



Centre for
Human Rights and
Restorative Justice

REFERENCES TO COLONIALISM, COLONIAL, AND IMPERIALISM

Sierra Leone Truth Commission

Abstract

A list of references to colonialism, colonial, and imperialism in the Sierra Leone Truth Commission.

Chelsea Barranger

Links to Data Visualization

This section contains links to all data visualization for the Sierra Leone report.

Comparison Charts

- [References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperialism chart](#)
- [References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperialism excel list](#)

Word Trees

- [Colonial](#)
- [Colonialism](#)

References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperialism

This section contains all references to colonialism, colonial, and imperialism from the Sierra Leone report.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 120 references coded [0.63% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

Affected Children National Aids Secretariat
Nigerian Armed Forces Training Group National Council of the Colony of Sierra Leone
National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

conflict.

Causes of the Conflict

11. While there were many factors, both internal and external, that explain the cause of the civil war, the Commission came to the conclusion that it was years of bad governance, endemic corruption and the denial of basic human rights that created the deplorable conditions that made conflict inevitable. Successive regimes became increasingly impervious to the wishes and needs of the majority. Instead of implementing positive and progressive policies, each regime perpetuated the ills and self-serving machinations left behind by its predecessor. By the start of the conflict, the nation had been stripped of its dignity. Institutional collapse reduced the vast majority of people into a state of deprivation. Government accountability was non-existent. Political expression and dissent had been crushed. Democracy and the rule of law were dead. By 1991, Sierra Leone was a deeply divided society and full of the potential for violence. It required only the slightest spark for this violence to be ignited. The Commission traced the roots of these lapses through the post-independence period and into the colonial period in the chapters entitled “Historical Antecedents to the Conflict”¹⁰ and “Governance”.¹¹

12. 9

The Commission highlights

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

international and national law.

49.

The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone devotes a lengthy section, Chapter III, to ‘human rights and fundamental freedoms’. The formulation is awkward and unduly complex, making it inaccessible to the average citizen. Many of the provisions are devoted more to exceptions to human rights than to their affirmation. There is an exhaustive provision dealing with the use of emergency powers and the suspension of constitutional protections. The language is consistent with that in the constitutions of many other former British colonies, and reflects an historic unease of English lawmakers with the constitutional entrenchment of fundamental rights. For the purposes of the TRC’s work, there is no significance in the distinction between ‘human rights’ and ‘fundamental freedoms’; both terms can be subsumed within the expression ‘human rights’.

50.

The Lomé Peace Agreement

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

a number of reasons.

68.

The Commission felt that a brief report would do injustice to the range of issues that account for the conflict in Sierra Leone. While a number of issues triggered the conflict, there were clear structural issues dating back to the time of colonialism. If these issues were not addressed in detail, the Commission would not have met its broad ranging mandate. The individual, factional and institutional fluidities assist an understanding of the dynamics of the war. Without this nuanced interpretation, the real history may have been lost in a summary. A nuanced interpretation required that the narrative be discussed in depth, including the roles and experiences of people, institutions and the respective factions.

69.

The Commission recognised that

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

Antecedents to the Conflict 7.

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

8.

In order to 'compile

Reference 6 - 0.02% Coverage

and unified independent nation.

11.

The Commission examined the colonial period and the first few years of independence together under the section entitled 'The Historical Evolution of the Sierra Leonean State'. In this section, four distinct phases proved crucial to understanding the roots of the conflict and some of the challenges that the country still faces today:

