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Cllr. Ndubusi Nwabudike

P11

Naked Weapon

MCC raids New Dawn's office



P7



Workers next door untouched



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CMYK



Continental News

Tunisians self-isolate in factory to make masks

Employees at a Tunisian factory are churning out 50,000 face masks a day and other protective medical gear after opting to go into lockdown at work.

The 150 workers, mainly women, have isolated themselves at the Consomed factory for a month.

They were spurred on by patriotism as the country battles coronavirus, their manager Hamza Alouini told the BBC.

Employee Khawla Rebhi said she greatly missed her family, but her colleagues' good cheer provided some compensation.

"My husband and 16-year-old daughter supported and encouraged me to do this," Ms Rebhi, who is in charge of the production line, told the BBC.

Live tracker: Coronavirus in Africa

The factory usually exports its protective gear, but its focus now is to produce enough for the health sector at home.

The North African nation, which went into lockdown on Sunday, has 227 confirmed cases of coronavirus and six patients have died in the last week. Among those who moved into the factory, which is in a rural area south of the capital,

Tunis, a week ago are cooks, a doctor and pharmacist.

There are separate dormitories for 110 women and 40 men - and enough stocks to last a month. "We have a designated area for all kinds of exercise and dancing

for the women, and the men have a football and basketball area," Ms Rebhi told me.

"And we all have internet and video chat with our families when we are not working."

She says the factory runs from 06:30 to 22:30 local time every day on two eight-hour shifts, with the men mainly on the later one. On their eighth day of confinement, Mr Alouini said there were still "positive vibes" from everyone.

He said the staff felt the need to isolate at the factory because if the virus spread within the workforce, they would not be able to keep up with the needs of doctors in the country.

"If we don't work our doctors will not be protected against the virus," he told the BBC's Focus on Africa radio programme.

"I'm trying to do my best for all my country - for the hospitals, for the army, for the police, for everybody."

Ms Rebhi says the workforce's sense of mission is giving them all hope, but she cannot deny that they are worried about efforts to contain Covid-19.

"I am looking at how other governments are struggling with it in Europe and elsewhere and I can't help but wonder how a country like Tunisia will handle it." BBC



The factory workers opted to isolate themselves to better guarantee their ability to keep making protective gear

South African workers freed from mask-making factory

The authorities in the South African city of Durban have freed 14 workers who had been "locked up in a [mask-making] factory since Monday", a local government minister said.

They also arrested the owner of the business.

The workers "were forced to manufacture hundreds of masks to meet the demand caused by the outbreak of

coronavirus", KwaZulu-Natal's tourism and environmental affairs minister Nomusa Dube-Ncube said in a statement.

They were "subjected to inhuman conditions", she added.

Ms Dube-Ncube said that officials were acting on a tip off from the public after its inspectors found that masks were selling in the shops for \$44 (£35) each.

South Africa is currently in the third day of a 21-day lockdown as it attempts to slow down the spread of coronavirus.

There are more than 1,100 confirmed cases in South Africa, higher than any other country on the continent. One person has died after contracting Covid-19, the disease caused by the virus. BBC



Zimbabwe coronavirus victim died 'alone and scared'

Cooped up in an isolation ward, a young Zimbabwean man who had been diagnosed with Covid-19, pleaded with his family for help.

Thirty-year-old Zororo Makamba was "alone and scared", according to his older brother who spoke to Zimbabwe's privately owned Daily News newspaper.

Makamba was being treated in the Wilkins Hospital, designated as the main isolation facility for coronavirus patients in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare.

Shortly after he talked to his family, he was dead. The death of Makamba, a well-known journalist, came swiftly - less than three days after his diagnosis. Famous for his online social and political commentary, under the banner "State of the Nation", his death achieved an unwanted milestone. He was the country's first coronavirus casualty and it shocked Zimbabwe.

The fact that Makamba came from a wealthy, high-profile family did not save him, and family members have argued that his death has exposed the inadequacies of the country's medical response to the threat of coronavirus. "The government is ill prepared to deal with the

virus," older brother Tawanda Makamba told the Daily News.

The health ministry said his pre-existing condition made him vulnerable to the disease. He had undergone surgery last November to remove a tumour from under his lung and was in recovery.

While his family admit that his immune system was compromised, they insist that his death could have been avoided. Very few



governments were prepared for a public health crisis of this magnitude. As the coronavirus swept through Asia, Europe and the US, Zimbabwe has watched from the sidelines as advanced economies with better developed health care systems have buckled under the strain. The shortage of hospital beds, of protective clothing and life-saving equipment, such as ventilators, is a global problem. BBC

EDITORIAL

Bracing ourselves for the worse

LIBERIANS ARE NO doubt a resilient people, who come together to addressing a common problem that threaten their wellbeing nationally. A case in point, Liberians stood in a united front and defeated the dealy Ebola virus in 2015.

WE HAVE NOT seen that same resilience since President Weah announced the first case of the COVID-19 in the country a week ago followed by subsequent cases. We see a national leadership void here on this pandemic that is ravaging countries around the world with death toll now already hitting 400,000.

ONE PATRIOTIC LIBERIAN and former official who has stood up to suggest a way forward is Dr. Nathaniel Barnes, ex-minister and ambassador.

DR. BARNES WARNS that it could get worse in Liberia due to lack of capacity and global impact both on the social and economic fronts unless government embarks immediately on series of stimulus packages to save the population from obvious starvation and death.

HE STRESSE THE need to incent and subsidize business people, especially importers of rice, the nation's staple and other basic commodities. He recommends tax waiver for rice importers in order to avoid hoarding and price hike so the commodity can reach the most vulnerable.

THE LIBERIAN ECONOMIST further suggests government, thru the Central Bank suspends payment on loans by commercial banks and pay civil servants, including those sent on compulsory leave.

THE WEAH ADMINISTRATION has not indicated which way it is taking the economy that could no doubt, negatively impact citizens' lives besides the Coronavirus.

THE AUTHORITIES HERE are pre-occupied with locking down, including closure of schools, churches, and mosques than looming economic consequences that may soon hit the population.

EVEN THE LIBERIAN Senate has called on President Weah to take charge of the pandemic himself, rather than leaving the situation with his officials. While infection may slow for now, the rate of contacts is rapidly increasing, which shows a looming calamity is ahead.

WE COULD NOT have agreed with Grand Kru County Senator Doctor Peter Coleman, who chairs the Senate Committee on Health, any better. President Weah should switch from being a backbencher in the current crisis and take charge.

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COMMENTARY

By Tim Dixon & Mathieu Lefèvre

The "Invisibles" in the Pandemic

The COVID-19 crisis leaves some people more vulnerable than others to the economic and social fallout. The G20 should create initiatives that reflect the inclusive foundations of the Marshall Plan rather than the inadequate bailouts of the Great Recession.

LONDON/PARIS - The COVID-19 pandemic began with trust in institutions at an all-time low. Politics was polarized and social cohesion stretched thin. That is why as governments scramble to direct massive resources to households and businesses, they must not neglect those local communities where the health crisis and the economic fallout will most visibly intersect.

As G20 leaders convene online this week to coordinate a response to COVID-19, the drop in global GDP expected in the coming months seems likely to exceed the contraction during the post-2008 Great Recession. Unlike the global financial crisis that triggered that downturn, the pandemic threatens to shutter entire sectors of economies across the world. We simply have no precedent for so much of so many economies suddenly halting simultaneously.

The domestic responses to the Great Recession were inadequate. Bailouts stabilized financial institutions and urban centers while leaving millions behind in rural and semi-rural regions. As austerity and automation eroded prospects for better lives in non-urban communities, a sense of injustice took root. Populists exploited these grievances, turning citizens against migrants, refugees, the media, the "establishment," and experts of all types.

To avoid repeating those errors, we need to address both the economic and social capital in these stranded communities. The COVID-19 outbreak has spurred thousands of community-based efforts around the world - in streets, apartment blocks, and in neighborhood WhatsApp and Facebook groups. These initiatives offer practical support to those isolated and most at risk from the virus. Balcony-singing Italians and other examples of generosity and community spirit provide bright moments in these dark times.

But community networks are much weaker in places where they will soon be most needed. For the past three years, More in Common, an NGO which we lead, has been reporting on social fractures in Western democracies. Our studies have found in each country a segment of "invisibles," who feel society ignores them. These "invisibles" are distinguished not by a specific income group, age, race, gender, or political belief, but by their disengagement from society.

Compared to others, invisibles are far more likely to distrust people and institutions of all kinds. More than any demographic group, they are vulnerable to polarizing "us-versus-them" narratives that fuel social conflict. This is profoundly dangerous in times of

crisis. And the invisibles are not a small group. The invisibles comprise around one-third of the total population in France, Germany, and the United States.

