This is a difficult result, principally for the victims of the alleged crimes, who will be denied the chance to have the allegations tested at a trial.

“In terms of the broader legal consequences, the supreme court has made clear that members of other armed groups that exercise sufficient control, such as Isis and the Taliban, can be prosecuted for torture under UK law. And similar alleged crimes that have occurred more recently than this case, anytime since 1991, if proven could also be prosecuted as war crimes.

“The priority is that the UK continues to invest in prosecuting cases like this. The British public does not want suspected torturers and war criminals walking on its streets. And for many victims

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across the world, their only hope for justice is through a British court.”

Handing down his ruling, which was not read in court during the 10-minute hearing, the judge said Taylor could not be charged with torture as a crime against humanity or a war crime because the alleged offences took place in 1990 - before the relevant sections of the International Criminal Court Act were introduced in 1991.

Taylor left Liberia in 1992 and divorced her husband in 1996, before the end of the civil war. She has not left the UK since 2001, the court previously heard.

Prosecutors argued that she was acting in a de facto official capacity on behalf of armed group the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), said to have been formed by Charles Taylor and responsible for attacks on President Samuel Doe during the civil war.

In her defence case statement following her arrest in 2017, Ms Taylor said that at no time did she act in an official capacity for the NPFL and disputed that the NPFL was the de facto governmental authority in the relevant areas at the relevant times.

Ms Taylor is said to have had no contact with the former

dictator following his conviction for aiding and abetting the commission of war crimes, for which he was sentenced to 50 years in jail.

Ms Taylor applied for indefinite leave to remain in the UK in 2013, which was turned down in 2016 on the basis that there were concerns she may have committed a war crime.

An immigration judge will now be asked to rule on her immigration status, meaning she could be allowed to continue living in the UK where she has family, including two sisters and a jazz musician brother.

A CPS spokesperson said: “This has been a landmark case, involving complex issues of law which were addressed for the first time by the Supreme Court, the highest court in the UK. New boundaries have been established to define who can be considered as acting in an ‘official capacity’ in the context of torture allegations.

“The Supreme Court refined the interpretation of the law and in light of their judgment, the trial judge granted Agnes Taylor’s application to dismiss the case against her. We will give careful consideration to that ruling.”



Ex-Pres. Charles Taylor



Agnes Taylor

Oil blocks for sale



-Govt. announces

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The Government of Liberia through the Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority (LPRA) announces sale of several blocks here, beginning next licensing round.

A statement from the Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority says the decision followed an unsuccessful ratification of negotiated petroleum sharing contracts in 2014, which climaxed the last round of bidding process.

The statement issued over the weekend notes the Government of Liberia made

a shrewd and progressive decision, through a robust reform process to provide efficient institutional governance system, maximize revenue from potential petroleum resources, and promote citizens' participation.

The reform, besides slump in oil prices and the Ebola crisis, resorted to temporary dormancy within the sector. But after the passage of the New Petroleum and Reform Law of 2014, and the setting up of the LPRA, Government is now in a position to proceed with the tendering process.

In a meeting held between the bankrupt National Oil Company of Liberia or NOCAL, LPRA and TGS (the geophysical company hosting Liberia's offshore seismic data and rendering technical support), it was unanimously agreed that all parties have established the need for capabilities and internal mechanisms to ensure Government conducts a successful bid round to attract investors.

The LPRA discloses the next round of bidding, expected to commence in April 2020, will affect blocks within Harper Basin, Maryland County, southeast Liberia.

The 2019 amendment to the New Petroleum Law triggered a

WINNERS

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