- The Colony and the Protectorate. Rather than constructing a unified Sierra Leonean state, the colonial government effectively created two nations in the same land. The colonial capital Freetown, known as the Colony, and the much larger area of provincial territory, known as the Protectorate, were developed separately and unequally. The colonial government formalised the common law practised in the Colony yet neglected the development of customary law in the Protectorate, thus producing two separate legal systems that persist to the present day. The impact of colonial policies and practices, including those relating to citizenship, ownership of land, land tenure rights and conflict of laws, was far-reaching. People in the Colony enjoyed vastly superior social, political and economic development and access to vital resources such as education. The divide between the two entities bred deep ethnic and regional resentment and destabilised the traditional system of Chieftaincy.
- The Era of Party Politics. In 1947, a new Constitution was proposed in order to prepare Sierra Leone for independence. This Constitution amalgamated the Colony and the Protectorate into a single political entity, but divided their elite representatives into opposing factions, each dedicated to protecting the

interests of its own people. In due course these factions formed themselves into narrow, regionally based political parties with little or no national agenda. Party politics became the greatest obstacle to national cohesion and identity. Party allegiance was just as divisive as ethnicity, class or regional prejudice in the battle over who should succeed the British. On the cusp of independence in 1961, the ten-year-old Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was joined in the political arena by the All People's Congress (APC), which would become its main rival in contesting elections.

Vol Two Chapter One Executive

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

One Executive Summary Page 5

- The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in Power. The SLPP majority party formed the first post-colonial government in 1961. The 1962 elections then revealed the depths of ethnic and regional polarisation in Sierra Leone and the superficiality of the ideological differences between the opposing parties. The SLPP retained power by winning most of its seats in the South and East of the country, which were predominantly populated by Mende people. The SLPP government was therefore labelled as a Mende government. This image polarised public opinion in the country, introduced notions of cronyism in many state institutions and laid the foundations for military involvement in politics. The period had terrible, albeit foreseeable consequences on the unity of the young state and served to deepen existing cleavages.

- The 1967 Elections and their

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

their new political elite.

42.

Successive post-colonial governments mismanaged the diamond industry and placed its effective control in the hands of outsiders in a way that has not benefited the Sierra Leone economy. A culture of diamond smuggling and embezzlement has been entrenched among key members of the political elite. Meanwhile, labour conditions in the mines are appalling, with many children still being used as miners.

43.

During the conflict, diamonds

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

creating the conditions for conflict.

The Commission finds that the seeds of discontent of the late 1980s and early 1990s can be traced to the colonial strategies of divide and rule and the subversion of traditional systems by the colonial power and successive governments.

20. War in Sierra Leone

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

OF THE CONFLICT 39.

40.

The causes of the Sierra Leone conflict were many and diverse. Some historical antecedents to the conflict can be traced back to the colonial period,¹² while others are found by examining the post-independence years, in particular, the years preceding the outbreak of violence in 1991.

Key themes highlighted by the

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

this violence to be ignited.

Main findings The Colonial Period 46.

The Commission finds that the Colonial power in Sierra Leone deliberately created two nations in the same land, one in the colony and the other in the protectorate. The impact of the separate development policies had far-reaching consequences, particularly in the fields of education, access to resources and in the social and political development of the two regions. The policies of the Colonial government led to the preferential development of the Colony at the expense of the Protectorate.

47.

The Commission finds that

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

expense of the Protectorate.

47.

The Commission finds that the Colonial government manipulated the Chieftaincy system and, in so doing, undermined its legitimacy. The Chiefs became mere surrogates of the colonial government. They owed their loyalty to their colonial masters rather than to the people they were meant to serve.

48.

The Commission finds that

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

were meant to serve.

48.

The Commission finds that the policies of the Colonial government created a dual legal system that affected the colony and the protectorate differently. This impacted negatively on those in the protectorate who had to contend with the arbitrary and capricious application of customary law by the Chiefs. This created much resentment amongst the residents of the protectorate.

The Post-Independence Period 49

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

purposes of extinguishing political opposition.

The Commission finds that divisions along ethnic and regional lines characterised the post-colonial period. Successive regimes favoured certain ethnic groups over others with regard to appointments in cabinet, the civil service and army.

64.

Sierra Leoneans owed loyalty

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

force.

THE UNITED KINGDOM 399.

The United Kingdom and Sierra Leone have a long-standing historical relationship. Sierra Leone was a British colony. Sierra Leoneans expected the United Kingdom to intervene promptly in the conflict in order to bring peace. Such intervention only materialised towards the end of the 11-year long conflict. The Commission finds that Sierra Leoneans are justified in their view that they were abandoned by the United Kingdom in their hour of need.