To be sure, economic change has hit these people hard, and declining job prospects have caused many to fear that they can't compete with immigrants who will work for less. But these individuals feel excluded socially as well. They are more likely to feel lonely, disrespected, and that they do not belong. And by exploiting their anger, frustration, and sense of powerlessness, populists have seized power in many countries, or are close to it.

What is needed to make trillion-dollar rescue packages effective and to avoid the grave mistakes of the Great Recession is a matching effort to strengthen social cohesion in developed and developing countries alike. The G20 countries could start with a commitment to match every dollar invested in shoring up economies with a cent for community funds targeting areas with depleted social capital.

Such funds could provide resources on a micro-scale to strengthen and rebuild community life and connection, with a special focus on the "invisibles" who will bear the brunt of the economic shutdown and social distancing measures. Crises on the scale we are now facing can leave communities more deeply divided, but they also provide the opportunity to bring people together.

The total value of the G20 COVID-19 interventions already exceeds that of the post-World War II Marshall Plan. Seventy-five years ago, economies were shattered, millions had been turned into refugees, and despair abounded. General George C. Marshall's plan to rebuild societies and economies was a remarkable feat of cooperation between the US and Europe.

Marshall's clarion call at the launch of the Plan in 1947 was for "the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist." Marshall had learned from the mistakes of the 1920s and 1930s that vulnerable societies, when left divided, succumb to the lure of authoritarianism.

In preparing for a post-pandemic future, G20 leaders should heed this lesson. The prosperity that became possible for the children of the Marshall Plan - now in their 70s and 80s, and thus the most threatened by coronavirus - was built on inclusive economic and social foundations. To survive this pandemic with hope intact, we need to rebuild not just for some but for all.

O-PED

By Javier Solana

Our Finest Hour

Over the coming weeks, much will be at stake collectively, and for some of us also individually. Today, uncertainty about what the post-pandemic world will look like is rife, but we do know it will be built upon the words and deeds we choose now.

MADRID - As many readers may know, I am currently hospitalized in Madrid after having tested positive for COVID-19. My recovery has been slow, but the prospects are encouraging. Although remaining isolated from my loved ones has been unpleasant, it is a relief that these hardships are befalling us in the twenty-first century, with so many tools at our disposal to remain socially connected. More traditional pastimes - listening to music, reading, and, indeed, writing - have been a gift as well.

For many hours, I have relied upon a distinguished companion to endure this confinement: none other than Winston Churchill. I have always been fascinated by the wartime British prime minister, and these days I have been able to discover new details about his life, thanks to an extraordinary biography by the historian Andrew Roberts.

Churchill's admirable resilience throughout World War II is an endless source of inspiration, particularly in times like these. His character and track record - both undoubtedly complex - remind us that heroism is compatible with imperfection, that presence of mind is compatible with contradiction, and that courage is compatible with hesitation. Characters like Churchill deserve to be recognized, which is not to say they should be uncritically glorified.

In the private wars that many of us are already waging against COVID-19, and that many others will unfortunately have to fight as well, we will surely experience some of the "blood, toil, tears, and sweat" that Churchill spoke of in May 1940. But we should also try to emulate his buoyant spirit. The virus reportedly alters some patients' senses of smell and taste, but there is no reason why it should numb our sense of humor.

From a collective standpoint, it also makes sense to take a page out of Churchill's book. In recent days, many world leaders have claimed that we are at war against the virus - and, to some extent, they are right. As in any other war, resources need to be mobilized, and a host of civic values - such as duty, comradeship, and public service - need to be promoted with renewed conviction. The outstanding health professionals who, in Spain and all over the world, are giving their absolute best to fight the virus and alleviate the suffering of the ill are an example to us all.

We are facing a crisis of historic proportions. But if what we are going through can indeed be called a war, it is certainly not a typical one. After all, today's enemy is shared by all of humankind, and the mobilization of state resources must go hand in hand with the demobilization of most of the population.

It is important not to lose sight of these and other differences. Otherwise the war rhetoric could cloud our judgment, leaving us vulnerable to certain traps. To avoid these undesirable scenarios, allow me to ring a few alarm bells and raise a few caveats.

First, we must not mistake strong leadership - which will certainly be needed in these dire circumstances - for inflexible leadership. Our governments should be given enough wiggle room to tackle this emergency properly, but that should not be taken to mean *carte blanche* - not now and not ever.

Ensuring maximal preservation of civil liberties and continuing to hold our leaders accountable is not just an ethical imperative; it is also our best line of defense against threats like the one we face today. Doing so does not weaken our societies; on the contrary, it enriches the public debate, thus increasing our chances of identifying the most suitable responses.

Second, we must not mistake patriotic responsibility - which no doubt will be needed and welcome - for exclusive forms of nationalism. This is no time for scapegoating or succumbing to panic and liberating our worst instincts. The ongoing crisis will be resolved only through rationality, compassion, and mutual understanding, both within and beyond our borders. All avenues of international scientific and technological cooperation must be explored, and always in a spirit of solidarity, which today, more than ever, overlaps fully with our own interests. The key to overcoming the current crisis is to ensure that the global spread of best practices outpaces the global spread of the virus.

Last, we must ensure that the socioeconomic landscape that emerges from this metaphorical war is in no way akin to those left behind after a real one. Reconstruction efforts must, in other words, be conceived preventively rather than reactively, and the shock-absorbing machinery must start working at full speed immediately.

European Union institutions and EU member states alike need to commit to do whatever it takes in this respect, in order to rise to the challenge. Other multilateral organizations and fora will also be indispensable in designing an effective joint response. Looking further into the future, we will need to make sure not to forget the many virtues of globalization - which of course requires careful reevaluation, but not outright rejection.

Over the coming weeks, much will be at stake collectively, and for some of us also individually. Today, uncertainty about what the post-pandemic world will look like is rife. But we do know it will be built upon the words and deeds we choose now. We would do well, therefore, to look the evil before us in the eye, while never losing sight of our own future and that of coming generations.

Humankind has overcome harder tests than this one, and the actions needed now are in no way equivalent to those undertaken during World War II. But, even if the COVID-19 crisis is not remembered as our respective countries' "finest hour," to borrow Churchill's words, let it at least be remembered as our own.

OPINION

By Andrew Sheng, Xiao Geng

Waging War on COVID-19

Like any war, the fight against COVID-19 will disproportionately hurt those who were already vulnerable. Unless countries can move past destructive nationalism and petty competition in order to engage in constructive cooperation, millions will suffer, both physically and economically.

HONG KONG - The world is at war. The enemy is resilient, ruthless, and unpredictable, with no regard for race, nationality, ideology, or wealth. Already, it has killed more than 26,000 people and infected over 560,000, from ordinary workers to the United Kingdom's prime minister and crown prince. It has halted economies, overwhelmed health-care systems, and forced hundreds of millions to remain confined to their homes. And it will not back down.

Unlike a conventional war, the COVID-19 pandemic is not a choice or a competition. No ceasefire can be reached, no treaty signed. And, with no known vaccine or effective cure, the world has few weapons with which to fight it. The only way to restore peace - or, at the very least, stave off systemic failure until a more effective weapon is developed - is with a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, whole-of-world approach.

The most urgent imperative is to ensure that the frontline is not overwhelmed. As an Imperial College study showed, the best way to do that is through early and resolute social distancing: keeping people away from one another in order to slow down transmission. This replaces a steep, exponential "pandemic peaking curve" of infection with a "flattened" curve, in which severe cases do not exceed the health-care system's capacity.

That is not what happened in Wuhan, China, where the virus first emerged. With authorities unaware of COVID-19's pathology or potential, they had to play catch-up - a delay that probably increased total fatalities. Nor is it what happened in Italy, where the health system quickly became overwhelmed, and the number of fatalities now exceeds twice that of China.¹

The lesson is clear: governments must urgently implement lockdown measures. China and Italy have both done so (though China's more draconian measures - together with other actions, such as building designated COVID-19 hospitals, and demographic factors - have proved more effective.)

Yet, while such action is vital to protect public health, it puts severe stress on the economy. The longer the lockdown persists, the greater the likelihood of large-scale unemployment, collapsing demand, and recession, especially given the prevalence of longstanding global asset bubbles supported by zero or negative interest rates.

The "just-in-time" global economy cannot survive more than two months of lockdown before its "Minsky moment" - when investors start panic selling, a boom becomes a crash, and a bubble goes bust. Already, Western stock markets have plummeted. In the United States, the Dow Jones Industrial Average, even with its recent uptick, is on track for its worst month since the Great Depression.¹

Though China's stock market has so far endured the lockdown without a sharp decline, largely because it had already suffered from the trade war with the US, vast amounts of wealth have been destroyed. During the first two months of 2020, China's industrial value-added for large and medium-size enterprises declined by 13.5% year on year; urban investment on fixed assets plummeted by 24.5%; and total retail sales dropped 20.5%. In December 2019, by contrast, all three had grown - by 6.9%, 5.4%, and 8%, respectively.¹

The lesson is clear: While lockdowns are essential, so is strong action to revive production and consumption. In the short term, this can mean active monetary and fiscal policy. But such measures have only limited potential. Even the US Federal Reserve's rapid move to cut interest rates and promise to pump trillions of dollars failed to stem the stock-market decline.

