



DIALBOLIC PLANS TO TARNISH THE IMAGE OF THE SLPP AND OPPRESS THE OPPOSITION

Freetown, May 7, 2009: The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) wishes to bring to the attention of the public diabolic plans by the ruling APC and its paid news organs to create a platform for oppressing the Opposition.

A. Background

In December 2007, State House website shamefully published a story accusing Mr. John Benjamin, Dr. John Karimu and Dr. Francis KaiKai of planning to mobilize Kamajors in Liberia to cause havoc in Sierra Leone. The Party protested strongly against this and the Minister of Information apologized to the persons named in the article and the Party on UN Tea Break Programme and promised to investigate. To date nothing has been done and the Manager of the website Sheka Tarawallie was never been queried.

The African Champion, the unofficial mouthpiece of the APC owned by the Deputy Minister of Health, Mr. Mohamed Koroma has persistently carried stories about secret meetings held by some SLPP members and plans to destabilize the state. Recently, the New Citizen Newspaper owned by the Minister of Information and Communication, Alhaji I B Kargbo carried a story accusing the SLPP of forming Task Forces. Several mischievous articles of this nature have been carried out by the APC ***We Yone*** Newspaper.

B. Recent Mischief

In its Thursday May 7, 2009 edition, the Standard Times newspaper carried a lead story ***Preparation on the Way SLPP: Task Force demands Diamba, Motorbikes, cutlasses and daggers for the next election.*** The article published a letter signed by an unknown Commander addressed to the National Executive Members of the SLPP.

The SLPP would like to dissociate itself from the letter so published. The Party believes this is mischief aimed at detracting public attention from the abysmal failure of the APC to address pressing matters of governance, corruption, youth unemployment, poor service delivery and poverty.

The Party would also like to state that it firmly believes that the letter was written by the APC or its cronies to create a public impression that the SLPP, like the APC, is a violent Party. The authors of this and similar letters and pronouncements can best be described

as enemies of the land whose priority is to sow discord and manufacture a justification for a diabolic plan by the ruling APC to oppress members of the Opposition.

The Party further believes that this mischief is consciously calculated to create a justification for another raid on the SLPP offices and attacks of its members nationwide by APC thugs and state security forces.

C. Implications of such Mischief

The Party would also like to remind these enemies of the land that such articles and pronouncements by the Press and Government and APC officials are counter productive in every respect. These create public apprehension of insecurity in the country and scares away potential investors. Undoubtedly, this is not helpful to their pay masters and the nation.

D. Commitments to Peace

The Party would like to remind the public that the last SLPP administration ended the 11-year rebel war and brought peace to this country. Additionally, the administration started a long journey to peace consolidation. The Party would therefore like to remind the general public that it shall do nothing to undermine the peace and stability of this country.

Following the several attacks on the SLPP National Headquarters on March 13 and 16, 2009 many of our members were wounded and seven of our female supporters raped. With the intervention of the United Nations Integrated Peace Building Office in Sierra Leone, the ruling All Peoples Congress and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) signed a Communiqué to end political violence. The SLPP is firmly committed to this process and is cooperating with the Government and the United Nations to implement the provisions in the Communiqué.

E. Call on the Government

The SLPP therefore urges the Government to take appropriate action to investigate the veracity of the published article and its accompanying letter.

F. Next action

Meanwhile, the Party is formally complaining to the Independent Media Commission (IMC) for necessary action.

Thank you.

John Oponjo Benjamin
National Chairman