400.

The Conakry Peace Talks

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

of the Diamond Industry 565.

The Commission finds that successive post-colonial governments of Sierra Leone mismanaged the diamond industry and placed its effective control in the hands of a few elite individuals and groups in a manner that did not benefit the economy of Sierra Leone.

566.

The Commission finds the

Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

freedom cannot be maintained.

77.

The use of sedition and defamation proceedings under the criminal law does not bode well for freedom of expression in Sierra Leone. These provisions are the leftovers of a long gone colonial era. In many countries, laws on sedition and criminal libel have been either formally or effectively abandoned.²⁴ The only circumstances in which criminal sanctions on free speech can be justified is where an intention to incite violence or lawless conduct has been demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt and where there is a real risk that violence will ensue.

24

For example, in 2001

Reference 18 - 0.01% Coverage

citizenship. This law is racist.

The mixture of various groups with different skills can be the engine room of a vibrant democratic society. It is desirable that Sierra Leone evolves into a more pluralist society, welcoming persons of all ethnic origins. Racist legislation is a perpetuation of the philosophy that justified the slave trade and colonialism, and should be unthinkable in an African democracy that has emerged from the continent's oppressive past.

85.

Citizenship should be acquired

Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.

Children suffered gross physical abuse at the hands of adults in the Sierra Leonean conflict. Children are still subject to institutional physical abuse through the use of corporal punishment at schools and in homes. The government school system that arose in the days of colonial rule adopted nineteenth-century British traditions of school discipline, including that of beating children.

26

Part II of the

Reference 20 - 0.01% Coverage

of this recommendation.

Local Courts

155. The various peoples of Sierra Leone have always had systems and principles for dispute resolution. But the basic institutional framework of the current customary legal system is a product of colonialism; established by the Protectorate Ordinance of 1896. What were then called “Courts of Native Chiefs” or “Native Courts” are now called “Local Courts.”⁵³

156. Under the colonial strategy of indirect rule, chiefs were used as instruments of the colonial administration. Chiefs were made immune to the checks and balances of traditional institutions and accountable instead only to the colonial state. Within the jurisdiction set for it by the protectorate, customary law was both made and enforced by the chiefs. They used it to carry out colonial demands such as tax collection and, often, to carry out their own exploitation by way of fines, coerced labour, and arbitrary decisions.⁵⁴

52

The Attorney General is

Reference 21 - 0.01% Coverage

must be individuals with impeccable

85 In many former British colonies, including Sierra Leone, the old Official Secrets Act is still in place. Such laws obstruct access

Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

158

92 93

Chieftaincy 256.

New chieftaincies created by the colonial power after the Hut Tax War were deeply resented by the long-standing hereditary ruling houses. In the postindependence period, chieftaincies were corrupted by their co-option and politicisation by successive central governments. Chiefs lost sight of their traditional roles and neglected their duties to their subjects.

257.

The Commission calls for

Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage

against the civilian population.

2.

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

3.
The Truth and Reconciliation

Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage

the greatest extent possible.

7.

The 'Historical Antecedents to the Conflict' have been divided into three sections for the purposes of this chapter. 'Part I – The Historical Evolution of the State' examines Sierra Leone's social, political and economic development under colonial rule and in the first few years of independence. 'Part II – The Management of Power by the APC' is a short synopsis of the system of government adopted by Sierra Leone's longest-serving and most influential prewar Government, under the All People's Congress (APC) party. 'Part III – Local Historical Antecedents' traces pre-conflict dynamics in a variety of important Districts that help to explain the manner in which the war unfolded across the nation. The main points of the chapter are drawn together at the end in a brief 'Conclusion'.

Vol Three A Chapter One

Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage

below in the following order:

- The Colony and the Protectorate. Rather than constructing a unified Sierra Leonean state, the colonial government effectively created two nations in the same land. The divide between the entities known as the 'Colony' and the 'Protectorate' had far-reaching implications for issues such as citizenship, land tenure rights and conflict of laws.
- The Era of Party Politics

Reference 26 - 0.01% Coverage

main rival in contesting elections.