Fiscal measures could have a stronger impact. Indeed, it was the congressional approval of an unprecedented \$2 trillion economic-stabilization package - which includes direct payments to taxpayers, unemployment benefits, and a \$500 billion fund to assist businesses - that halted the US stock market's decline. But even that can do only so much in the event of a protracted lockdown.

Most workers and businesses hold limited cash reserves. A recent Brookings study showed that 44% of Americans are low-wage hourly workers, and a 2019 Fed survey suggested that 40% of American adults wouldn't be able to cover an unexpected \$400 expense with cash, savings, or a credit-card charge that could be repaid quickly.

In the European Union, 22.4% of the population - 112.8 million people - lived in households at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2017. These people cannot afford to have their incomes interrupted for long. And, because many of them perform jobs that cannot be done remotely, a protracted lockdown would do just that.

That is all the more likely, because many of their employers would not be able to continue paying them. JP Morgan estimates that the median cash buffer is 16 days for restaurants, 19 days for retail stores, 27 days for all small business, 33 days for high-tech services, and 47 days for real-estate companies.

The International Labor Organization forecasts anywhere from 5.3 million to 24.7 million lost jobs due to the pandemic. (The 2008 crisis increased global unemployment by 22 million.) In the US alone, 3.3 million people filed for unemployment benefits last week, one third more than the Goldman Sachs estimate of 2.25 million.

Yet there is little reason to expect the pandemic to come to a quick and decisive end. According to the Imperial College, even if the peak is reached soon, reverse waves of smaller outbreaks could require repeated lockdowns, until an effective vaccine is developed, tested, manufactured, and distributed widely - a process that will take a minimum of 12-18 months.

The world has only one hope of offsetting the consequences of periodic economic shutdowns during this period: cooperation. That includes both coordinated economic policies and the free exchange of knowledge and data.

Like any war, the fight against COVID-19 will disproportionately hurt those who were already vulnerable. Unless countries can move past destructive nationalism and petty competition - such as US President Donald Trump's insistence on calling COVID-19 the "Chinese virus" - millions will suffer. The resulting anger could push the world toward conventional conflict, causing even more destruction and suffering.¹

Pandemics, like wars, are not about who is right, but who is left. We need a global alliance for victory.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Cllr. Ndubusi Nwabudike is not a Liberian and is therefore not qualify to sit on the National Elections Commission (NEC)

We must be clear, a naturalized Liberian - whether from Nigeria, Ghana, or America and Italy (Negro or Negro descent) - can serve on the National Elections Commission of Liberia. However, the case of Mr. Ndubusi Nwabudike is completely different, he is not a naturalized Liberian!

Mr. Nwabudike claims he was born in Nigeria and his parents are from Delta State in Nigeria. Cf. Frontpage Africa March 27, 2020 online story written by Lennart Dodoo: <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/frontslider/liberian-senate-conducts-confirmation-hearing-today-on-the-controversial-appointment-of-nigerian-born-liberia-as-chairman-of-elections-commission/>. This statement alone affirms that he is a Nigerian citizen. "Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria." Article 25 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Because Mr. Nwabudike was born in Nigeria after the date of independence and both of his parents were citizens of Nigeria, he is a Nigeria citizen by birth. Id.

There exist credibility and trust issues surrounding the inconsistent accounts that Mr. Nwabudike has given to the public and the Liberian Senate about his background. He has indicated on his curriculum vitae that his place of origin is Montserrado County. Such a blatant lie, and thus a crime or perjury. How then would an Igbo man's origin be Montserrado? I hope the Senate would ask Cllr. Nwabudike about this very strange history account. Our history tells us who the aboriginals of Montserrado or Ducor - is Nwabudike a Bassa man or Vai, or a Congo or Americo-Liberian too? While one nationality may change, no one origin and or birth place ever changed. For instance, President Weah's origin is Grand Kru County, being a resident and Senator for Montserrado County has never changed that fact; Saah Joseph's origin will always remain Lofa County.

Your parents came from Delta State, but your origin is Montserrado County. Really? Making up imaginary stories is not something easy for anyone, including Cllr. Nwabudike. If I were Nwabudike I had better stay quiet than seeking public attention and thus causing self-embarrassment.

An investigation conducted reveals that his claim of Liberian citizenship is unsupported by law. His story is poorly designed, and the inconsistencies are obvious. With all the doubts, Mr. Nwabudike now bears the ultimate burden to prove his Liberian citizenship. Practicing law, obtaining a voter's registration card or holding any previous positions set aside for a Liberian citizen, are not proof of citizenship under the law. One may use any of these scenarios as a "presumption" of his or her citizenship. This is true because our laws say so - a Certificate of Naturalization is legally required. Section 21.7 of the Alien and Naturalization Law. Hence, such certificate must be issued to in accordance with law to be good.

Our law provides that, "[a] person admitted to citizenship by a court ... shall be entitled upon such admission to receive from the clerk of such court a certificate of naturalization, which shall contain substantially the following information: Number of petition for naturalization; number of certificate of naturalization, date of naturalization; name, signature, place of residence, autographed photograph, and personal description of the naturalized person, including age, sex, marital status, and country of former nationality; title, venue, and location of the court issuing the order of naturalization; statement that the court, having found that the petitioner intends to reside permanently in Liberia, and has complied in all respects with all of the applicable provisions of the naturalization laws of Liberia, and was entitled to be admitted as a citizen of Liberia thereupon ordered that the petitioner be admitted as a citizen of Liberia; attestation of the clerk of the court issuing the order of naturalization, and seal of the court." Section 21.7 of the Alien and Naturalization Law (1973). We are also keen to note that the law requires all certificates of naturalization to be filed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hence, if Cllr.

Nwabudike had naturalized as he claimed, there would be a duplicate copy of his certificate. It is plain and simple that he is not a Liberian.

It is highly probable that Cllr. Nwabudike has misled the Liberian National Bar Association and the Supreme Court of Liberia by making false declarations to be admitted to practice law, and the Elections Commission to have voted in elections. Our law writers anticipated such conduct, thus there are legal and ethical ramifications for any violation that may have occurred - including prosecution or disbarment in the instant case.

It must be pointed out that Cllr. Nwabudike has tacitly admitted to his citizenship and allegiance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, when he informed us that he was born in Nigeria and his both parents are from the Delta State. He is still a Nigeria citizen pursuant to Article 25 of the Constitution of Nigeria. "Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria. Because Mr. Nwabudike was born in Nigeria after the date of independence and both of his parents were citizens of Nigeria, he is a Nigeria citizen by birth. Id.

Also, Cllr. Nwabudike fails to tender any proof that he has renounced his Nigerian citizenship to be able to legally obtain Liberian citizenship. Article 29 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that "[a]ny citizen of Nigeria of full age who wishes to renounce his Nigerian citizenship shall make a declaration in the prescribed manner for the renunciation. The President shall cause the declaration to be registered and upon such registration, the person who made the declaration shall cease to be a citizen of Nigeria." It is imperative to further point out that Cllr. Nwabudike cannot simultaneously carry both Nigerian and Liberian citizenships.

He claims that he was born in 1965 and came to Liberia in 1988 at the age of 23. Our investigation further shows that he has acquired his primary, secondary and undergraduate education in Nigeria as a Nigerian student and paid local fees up to his alleged graduation in June 1988. In the same June 1988, he enrolled at the University of Liberia Graduate School, and graduated in 1990, and later entered the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law. A careful perusal of his records from the University of Liberia reveals an apparent alteration to his place of birth. While it must also be noted that he attended the University of Liberia as a local student and paid fees charged to all Liberian students. This brings us to the next question when and how did Mr. Nwabudike acquire his Liberian citizenship in June of 1988 and the very same month and year he is said to have graduated from a Nigerian University as a Nigerian student. He is not a Liberian, otherwise he has the burden.

Again, attending the University of Liberia and paying local fees is not a proof of citizenship. It is our considered opinion that Cllr. Nwabudike's claim of Liberian citizenship is an obvious lie. Because it was not possible to have obtained Liberian citizenship without renouncing his Nigerian citizenship consistent with the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria quoted hereinabove.

Cllr. Nwabudike, the flabbergasted nominee to head NEC has made frantic efforts to throw a catchall basket to establish his citizenship at all costs - unfortunately, the basket leaks. In another account of his imaginary story, he also claimed that he became a Liberia citizen through his father's purported naturalization in the 1940s. Yet he has not offered his father's certificate of naturalization, but instead tends to use a flimsy war excuse. Clearly, he has made no efforts to search for his or his father alleged certificates of naturalization



because none exist. The evidence in this case would be Cllr. Nwabudike's certificate of naturalization and nothing more.