- The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in Power. The euphoria and perceived unity of the immediate post-colonial period appear with hindsight to have been artificial. The first independent government, formed by the majority SLPP party, served to polarise public opinion in the country, introduced notions of cronyism in many state institutions and laid the foundation for military involvement in politics. This period had terrible, albeit foreseeable consequences on the unity of the young state and served to deepen existing cleavages.
- The 1967 Elections and their

Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage

of the multi-party system.

The Colony and the Protectorate⁶ 9.

Before 1947, Sierra Leone was divided socially, geographically and historically into two entities. The colonial capital Freetown, known as the Colony, and the much larger area of provincial territory, known as the Protectorate, were political creations of the British, designed to facilitate their administration of the people as part of their expanding Empire. The Crown Colony State, established in 1808, was originally limited to the area of Freetown and its immediate environs on the Western peninsula, later taking in the Bonthe Urban District of Bonthe Island. The Protectorate, encompassing the remainder of the territory known in modern times as Sierra Leone, was established in 1896.

6

This section of the

Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 5

10.

The imperial leadership pursued a social engineering strategy that was deeply divisive in its nature and impact. Simply put, the Colony and the Protectorate were developed separately and unequally. The colonialists used commerce, Christianity and notions of 'civilisation' as their tools to manipulate the relationships among the indigenous peoples, who had intermingled and dealt with one another for centuries. In place of harmonious co-existence, the colonialists sowed seeds of distrust, competition and intransigence.

11.

By way of example

Reference 29 - 0.01% Coverage

distrust, competition and intransigence.

11.

By way of example, the chiefs and peoples of the Sierra Leonean interior had originally welcomed the arrival and gradual resettlement of various categories of freed slaves⁷ on the Western peninsula. Several traditional rulers even made their land available to the freed slaves. Yet the British colonial administration promoted the notion that western values and Christianity were superior to the traditional customs and religions practised in the Protectorate. The people in the Protectorate were thus effectively discriminated against on the basis of their belief systems.

12.

In terms of land

Reference 30 - 0.01% Coverage

of their belief systems.

12.

In terms of land area, the Crown Colony was not more than 200 square miles. The Protectorate, on the other hand, extended some 182 miles from West to East, and 210 miles from North to South.⁸ The Colony had only about sixty thousand people by the end of the colonial period, while the Protectorate had about two million people.⁹ These massive disparities in land size and population, however, appeared to be inverted by the sociological and political divide.

13.

The British had acquired

Reference 31 - 0.01% Coverage

sociological and political divide.

13.

The British had acquired the original land in the peninsula and its environs (now known as the Western Area) for the Colony in 1787, from the Temne ruler, King Nimbana, whose northern Koya Kingdom extended to the western tip of the territory. With colonial expansion, Bonthe Island, off the south-western shore, was later added. The Sierra Leone Company, a corporate entity created by the British Abolitionists who had led the campaign to end the slave trade in the United Kingdom, administered the Colony at first. By 1800, former slaves and their descendants had developed into a distinctive social group who were known as the Creoles, or Krios. They developed a language from among their various dialects, which became known as Krio.¹⁰ By 1808, with the collapse of

7

The categories of slaves

Reference 32 - 0.01% Coverage

to the Conflict Page 6

the Sierra Leone Company administration, the Creoles had become colonial subjects governed directly by the British crown.

14.

The territories of the

Reference 33 - 0.01% Coverage

by the British crown.

14.

The territories of the Protectorate, meanwhile, came under British rule through the gradual and subtle advance of the colonialists into the hinterland. The British took their lead from Krio traders and Christian missionaries, whose entry into the outlying territories provided the context and the conditions for their annexation. By 1896, the British had expanded their coverage and control to a sufficient extent to be able to declare the hinterland a Protectorate. Thus, almost nine decades after the resettled former slaves had come under British colonial rule in 1808, the remainder of the population also lost their sovereignty to the avarice of imperialism.

15.

The British treated the

Reference 34 - 0.01% Coverage

the avarice of imperialism.

15.

The British treated the peoples of the Colony and the Protectorate quite differently. The inhabitants of the Protectorate were classified as “protected subjects” and were commonly referred to as “natives”. The people in the Colony were considered to be direct British subjects and were thus referred to as “non-natives”. These designations were not merely descriptive, but rather had huge political, social, economic and administrative implications. Only the Crown Colony State was governed by the monarch and

recognised as part of the British Empire. The Protectorate was administered indirectly, as a British “protected territory”.

16.

The existing rulers of

Reference 35 - 0.01% Coverage

abusive or autocratic.¹¹

17.

In the process of acquiring territory and expanding the frontiers of the British Empire, the colonialists in Sierra Leone entered into treaties and agreements with traditional rulers in approximately 400 land units, which they designated as chiefdoms. The leader of each of these chiefdoms was given the title of ‘Paramount Chief’. In terms of functions and powers, Paramount Chiefs were restricted in comparison to the pre-colonial rulers.¹² Hierarchically, Paramount Chiefs fell directly under the District Commissioners, who were mainly white, British citizens. Only if a Paramount Chief fulfilled the District Commissioner’s demands for labour and taxes, as well as “maintaining law and order” within his territories, would he be given a degree of autonomy to rule his subjects.

18.

Conscious of their steady

Reference 36 - 0.01% Coverage

to rule his subjects.

18.

Conscious of their steady marginalisation, the Chiefs objected strongly, albeit in vain, to colonial domination. Their protestations culminated in the so-called ‘Hut Tax War’ of 1898, led by Bai Bureh of Kasseh and a number of Mende chiefs, such as Nyagua of Kpanguma. The ‘Hut Tax War’ was a revolt against the proposed imposition of a tax based on the size of one’s homestead. The British suppressed the rebellion and the tax was retained. The perceived ringleaders of the protest were arrested and 98 of them were hanged in

¹¹ ¹²

See Abraham, A

Reference 37 - 0.01% Coverage

to the Conflict Page 7

Bandajuma. Indeed most of the Chiefs who had rebelled were punished – some of them imprisoned, others banished – while those who supported the British were rewarded along with their subjects.¹³ The period of unrest around the ‘Hut Tax War’ thus marked the effective consolidation of colonial rule. All the chiefs were compelled to adjust to their new status as the servants and representatives of the colonial government.

19.

The overhaul of the

Reference 38 - 0.01% Coverage

of the colonial government.

19.

The overhaul of the structure of Chieftaincy was to have grave implications on the ways in which traditional rulers related to their subjects and on the sociopolitical organisation of the communities. The overbearing attitudes and behaviour imbibed by the Chiefs from their colonial masters led to their assuming new and overwhelming powers over their subjects. Some of these measures, such as the ability to impose fines or other punishments for errant behaviour, were retained long into the post-colonial period and permanently defined the negative perceptions of Chiefs among many of their subjects. Indeed, these negative perceptions carried over into the conflict in Sierra Leone in the 1990s as a partial explanation for the brutality of the treatment meted out to Chiefs and other figures of status or authority.

20.

No system of Paramount

Reference 39 - 0.01% Coverage

of status or authority.

20.

No system of Paramount Chieftaincy existed in the Colony. Instead the Office of Colonial Governor was charged with administration. By 1863, the people of the Colony were allowed some form of representation in the colonial Legislative Council and therefore had the opportunity to learn and grow in the management of their own affairs. The Municipality Act of 1893 inaugurated the City Council, the equivalent of local government for the Colony. The existence of a City Council in Freetown gave the inhabitants of the Colony a distinct advantage over their counterparts in the Protectorate. The institution was to become a significant factor for the people of the Protectorate as they dealt with their fears of domination by the Krios in the years before self-government.

Education 21.

The disparities between

Reference 40 - 0.01% Coverage

before self-government.