Assuming his father had naturalized in the 1940s, under the Liberian Naturalization law that does not make Cllr. Nwabudike an automatic citizen, because he has not chosen Liberia over Nigerian as his nationality since he turned 21. He has not renounced his allegiance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria as provided for under Nigerian law. Under our law, it is only permissible that a child enjoys dual nationality before s/he turns 21 - provided one parent was a Liberia citizen at the time of the child's birth. Because Cllr. Nwabudike has clearly admitted that both his parents are from Delta State this exception does not apply to him.

For the sake of argument, let us agree that his father was a naturalized Liberian, thus his father has forfeited that status before Nwabudike was born, because his father had returned to Nigeria, his country of origin, and stayed more than two consecutive years. Therefore, Mr. Nwabudike could not have acquired his purported citizenship through his father. He is not a Liberia citizen; otherwise, he has that burden. Thank God Cllr. Nwabudike has given us more facts to use. To become a Liberian, Cllr. Nwabudike must renounce his Nigeria citizenship, which he still holds.

It is evident that he continues to beat our system, but his nomination to NEC is the dawning of the new day. Ninety-nine days for rogues one day for the master. What was not done legally, is never done at all. Our institutions like the Liberian National Bar Association and the Court must muster the courage to correct this blunder. Understandably, he deceived everyone, including the Liberian Senate that previously confirmed him. As for the Bar and the Court, Nwabudike's conducts warrant disbarment, because making false declarations during Bar admission process is a cogent basis for disbarment and subsequent prosecution; as for the Government, Cllr. Nwabudike needs to be prosecuted and deported, and the Senate must reject him!

Additionally, it is not feasible that he is on the NEC commission, because his inclusion has the proclivity to undermine public trust in any electoral process and would further dent the credibility of any elections and results.

Mr. Nwabudike is not in good standing with the Liberian National Bar Association for years. He faces several corruption allegations. TO TRUST SUCH A MAN WITH OUR ELECTIONS, IS LIKE TRUSTING A GOAT WITH CASSAVA LEAF. FRANKLY, PRESIDENT DISAPPOINTS AGAIN BY THIS NOMINATION.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Senate seeks economic relief for citizens

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The plenary of the Liberian Senate seeks a leadership discussion with President George Manneh Weah to strategize ways in finding economic relief for the citizenry in the wake of the stay-home mandate to prevent spread of the deadly

discussion is most needed to bring relief to the citizens and other nationals here as the government continues with the enforcement measures for non-essential workers to stay home.

Sitting in their respective seats six (6) feet apart in the William Richard Tolbert Joint Chambers at the Capitol,

their needs must be considered.

The decision by the senate to call on its Leadership to discuss with President Weah was triggered by a regular briefing from Grand Kru County Senator Peter S. Coleman, who chairs the Senate Committee on health and also represents the senate on the Incident Management Team set up to combat the Corona virus.

Bringing the senate up to speed with latest updates on the status of the pandemic in the country, the chairman of the Senate's Statutory Committee on Health, Dr. Coleman notes that the three persons who were confirmed positive are still in stable condition and almost in their 14 day incubation period.

Senate Coleman further discloses that Liberia will receive masks and other safety materials from the African Union, based on a donation to that body by Chinese billionaire Jack Ma.

Senator Coleman also informs Plenary that although there is a package of US\$15 million from the World Bank toward the fight against the deadly Corona virus, there is no straight jacket spending on the amount.

He said with the new request for economic relief, the Government can possibly meet the World Bank and find a way to bring economic relief to the population.



Corona virus. The senators during their regular session at the Capitol called on President Weah to provide regular daily or weekly briefing to the country on issues of national concerns especially, COVID-19.

Plenary says the proposed

wearing masks, the senators say, if citizens especially, those who depend on regular sales from their market daily to feed their families must stay home to abide by the health regulations put in place by the Government, the imperative for the government to come to

Govt., Afriland Bank sign agriculture loan

The Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Minister Samuel D. Tweah, and the Minister of Agriculture, Madam Jeanine Cooper, on Thursday, 26 March, signed a cash collateral guarantee agreement with a local commercial bank, Afriland Bank, aimed at providing a financial remedy to rice processors in the Country.

Under the agreement, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning will provide an initial amount of Seven Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (US\$700,000.00) to the Afriland Bank as cash collateral for utilization by

farmers to increase food production is one of the newest hallmarks of the Government of Liberia under the PAPD. This tripartite initiative by both ministries and commercial banks will help in opening agro-financing windows for productive farmers in the country.

The cash collateral will facilitate a revolving credit facility for rice processors at a lower interest rate and will increase production and distribution of home-grown rice by purchasing and processing seed rice from farmers and cooperatives in the country. The Government of Liberia's decision comes



various rice processors to purchase paddy rice.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Thursday, March 26, at the Agriculture Ministry in Congo Town, Minister Jeanine Milly Cooper said signing of the loan agreement is a millstone for the country.

Minister Cooper said in the wake of the deadly Corona virus globally, countries that are importing rice and other commodities are considering shutting down their borders, which means Liberia that depends on importation of goods may face serious challenge in the near future.

She reiterated that providing financial access to

against the backdrop of poor access to credit in the agriculture sector as was articulated by rice farmers and processors during a recent business climate meeting in Ganta, Nimba County.

Research shows that commercial banks' lending to the agriculture sector in South Saharan Africa including Liberia is less than 4%. With limited, or no access to finance, farmers find it very difficult to increase their yield, especially in rice production. The intervention by the Government of Liberia is expected to create a paradigm shift in local rice production in the coming years.

CICO donates to Coronavirus fight in Liberia

As a way of identifying with nearby communities in the fight against the deadly Coronavirus in Liberia, CICO has donated several materials to residents of King Gray Community in Paynesville outside Monrovia.

The materials, which include buckets, clorox, soap and hand sanitizers are intended to help in fighting the COVID-19 as part of the company's effort in supporting the Government of Liberia to kick the deadly virus out of the country.

Mr. Zhou Zhishang, CICO Business Manager, who presented the items on behalf of the company, said CICO remains committed to giving back to nearby residents and communities, something which has been demonstrated in the past.

He called on residents of King Gray Community to help spread awareness messages against the virus and follow all protocols in keeping with government's recent



declaration of health emergency in the county.

Community Chairman, Mr. Byron Y.A. Clinton, who received the items on behalf of the community, expressed thanks and gratitude to the Management of CICO for the timely donation and called on residents to use the items

wisely.

Liberia's first or index case of the virus was confirmed Monday, March 16, 2020, when the Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Mr. Nathaniel T. Blama, was tested positive of the virus. A casual worker in his home was also reported

the second case early Tuesday.

In the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic and in an effort to keep the country safe, the Ministry of Health has declared a national health emergency in keeping with Title 33, Chapter 14 of the

Liberian Code of Law Reversed, known as the Public Health Law.

The Ministry of Health has designated two counties, Montserrado and Margibi as "Infected Areas" for 21 days.

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MCC raids New Dawn's office

Officers of the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) numbering about 20 in a gangster style on Sunday March 29, raided the offices of the New Dawn newspaper, saying they were enforcing a city law which requires offices to be closed on Sunday.

The officers took away laptops, phones, wheel barrows, shovel and two bags of cement which were lying on the floor as staff were rearranging the desks in the newsroom for Monday's production after a late tile laying on Saturday night.

One of the officers who had earlier engaged an Indian merchant next door who was only repairing his generator called upon his colleagues who asked no question but bulldozed their way into the newspaper's offices. Even upon being told that this is a newspaper, office, they remarked that newspapers should also be closed on Sundays.

The paper's Publisher and Managing Editor Mr. Othello B. Garblah placed several calls to officials of the MCC but it yielded no results after



several promises that they would have returned the items above.

The raid on the paper appears selective as even in front of the paper's offices contractors who were during an outdoor painting of the National Investment Commission's offices, where left untouched. As if that was not enough, carpenters were busy working outdoors in front of the Monrovia City Hall when Mr. Garblah went there purposely to complain about the raid.

This is the first time, that the incident has taken place here. It is not yet clear while the paper has been singled out, but the paper has been critical in recent times about the President's nominee to head the National Elections Commissions-Nigerian born naturalized Liberian Cllr. Ndubusi Nwabudike

The Commander of the Monrovia City Police assured this paper that the items raided from the paper's offices would have been returned on the same Sunday.

However, he defended his officers' actions saying they were in no wrong.

He was, however, quick to point out that authorities need to revisit their moratorium on working on Sunday to exclude the media.

As to whether his reference of media only refers to the print media because radio stations were blaring the airways on Sunday and none were shot down.