Education 21.

The disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate were particularly acute in the realms of social and economic development. British colonial policies afforded the residents of the Colony vastly superior access to resources such as education. These advantages for the Krios, the predominant residents of the Colony, endured until the end of colonialism in 1961.

22.

Education in the Colony

Reference 41 - 0.01% Coverage

of colonialism in 1961.

22.

Education in the Colony flourished to the extent that some residents were able to attain what were considered high standards in the West. In 1827, one of the first universities in sub-Saharan Africa was established in Freetown in the shape of Fourah Bay College. The Krios, who were the sole beneficiaries of such facilities, became the first professional lawyers, doctors, missionaries, educators and engineers.¹⁴

13

For more details see

Reference 42 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 8

23.

In respect of primary education, the Colony had 67 schools, which was a disproportionately high number compared to only 104 schools in the Protectorate. Moreover, the colonial government supported 50 out of 67 schools in the Colony and only 24 out of 104 in the Protectorate. This disparity in educational provision manifested itself clearly in the contrasting percentages of children attending primary school in the different regions of the country in 1947:15

Southern Province (Protectorate) Northern Province (Protectorate) Western Area (Colony)

Eastern Province (Protectorate) 24.

4

Reference 43 - 0.01% Coverage

that of the North.

25.

There was an upsurge in the number of school-going children between 1946 and 1953, following the establishment of the Colonial Development Welfare Fund and a massive investment in education in the Protectorate.¹⁶ However, the expansion did little to address any of the disparities because the new facilities were totally inadequate.

26.

Further problems could be

Reference 44 - 0.01% Coverage

facilities were totally inadequate.

26.

Further problems could be ascertained by examining the social profile of the children who were given the opportunity to go to school. In Bo, the main town of the Southern Province, for example, a school for boys was set up in 1906. Yet this school catered almost exclusively for the children of the elite and included the nominees and children of Chiefs. The establishment of such a school promoted the notion in the minds of ordinary people that members of the traditional ruling class were forming themselves into an elitist group. Indeed, this 'traditional elite' would provide the country's leadership from the end of colonialism. Meanwhile, there was only one school for girls anywhere in the Protectorate, namely the Hartford School at Moyamba.

27.

With regard to teacher

Reference 45 - 0.01% Coverage

Conflict Page 9 16

28.

As only persons who were "suitably educated" could serve in the colonial administration, the Krios had a massive advantage over people from the rest of the country. Accordingly, the Krios dominated all the important positions in the colonial government. Even the emergent entrepreneurial class relied on a

literate work force, which was essentially Krio. The Krios were therefore extended inordinate advantages over other Sierra Leoneans, considering their population size.

29.

The enduring disparities in

Reference 46 - 0.01% Coverage

considering their population size.

29.

The enduring disparities in education were not the result of some historical accident that favoured the Krios. On the contrary, the colonial rulers were adept at promoting specific indigenous groups with particular skills, which served their own interests. Communities close to the coast were the first to encounter the Europeans and had access to western education long before communities in the hinterland. The population from the coastal areas provided the bulk of interpreters, court officers, messengers and other support staff for the colonial administration.

30.

The Krios were in

Reference 47 - 0.01% Coverage

for the colonial administration.

30.

The Krios were in a sense doubly advantaged because they were already literate by the time the Colony was governed directly from London and they had direct familial and other links to the United Kingdom arising from their historical relationship. They were classed as British subjects, which conferred certain privileges upon them and enabled them to be influential players in the period leading to self-government. Their only major drawback was their paucity of numbers. In 1947, when a constitutional debate addressed the question of voting rights, the Krios opposed an extension of the franchise to illiterate people. This opposition was widely considered to have been a selfpreservation tactic on the part of the Krio minority, aimed at excluding illiterates (most of whom were from the Protectorate) from the political arena and thus allowing the Krios to continue to dominate domestic affairs. The move created deep resentment among the emerging educated elite in the Protectorate and heightened the perception of discrimination against Protectorate people.

31.

Even educated Krios soon

Reference 48 - 0.01% Coverage

discrimination against Protectorate people.

31.

Even educated Krios soon began to realise the impact of limited opportunities, however, when they found that there was a certain level in the colonial service beyond which non-British persons could not advance. The Krios were then quick to mobilise public opinion against the policies of the colonial government. With a vibrant civil society including established media houses, they constantly attacked the divisive politics of the colonialists. Experiences elsewhere on the African continent had demonstrated that such threats to colonialism were inevitably neutralised through the promotion of the interests of the numerically superior natives by the colonialists. Sierra Leone proved to be no exception. The British

increasingly began finding common cause with the Protectorate peoples and the emergent immigrant groups such as the Lebanese and the Syrians.

New constitutional arrangements that granted

Reference 49 - 0.01% Coverage

Page 10

Legal duality 32.

The distinction between the Colony and the Protectorate was also reflected in the laws that governed them. Whereas the Colony adopted the English Common Law, the Protectorate operated a combination of legal doctrines and a three-tier court system, as follows:

(a) The Court of Native

Reference 50 - 0.01% Coverage

the death penalty.¹⁷

33.

The ambiguity over the hierarchy of these three courts in the Protectorate created a great deal of confusion about the powers and the limits of the Chiefs. In theory, the Chiefs were not permitted to adjudicate on criminal cases alone. In practice, however, they often did so and they became very powerful as a result. The Chiefs frequently exploited their people's uncertainty about the legal system to impose fines and other kinds of punishment as a means of consolidating their authority. Their abuse of the courts sowed the seeds for conflict over which law would prevail in any given situation. Quite apart from the differences between the Colony and the Protectorate, the Chiefs created a harmful situation of legal duality within the Protectorate itself.

34.

The multiple conflicts of

Reference 51 - 0.01% Coverage

within the Protectorate itself.

34.

The multiple conflicts of laws were to reverberate long into the post-colonial period. The Colony had a heritage of applying only the Common Law, whereas the Protectorate had a mixed system of inconsistent and irrational application. The Common Law was supposed to supersede customary law in the event of a conflict between the two, but in reality most disputes were decided at the whim of the adjudicator. The Common Law was codified while Customary Law was not, making the latter more susceptible to arbitrary interpretation, varying from Chieftdom to Chieftdom as well as between different ethnic groups. The impact of this legal duality was that people were treated differently in response to the same forms of illegal behaviour. The people of the Protectorate were given cause to resent the law and feel aggrieved at their second-class treatment; they looked spitefully upon the Krios, who seemed to have everything tailor-made for them.

35.

As custodians of custom

Reference 52 - 0.01% Coverage

to the Conflict Page 11

depend almost entirely on one's subservience to the colonial authority rather than on one's allegiance to the population one was elected to serve. Sadly this did tradition became entrenched to the extent that it did not change when colonialism ended. Chiefs were to be co-opted in an identical fashion by the post-colonial political parties, who relied on them to corral support from their people at election time. In exchange, the parties offered their support to help the Chiefs retain their positions even when there was good cause to remove them.

Systems of local government 36

Reference 53 - 0.01% Coverage

Systems of local government 36.

The Colony and the Protectorate were also governed differently at the local level. In the Colony the Municipality of Freetown was established as far back as 1895. The management of the Freetown council was by election of a substantial percentage of the population who were literate and had assets that qualified them to be on the voters' list.

37.

By contrast, in the

Reference 54 - 0.01% Coverage

cause of conflict.

Resources 38.

The endowment of resources was another area in which the Colony and the Protectorate experienced contrasting fortunes. On the face of it, the Protectorate enjoyed a natural advantage in this regard, as it was blessed with all the economic resources (including bauxite, iron ore, rutile (titanium ore), diamonds, coffee and cocoa) the country needed to develop, while the Colony had virtually nothing to offer.

39.

However, what the Colony

Reference 55 - 0.01% Coverage

virtually nothing to offer.

39.