Most newspapers in Liberia work on Sundays to produce their papers for Monday. The action against the New Dawn was so far the only reported case, which makes the paper to believe that it has been targeted by the Liberian Government because there has

been no prior warning that all offices including newspapers should close on Sundays.

Meanwhile, Monrovia City Mayor through the intervention of the CDC Chairman on Sunday ordered the items return, but were short of one bag of cement, while investigations into the lap tops remain ongoing.

The enforcing officers did not report anything about the missing laptops. Mayor Koijee said most of the people who participated in the raid on the paper were recruited to help in the enforcement exercise and were not official officers.

However, staff at the office said they wore City Police uniforms.

AfDB launches \$3 billion social bond to "Fight COVID-19"

The African Development Bank (AfDB) says it has raised an exceptional \$3 billion in a three-year bond to help alleviate the economic and social impact the Covid-19 pandemic will have on livelihoods and Africa's economies.

The Fight Covid-19 Social bond, with a three-year maturity, garnered interest from central banks and official institutions, bank treasuries, and asset managers including Socially Responsible Investors, with bids exceeding \$4.6 billion. This is the largest Social Bond ever launched in international capital markets to date, and the largest US Dollar benchmark ever issued by the Bank. It will pay an interest rate of 0.75%.

The African Development Bank Group is moving to provide flexible responses aimed at lessening the severe economic and social impact of this pandemic on its regional member countries and Africa's private sector.

"These are critical times for Africa as it addresses the challenges resulting from the Coronavirus. The African Development Bank is taking bold measures to support African countries. This \$3 billion Covid-19 bond issuance

is the first part of our comprehensive response that will soon be announced. This is indeed the largest social bond transaction to date in capital markets. We are here for Africa, and we will provide significant rapid support for countries," said Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank Group.

The order book for this record-breaking bond highlights the scale of investor support, which the African Development Bank enjoys, said the arrangers.

"As the Covid-19 outbreak is

dangerously threatening Africa, the African Development Bank lives up to its huge responsibilities and deploys funds to assist and prepare the African population, through the financing of access to health and to all other essential goods, services and infrastructure," said Tanguy Claquin, Head of Sustainable Banking, Crédit Agricole CIB.

Coronavirus cases were slow to arrive in Africa, but the virus is spreading quickly and has infected nearly 3,000 people across 45 countries,



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placing strain on already fragile health systems.

It is estimated that the continent will require many billions of dollars to cushion the impact of the disease as many countries scrambled contingency measures, including commercial lockdowns in desperate efforts to contain it. Globally, factories have been closed and workers sent home, disrupting supply chains, trade, travel, and driving many economies toward recession.

Commenting on the landmark transaction, George Sager, Executive Director, SSA Syndicate, Goldman Sachs said: "In a time of unprecedented market volatility, the African Development Bank has been able to brave the capital markets in order to secure invaluable funding to help the efforts of the African continent's fight against Covid-19. Not only that, but in the process, delivering their largest ever USD benchmark. A truly remarkable outcome both in terms of its purpose but also in terms of a USD financing".

The Bank established its Social Bond framework in 2017 and raised the equivalent of \$2

billion through issuances denominated in Euro and Norwegian krone. In 2018 the Bank was designated by financial markets, 'Second most impressive social or sustainability bond issuer' at the Global Capital SRI Awards.

"We are thankful for the exceptional level of interest the Fight Covid-19 Social Bond has raised across the world, as the African Development Bank moves towards lessening the social and economic impact of the pandemic on a continent already severely constrained. Our Social bond program enables us to highlight our strong development mandate to the investor community, allowing them to play a part in improving the lives of the people of Africa. This was an exceptional outcome for an exceptional cause," said Hassatou Diop N'Sele, Treasurer, African Development Bank.

Fight Covid-19 was allocated to central banks and official institutions (53%), bank treasuries (27%) and asset managers (20%). Final bond distribution statistics were as follows: Europe (37%), Americas (36%), Asia (17%) Africa (8%), and Middle-East (1%).

Français

Coronavirus : Quand George Weah chante pour sensibiliser les populations

Le Liberia, comme nombre de pays en Afrique, n'était pas encore violemment touché par la pandémie qui faisait des ravages en Europe et aux USA ; seulement trois confirmés déclarés. Pour ce pays d'Afrique de l'ouest qui se remet encore des séquelles de deux longues années d'une épidémie d'Ebola, c'était une chance qu'il fallait entretenir. Aussitôt le premier cas identifié, les autorités gouvernementales prenaient des mesures et le président George Weah sortait un single de sensibilisation.

Une chanson contre le Coronavirus...

Il y a quelques jours, le président Libérien s'adressant à la nation disait : « La propagation de ce virus représente la plus grande menace pour la santé et le bien-être de la population du Libéria depuis l'épidémie d'Ebola subie par notre pays de 2014 à 2016 ». Selon l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, 11 310 personnes sont mortes d'Ebola en Guinée, au Libéria (4800) et en Sierra Leone pendant cette période. Cette adresse, le

président ex-footballeur libérien, le faisait après que le premier cas de coronavirus ait été déclaré dans le pays ; le directeur exécutif de l'Agence libérienne de protection de l'environnement et observateur pour le Fonds Vert pour le Climat (GCF), qui avait assisté début Mars à la réunion du conseil d'administration du fonds à Genève en Suisse.

Mais le président joignant le geste à la parole, aurait décidé de se mettre en personne en

première ligne sur le front de la sensibilisation sur la maladie, en sortant une chanson à thème sur le virus. Selon Le porte-parole du président, Solo Kelgbeh, le président qui avait déjà produit une chanson similaire pendant la crise d'Ebola et aurait déjà commencé à travailler celui en rapport avec le coronavirus bien avant même qu'il n'atteigne le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Pres. Weah



Clir. Nwabudike

Guinée : l'isolement d'Alpha Condé s'accroît sur la scène internationale

Cinq jours après un double scrutin législatif et constitutionnel boycotté par l'opposition, violemment contesté et endeuillé par la mort de plusieurs personnes, la commission électorale nationale indépendante (CENI) a finalement rendu son verdict, vendredi 27 mars au soir. Sans surprise, la nouvelle

constitution soumise à référendum a été adoptée par 92% des voix. Une fausse (quasi) unanimité qui dissimule mal un paysage politique ravagé et l'isolement du pouvoir guinéen.

Sa mise au ban est notable sur la scène internationale. Trois des principaux partenaires de la Guinée - l'Union européenne, les Etats-Unis et la France - qui n'entretenaient

aucune illusion sur le sens à accorder aux chiffres - avaient déjà rendu un jugement sans appel concernant le manque de crédibilité du processus électoral. Les uns et les autres ne se sont pas embarrassés de circonvolutions diplomatiques. Quarante-huit heures seulement après le vote, le Quai d'Orsay tranchait : « Le caractère non inclusif de ces élections et non consensuel du fichier électoral, ainsi que le rôle joué par des éléments des forces de sécurité et de défense excédant la simple sécurisation du processus, n'ont pas permis la tenue d'élections crédibles et dont le résultat puisse être consensuel ». Des termes quasiment identiques ont été utilisés par Bruxelles et Washington.

Pression internationale

Les Etats-Unis ont également demandé aux autorités « d'enquêter de manière rapide et transparente sur tous les décès liés aux manifestations

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Se préparer au pire !

Les Libériens sont sans aucun doute un peuple résilient qui se rassemble pour résoudre un problème commun qui menace son bien-être au niveau national. Un exemple typique, les Libériens se sont tenus sur un front uni et ont vaincu le virus Ebola sourd en 2015.

Nous n'avons pas vu la même résilience depuis que le président Weah a annoncé le premier cas de COVID-19 dans le pays il y a une semaine, suivi par des cas ultérieurs. Nous voyons un leadership national nul ici sur cette pandémie qui ravage les pays du monde entier avec un bilan de 400 000 morts.

Un Libérien patriote et ancien fonctionnaire qui s'est levé pour suggérer une voie à suivre est le Dr Nathaniel Barnes, ancien ministre et ambassadeur.

Le Dr Barnes avertit que cela pourrait s'aggraver au Libéria en raison du manque de capacités et de l'impact mondial sur les fronts social et économique, à moins que le gouvernement ne se lance immédiatement dans une série de plans de relance pour sauver la population d'une famine et d'une mort évidentes.

Il souligne la nécessité d'encourager et de subventionner les hommes d'affaires, en particulier les importateurs de riz, de denrées de base du pays et d'autres produits de base. Il recommande une exonération fiscale pour les importateurs de riz afin d'éviter la thésaurisation et la hausse des prix afin que le produit puisse atteindre les plus vulnérables.

L'économiste libérien suggère en outre que le gouvernement, par le biais de la Banque centrale, suspend le paiement des prêts accordés par les banques commerciales et paie les fonctionnaires, y compris ceux envoyés en congé obligatoire.

L'administration Weah n'a pas indiqué dans quelle direction elle prend l'économie, ce qui pourrait sans aucun doute avoir un impact négatif sur la vie des citoyens en dehors du coronavirus.

Les autorités ici sont préoccupées par la fermeture, y compris la fermeture des écoles, des églises et des mosquées, que des conséquences économiques imminentes qui pourraient bientôt toucher la population.

Même le Sénat libérien a appelé le président Weah à prendre lui-même en charge la pandémie, plutôt que de laisser la situation à ses fonctionnaires. Bien que l'infection puisse ralentir pour l'instant, le taux de contacts augmente rapidement, ce qui montre qu'une calamité imminente est à venir.

Nous n'aurions pas pu être mieux d'accord avec le sénateur du comté de Grand Kru, le docteur Peter Coleman, qui préside le comité sénatorial de la santé. Le président Weah devrait cesser d'être un député d'arrière-ban dans la crise actuelle et prendre les choses en main.

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Français

Coronavirus : Quand George Weah

Libéria. « Le Libéria est un pays où la majorité des gens n'ont pas accès à Internet et à Facebook, mais tout le monde écoute la radio. Cette chanson sera diffusée sur différentes stations de radio du pays ... pour diffuser suffisamment le message » avait ajouté le porte-parole en substance.

« Soyons unis et combattons le coronavirus »

« Soyons unis et combattons le coronavirus », tel est le titre du single sorti mercredi par le président footballeur libérien, George Weah. Sur une chanson de six minutes accompagnée d'une musique du groupe "The Rabbis" et d'un chœur de voix féminines harmonisées ; le

président expliquait les voies de propagation du virus et les moyens simples pour s'en tenir éloigner. « De l'Europe à l'Amérique, de l'Amérique à l'Afrique, prenez des précautions et soyez en sécurité (...) faites attention lorsque vous touchez de vos mains infectées, (...) nez ou yeux... » éduquait le président en l'occurrence dans sa chanson. Une initiative louable dans un pays de 4,8 millions d'habitants, classé parmi les plus pauvres et qui selon les observateurs, aurait du mal à réagir face à une flambée du taux de propagation. Le Libéria aurait d'ores et déjà interdit tous les voyages à destination et en provenance de pays touchés par le virus.

Guinée : l'isolement

et aux élections et que les résultats de ces investigations soient rendus publics ». Officiellement, six personnes - 12 selon l'opposition - ont été tuées dimanche, plus une trentaine d'autres ces six derniers mois. Les organisations de défense des droits humains imputent ce bilan aux tirs des forces de l'ordre mais aucune enquête n'a été ouverte.

Lire aussi Guinée : le référendum constitutionnel et les législatives troublés par des violences

« La rapidité de la réaction internationale et le ton employé ne sont pas communs », note un diplomate français. « Mais il est rare ces derniers temps d'avoir une telle mascarade électorale en Afrique de l'Ouest et une telle parodie démocratique », ajoute cette source. Avant même le scrutin, l'Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF) et la Communauté des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cédéao, la principale organisation sous-régionale) avaient pris leurs distances avec Conakry. Plusieurs audits avaient en effet conclu à la présence de quelque 2,5 millions d'électeurs suspects sur un total de 7,3 millions de personnes inscrites sur les listes.

Le pouvoir avait alors accepté, sous la pression internationale et singulièrement celle de ses voisins africains, de reporter ce double scrutin. Mais un report de deux semaines seulement. Et sans rien concéder à l'opposition qui demandait un assainissement transparent des listes

électorales. Celle-ci exigeait également l'abandon du référendum sur une nouvelle constitution qui, à ses yeux, n'a d'autre but que de permettre au président Alpha Condé, déjà élu deux fois en 2010 et 2015, de se présenter pour un troisième mandat à la fin de l'année 2020. Ce que l'actuelle loi fondamentale lui interdit.

L'Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG) de Cellou Dalein Diallo et l'Union des forces républicaines (UFR) de Sydia Touré ont donc boycotté le double rendez-vous électoral. Un boycott « actif » très suivi dans les fiefs de ces deux partis d'opposition, qui à eux deux pesaient pour 46 % des sièges au dernier parlement, accompagné du saccage de dizaines de bureaux de vote, rendant d'autant plus douteux le taux de participation de 61% annoncé par la CENI.

Scrutin vicié
La ligne de défense du pouvoir est loin d'être infaillible. Convoqué jeudi par le ministre des affaires étrangères, Mamadi Touré, l'ambassadeur de France à Conakry, Jean-Marc Grosgrin, s'est ainsi vu reprocher « l'ingérence française dans les affaires guinéennes ainsi que le parti pris français en faveur de l'opposition », nous indique une bonne source. Peu auparavant, Naby Youssouf Kiridi Bangoura s'interrogeait : « Comment juger un scrutin dont vous n'avez participé ni à l'organisation ni à l'observation ? » Le porte-parole de la présidence, considéré comme un radical dans le camp présidentiel, oubliait de préciser qu'aucun pays, ni même aucune organisation

COMMENTAIRE

Par Tim Dixon & Mathieu Lefèvre

Les « Invisibles » de la pandémie

LONDRES / PARIS - La pandémie Covid-19 est arrivée à un moment où la confiance dans les institutions était à son niveau le plus bas jamais observé. La politique était polarisée et la cohésion sociale fragile. Voilà pourquoi, alors que les gouvernements se démènent pour diriger des ressources massives vers les ménages et entreprises, ils ne doivent pas négliger les communautés locales où crise sanitaire et dégâts économiques collatéraux seront le plus visiblement concentrés.

Alors que les dirigeants du G20 se réunissent en ligne cette semaine pour coordonner une réponse au Covid-19, la baisse du PIB mondial prévue dans les prochains mois dépassera probablement la contraction connue au cours de la période suivant la Grande Récession de 2008. Contrairement à la crise financière mondiale qui avait déclenché cette récession, la pandémie menace de fermer des secteurs entiers des économies à travers le monde. Nous n'avons tout simplement jamais connu pareille paralysie soudaine pour autant d'économies simultanément.

Les réponses nationales à la Grande Récession ont été insuffisantes. Les plans de sauvetage ont stabilisé les institutions financières et les centres urbains, tout en laissant de côté des millions de personnes dans les régions rurales et semi-rurales. L'érosion des perspectives de vie meilleure dans les communautés non urbaines provoquée par l'austérité et l'automatisation a progressivement donné naissance à un sentiment d'injustice profond. Les populistes ont exploité ces griefs, montant les citoyens contre les migrants, les réfugiés, les médias, « l'establishment » et les experts de tous types.

Pour éviter de répéter ces erreurs, nous devons traiter à la fois les maux économiques et sociaux de ces communautés délaissées. L'épidémie de Covid-19 a généré des milliers d'efforts communautaires à travers le monde - dans les rues, les immeubles et des groupes WhatsApp et Facebook de quartier. Ces initiatives offrent un soutien pratique aux personnes isolées et les plus menacées par le virus. Les Italiens qui chantent au balcon et d'autres exemples de générosité et d'esprit communautaire offrent des moments lumineux dans ces temps sombres.

Pourtant, les réseaux communautaires sont beaucoup plus faibles dans des endroits où ils seront bientôt les plus nécessaires. Au cours des trois dernières années, More in Common, l'ONG que nous dirigeons, a documenté les fractures sociales dans les démocraties occidentales. Nos études ont montré dans chaque pays un segment de personnes « invisibles » qui se sentent ignorées par leur propre société. Ces « invisibles » ne se distinguent pas par un groupe de revenu, un âge, une race, un sexe ou des convictions politiques particuliers, mais par leur désengagement de la société.

Par rapport aux autres, les invisibles sont beaucoup plus susceptibles de marquer une méfiance envers les institutions de toutes sortes. Plus que tout groupe démographique, ils sont vulnérables aux récits polarisants, de type « nous contre eux », qui alimentent les conflits sociaux. Ceci est profondément dangereux en

temps de crise. Et les invisibles ne sont pas un petit groupe. Les invisibles représentent environ un tiers de la population totale en France, en Allemagne et aux États-Unis.

Il est indubitable que les changements économiques récents ont frappé durement ces personnes, et la baisse des perspectives d'emploi ont poussé beaucoup à craindre de ne pas pouvoir rivaliser avec les immigrants travaillant pour moins cher. Mais ces personnes se sentent tout autant exclues socialement. Elles sont plus susceptibles de se sentir seules, de ressentir un manque de respect et d'avoir le sentiment de ne pas appartenir à la société. De plus, en exploitant leur colère, frustration et sentiment d'impuissance, des populistes ont pris le pouvoir dans de nombreux pays, ou en sont proches.

Ce qui est nécessaire pour que les billions de dollars des plans de sauvetage soient efficaces et que nous évitions les erreurs graves de la Grande Récession, c'est un effort tout aussi important pour renforcer la cohésion sociale dans les pays développés et en développement. Les pays du G20 pourraient commencer par un engagement à verser, pour à chaque dollar investi dans le renforcement des économies, un cent dans des fonds communautaires ciblant les zones à capital social appauvri.

Ces fonds pourraient fournir des ressources pour renforcer et reconstruire la vie et la connexion communautaires à une échelle micro-locale, avec un accent particulier sur les « invisibles » qui feront les frais de l'arrêt économique et des mesures de distanciation sociale. Les crises de l'ampleur que nous connaissons aujourd'hui risquent de diviser les communautés encore plus profondément, mais elles offrent également la possibilité de réunir les gens.

La valeur totale des interventions du G20 pour faire face au Covid-19 dépasse déjà celle du Plan Marshall de l'après-guerre mondiale. Il y a soixante-quinze ans, les économies avaient volé en éclats, des millions de personnes avaient été transformées en réfugiés et le désespoir s'était emparé des sociétés. Le plan du général George C. Marshall pour reconstruire les sociétés et les économies fut un exploit remarquable de coopération entre les Etats-Unis et l'Europe.

L'appel à l'action de Marshall lors du lancement du Plan en 1947 appelait à la « relance de la machine économique dans le monde de façon à permettre l'émergence de conditions politiques et sociales dans lesquelles les institutions libres peuvent exister ». Marshall avait appris des erreurs des années 1920 et 1930 : les sociétés vulnérables, lorsqu'elles sont laissées divisées, succombent à l'attrait de l'autoritarisme.

Au cours de la préparation d'un avenir post-pandémie, les dirigeants du G20 devraient tenir compte de cette leçon. La prospérité qui est devenue possible pour les enfants du Plan Marshall - aujourd'hui âgés de 70 ou 80 ans et donc les plus menacés par le coronavirus - a été construite sur des bases économiques et sociales inclusives. Pour survivre à cette pandémie avec un espoir intact, nous devons reconstruire non seulement pour certains, mais pour tous.

FEATURE

ARTICLE

Don't Get Mad-Get Ready For Change: The NEC Appointment Is Proof-Our People Are Powerless-Our System Is Broken & Corrupt By Design Part I

Rev. Torli H. Krua

The appointment of a Nigerian native to serve as the head of Liberia's National Elections Commission has angered many of President Weah's supporters and political opponents. Together, both the friends and political foes are united in demanding a presidential withdrawal or calling on the Liberian Senate to reject the appointee. Rejection or withdrawal isn't a solution of a system designed to enrich and empower politicians and enslave citizens. Contrary to what we were told and taught by America and Liberian Politicians, Liberia was designed by American slave masters (not American Freed Slaves) to keep Africans enslaved forever in America, empowering and enriching Liberian politicians and trapping all residents of the colony of Liberia in poverty and despair.

The 2nd annual report of the ACS was blaut: "...as is most confidently believed, the colonization of the free people of colour, will render the slave who remains in America more obedient, more faithful, more honest, and, consequently, more useful to his master, is it proper to regard this happy consequence to both, as the sole object which the Society hope to attain..."

After 200 years of swallowing bitter fruits from the corrupt Liberia tree, I ask the angry friends and foes; Are you ready to make change or to keep making noise?

Unlike President Weah's angry friends and political foes, I am so happy with this appointment not because of its expediency, legality or lack thereof. Like all political appointments in the two century history of the American Colony of Liberia, this appointment is another proof that Liberia's system of governance is corrupt by design, rotten to the core and must be changed before any progress can be made. Liberia was created by slave masters for the benefit of slave masters, not the people.

How Did I Arrive At This Conclusion?

Thirty five years ago, I founded a Liberian technology company, High Tech Applications Inc, that later won a US State Department subcontract to service computers at US Government embassies and installations in African Nations. My experience while working and living at the US Embassy in Monrovia in 1990 changed my perception about Liberian politics and Liberia's two century relationship with America.

After President Doe was assassinated. Liberia was drowning in anarchy. There were no commercial flights. This was when I returned to Liberia to fulfill my company's contractual obligations. I was flown by a US Navy Helicopter from Freetown to the Embassy in Monrovia, where I observed that all Liberian visa applicants were denied visas but foreigners were granted visas. After an incident involving a Liberian lady and child-visa applicants were denied and dragged from the interview window in my presence. Disturbed by the wailing of the woman and child, I asked the visa officer if I could apply for a visa. "Bring your application and passport tomorrow for a visa." The visa officer said. The next day, I reported to work and presented my passport and a visa application. "Are you a Liberian?" The officer asked a series of questions. "Don't you have a green card? I thought you just came from America? Sorry, Sir, we are not giving visas to Liberians at this time."

I was shocked. Labenese and Indians whose businesses were no longer functioning were given visas but not Liberians? Why? I asked. "We have a cable from the State department ording us not to give visas to Liberians. " He said. That's not true. Let me read it." I said. It's a classified cable." He said. Fast forward. I'm ready to leave the Embassy for Senegal. At my embarkation to the US Navy Helicopter, I was asked to present my ID, I presented my Liberian Passport. "Sorry Sir, we only allow Americans to board." The serviceman said. I complained and eventually I was allowed to



board. The feeling of being stuck in a wartorn country after escaping and returning voluntarily was sobering. I know something was wrong with Liberia and its relationship to America. I turned my back on my business and made a commitment to help Liberian refugees. I also started a journey to discover the secret of what's really wrong with Liberia and its relationship with America. What I discovered was shocking.

The United States Congress illegally colonized Americans based on their race .As a result ,America owes all Liberians a duty of care ;American taxpayers money purchased the colony ;US Navy was based in the colony and by flying the American Flag over the colony for the first 25 years with the presence and leadership of the US Navy and white American Governors who were paid using American taxpayers money Liberia is an illegal and lawless territory created by a partnership between the ACS and the US Federal Government .

The Opinion of Attorney General Hon .William Wirt ,Opinion 279 dated October 14 ,1819 ,recorded the unlawful nature of the racial colonization of free men of color or African Americans using American taxpayers money and the authorization by Congress to use the US Navy in colonizing Black Americans .

The Government of the United States has been involved in a two century coverup of the truth about Liberia 's slaveholding founding fathers and the collusion of American Colonization Society (ACS)and high ranking US Government officials who were slaveholders .

The March 3 ,1819 Act of Congress initiated an irreparable harm that continues two centuries of racial discrimination against Liberians .

The original United States Naturalization Law of March 26 ,1790 (1 Stat . . It thus excluded Native Americans ,indentured servants ,slaves ,free blacks and later Asians .

The Liberian Seal falsely claims ; The love of liberty brought us here ." The truth :it was the plot , prejudice and racism of slave owners and collusion of Congress and high ranking US Government officials

that brought American Settlers to Liberia .

Throughout his lifetime , President James Monroe owned 240 slaves .He never freed his slaves and our capital city is named in the honor of this slave master President Monroe placed an ad in a newspaper offering a reward of \$10 to anyone who would help to recapture two of his runaway slaves .

Bushrod Washington ,Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court and nephew of US President George Washington owned 100 slaves .As 1st President of the ACS ,Bushrod never freed his slaves .Infact ,he sold 54 of his slaves who decided to run away after discovering ACS was not created to free slaves but to remove free African Americans .

The Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act of 2019 ended 30 years of discrimination against Liberian Refugees in America . In contrast to the plight of Liberian refugee mothers denied TPS DED ,the 102nd . (1991-1992) Congress passed a law which allowed 52 968 Chinese nationals to be granted DED after the Tiananmen Square incident to adjust to permanent residency status . The 105th .Congress , (1997-1998) passed legislation known as NACARA . Under this law , 150 000 Nicaraguans , 5 000 Cubans , 200 000 El Salvadorans and 50 000 Guatemalans are able to adjust to permanent residency status .

TorliKrua

A pastor and human rights activist, Torli was instrumental in lobbying with US congressmen and policymakers to increase the quota of refugees from Africa being allowed into the US. He has also worked tirelessly in the New England region and beyond to champion the rights of refugees and immigrants. His organization, Universal Human Rights International, worked with thousands of immigrants from 38 different countries over the span of 20 years. He has been honored by the National Peace Corps Association and the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. Reach Torli: harlankrua@gmail.com

Naked weapon

By Othello B. Garblah

Investigations into the activities of the newly nominated Chairman of the National Elections Commissions (NEC) Cllr. Ndubusi Nwabudike indicate that he's a naked weapon waiting to explode if confirm to sit at the helm of the nation's top most integrity institution.

The nomination of Cllr. Nwabudike a self-proclaimed naturalized Liberian by President George Weah will also dent the credibility of future elections under his watch if confirm due to the erosion of public trust in his nomination, this paper has learnt.

Most Liberians are demanding that Cllr. Nwabudike's nomination be withdrawn due to the growing public mistrust over his credibility for the sake of future elections. They fear a repeated of the 1985 elections which plunged the country in to the over two decades of civil war resulting from this satisfaction over election results.

President Weah on Saturday March 21, 2020 announced the nomination of Cllr. Nwabudike, the self-proclaimed naturalized Liberian to head the NEC, after appointing him to two other high profile positions- Governance Commission and Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission in less than two years.

His nomination to head the NEC has attracted several criticisms from both within the corridors of the very ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) party and opposition alike all bordering on the nominee's credibility as his past haunts him.

On Friday about 12 Senators walked out of his confirmation hearing after the Senate failed to adhere to their request to make the confirmation hearing public.

Conflict of Interest

This paper gathered that in



2017, Cllr. Nwabudike was a member of the CDC legal team in the Liberty Party challenge of the 2017 elections first round result.

Moreover, in October 2018, during the election of the Liberian National Bar Association in Grand Bassa County, Cllr. Nwabudike served as Chairman of CDC lawyers who are all members of the LNBA. Those who congregated with him includes but not limited to Cllr. Phil Dixon of Ministry of Labor, Cllr. Edward K. Martins, former Montserrado County Attorney, Cllr. Charles Gibson, among others.

In addition, this paper also learned that as head of the Governance Commission, Cllr. Nwabudike drafted the Jordanian agreement and negotiated same, something which many say is an illegal conflict of interest.

Cllr. Nwabudike was said to have prepared the alleged illegal agreement and strategized that if the Liberian Airport Authority (LAA) management was reluctant to sign the agreement, President Weah should use his power to coerce them to sign the agreement despite the manager's at the time resistance to the contract because it was procured

without due diligence.

According to Cllr. Jerome Verdier of the International Justice Group, the alleged Article of Incorporation prepared by the nominee, included the names of nine (9) fictitious individuals as incorporators, without verifying their individual and collective personalities as natural persons of good repute without terrorists' linkages, forming a corporation in Liberia.

"Cllr. A. Ndubusi Nwabudike is too close to President (George) Weah in a corrupt conspiracy that undermines his public standing and moral integrity to hold such a high office of public trust", the International Justice Group (IJG) has said. These allegations proves a serious conflict of interest of the nominee and questions his independence on the NEC.

Cllr. Nwabudike naturalization claims questioned Did he lied?

Cllr. Nwabudike is not a Liberian and is therefore not qualify to sit on the National Elections Commission, claims a source who begs not to be mentioned. Cllr. Nwabudike

claims he was born in Nigeria and his parents are from Delta State in Nigeria. This alone questions his claim of a Liberian citizenship and his origin from Montserrado County as he penned on his CV. Cllr. Ndubusi Nwabudike is not a Liberian and is therefore not qualify to sit on the National Elections Commission (NEC), added another source.

According to Article 25 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, "Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria."

Thus since Cllr. Nwabudike was born in Nigeria following the year of independence and both of his parents were citizens of Nigeria, he is a Nigeria citizen by birth.

However, his claim of a Liberian citizenship could hold water if he is in compliance with Article 29 of the Nigeria Constitution, which states that "[a]ny citizen of Nigeria of full age who wishes to renounce his Nigerian citizenship shall make a declaration in the prescribed manner for the renunciation. The President shall cause the declaration to be registered and upon such registration, the person who made the declaration shall cease to be a citizen of Nigeria."

The learned counselor fails to tender any proof that he has renounced his Nigerian citizenship to be able to legally obtain Liberian citizenship in accordance with the aforementioned Nigerian Constitution.

Even the Liberian law states that, "[a] person admitted to citizenship by a court ... shall be entitled upon such admission to receive from the clerk of such court a certificate of naturalization, which shall contain substantially the following information: Number of petition for naturalization; number of certificate of naturalization, date of naturalization; name, signature, place of residence, autographed photograph, and personal description of the naturalized person, including age, sex, marital status, and country of former nationality; title, venue, and location of the court issuing the order of naturalization; statement that the court, having found that the petitioner intends to reside permanently in Liberia, and has complied in all respects with all of the applicable provisions of the naturalization laws of Liberia, and was entitled to be admitted as a citizen of Liberia thereupon ordered that the petitioner be admitted as a citizen of Liberia; attestation of the clerk of the court issuing the order of naturalization,

and seal of the court." Section 21.7 of the Alien and Naturalization Law (1973). The law requires all certificates of naturalization to be filed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The nominee bags lots of credibility questions

Documents before the Liberian Senate does not contain such proof by Cllr. Nwabudike-both certificates from Nigeria and his Liberian naturalization does not exist, thus punching holes into his claims. The Liberian Constitution does not honor dual citizenship as well, that is if he still holds his Nigerian citizenship.

However, the learned counselor appears to confuse the public more and cast doubt on his own credibility.

He claims in his CV before the Liberian Senate to have been born in 1965 and came to Liberia in 1988 at the age of 23. Our investigation further shows that he acquired his primary, secondary and undergraduate education in Nigeria as a Nigerian student and paid local fees up to his alleged graduation in June 1988, the same year and month he came to Liberia.

In the same June 1988, he claimed to have enrolled at the University of Liberia Graduate School, and graduated in 1990, and later entered the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law. A careful look at his records from the University of Liberia reveals an apparent alteration to his place of birth.

Although he attended the University of Liberia as a local student and paid fees charged to all Liberian students, it raises the questions as to when and how did Cllr. Nwabudike acquire his Liberian citizen in June of 1988 and the very same month and year he is said to have graduated from a Nigerian University as a Nigerian student.

Cllr. Nwabudike bags a lot of credibility and trust questions especially surrounding the inconsistent accounts he has given to the public and the Liberian Senate about his background.

He indicates on his curriculum vitae that his place of origin is Montserrado County. "Such a blatant lie per se, and thus a crime or perjury. How then would an Igbo man's origin be Montserrado?" a source roared at his claim.

Liberian history tells us who the aboriginals of Montserrado or Ducorthey are Bassa, Vai and Congo. This raises a question as to where Cllr. Nwabudike belong among these group of people.

This paper can say emphatically that while a person nationality may change, his or her original place of birth can never change.

His claims raises huge eyebrows as to how one whose parents came from Delta State, can originate from Montserrado County.

Starts from back page **Lonestar Cell MTN suspends**

that our customers can avoid hand-to-hand cash transfers to curtail the outbreak. We are urging customers to use MoMo to safely pay for goods and services, pay bills, transfer to and from their bank accounts and even send money to loved ones without having to worry about transaction fees or germs.

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Fishermen rescued



Four Survivors in the middle with Coast Guard Officers and NaFAA's DDGTS Williams Boeh The Government of Liberia through the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) in collaboration with the Liberia National Coast Guard has rescued a crew of fishermen from the Popo Beach Fishing Community who went missing on Friday, March 20, 2020 while fishing.

They were rescued after their canoe which is 10 to 15 meters in length powered by an outboard engine of 15 horse power failed at sea.


Initially, the four fishermen were rescued by a bulk carrier vessel named Montrose some 54 nautical mile off the Grand Bassa County and were received by the Liberian National Coast Guard some 25 nautical miles.

A NaFAA press release quotes the Director General as saying that the rescue efforts initiated by the Liberia National Coast Guard and National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority took place Tuesday, March 24, 2020 after the Fisheries Monitoring Center which is effectively operated jointly by NaFAA and Liberia Maritime Authority (LiMA) 24/7 received an intelligence from the

Collaborative Management Association (CMA) of Montserrado about the missing fishermen.

The CMA is a local fisheries governance structure put in place by NAFAA to effectively manage the coastal resources of Liberia.

Mrs. Emma Metieh Glassco mentioned that the "Fisheries Monitoring Center immediately informed the Liberia National Coast Guard and the Liberia Maritime Search and Rescue Center about the location which later led to the rescue of the four fishermen from high sea".



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As a part of its response to the coronavirus/COVID-19 health crisis, Lonestar Cell MTN has announced that effective Friday, March 20, 2020, it is suspending transaction fees on some MTN Mobile Money (MoMo) services for a period of 30 days. Mobile Money services to be impacted include merchant payments, bank withdrawals and deposits, and person-to-person transactions.

Specifically, for the next

30 days, customers will enjoy: Free person-to-person MoMo transfers on transactions; Free transfer of money from bank accounts to MoMo accounts and vice versa

No fees on payments for goods and services at all MTN MoMo partner merchant locations;

Increased account balance and transaction limits.

Following the World Health Organization's warning that the virus could be spread through banknotes, Lonestar Cell MTN is



encouraging all customers to switch to digital payments to minimize the use of cash. Using the cashless, safe and convenient MoMo platform available on *156# will also help customers practice social distancing and allow them to still get a lot done from home.

Uche Ofodile, CEO of Lonestar Cell MTN, said, "With the World Health Organization's warning, we are doing all that we can to ensure

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