However, what the Colony lacked in economic resources it compensated for with its highly literate and privileged population. The people of the Colony were to form the professional classes that were needed to run the post-colonial bureaucracy. Centralisation of government enabled those in the Colony to enrich themselves using the resources that the people of the Protectorate had produced. The profits of Sierra Leone's resource endowment were channelled almost exclusively into the Colony, financing the construction of huge houses, hospitals and other infrastructure, as well as a clean water supply for the citizens of Freetown. The citizens of the protectorate were deprived of any such benefits and remained in abject poverty.

Vol Three A Chapter One

Reference 56 - 0.01% Coverage

in the same country 40.

The British colonialists suspected the Krios of inciting the people of the Protectorate into rebellion during the Hut Tax War in 1898. The colonial administration therefore enacted stringent laws to exclude all Krios from the hinterland. Krios became “strangers” in the Protectorate by virtue of the Protectorate Ordinance of 1896 and they had to pay “stranger” fees to the local Chief, making them a lucrative source of revenue. Given that Krios were regarded as ‘foreigners’ in the Protectorate territories, they were afforded only those rights extended to them by the local Chiefs.

41.

In the Colony, the

Reference 57 - 0.01% Coverage

by the local Chiefs.

41.

In the Colony, the different ethnic groups from the Provinces were segregated and compelled to reside in designated areas: for example, the Mendes stayed in Ginger Hall, East Freetown, while the Fullahs were put in the area that became known as Fullah Town. Apart from living in individual ghettos, people from the Protectorate could not acquire voting rights in the city since they were illiterate and had no assets that qualified them to be on the roll of voters.¹⁹ The Krios of the Colony did not mix with the Protectorate people in any way that could have fostered greater understanding of each other. Being ignorant of one other, it was easy and convenient for the Krio elite to characterise the Protectorate people as uncivilised. This stereotype was applied to the Mende people in particular, as illustrated by the following newspaper excerpt from the 1920s, which depicted them as:

“...dressed, or rather undressed, in

Reference 58 - 0.01% Coverage

to wear more conspicuous...”²⁰

The endurance of this prejudice was such that, by 1947, the Protectorate people in the Colony outnumbered the Krios²¹ but were totally excluded from Colony politics.

The arrival of Lebanese and

Reference 59 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 13

44.

In the period between 1896 and 1947, the separation between the Krios and the people of the Protectorate grew ever wider. The two groups became strangers to each other in the same land. The deepening division had stark effects on the approaches of both groups to post-colonial politics. The Krios, fearful that they would not be treated fairly under a Protectorate government, formed a party of their own, the National Congress of Sierra Leone, to protect their interests. The Protectorate people, in defiance of the Krios, seized the opportunity at independence to assert themselves and to redistribute the national wealth in a manner reflective of their numerical strength.

Land tenure and ownership 45

Reference 60 - 0.01% Coverage

Land tenure and ownership 45.

The differences in the rules for land tenure and ownership between the Colony and the Protectorate contributed in large measure to the neglect of the Protectorate and a glaring lack of investment in its rich arable lands. Whereas Sierra Leoneans from all parts of the country had similar rights in the ownership of land in the Colony, the same was not true in the Protectorate.

46.

Three types of land

Reference 61 - 0.01% Coverage

tenure.²²

Irrespective of the

type of land ownership an individual asserted in the Protectorate, different land laws applied to Sierra Leoneans depending on whether they were “natives” (those originating from the Provinces) or so-called “non-natives” (those originating from the Colony). “Natives” could hold an indefinite interest in land in the Protectorate but “non-natives” could only acquire land and hold it on limited tenancy. The Provincial Land Act of 1906 stated that “no non-native shall acquire a greater interest in land in the Provinces than a tenancy for fifty years.” The same statute contained the further clause that “nothing in this Section shall prevent the insertion in any lease of a clause providing for the renewal of such lease for a second or further terms not over twenty one years.”²³

47.

The Provincial Land Act

Reference 62 - 0.01% Coverage

route out of poverty.

49.

Meanwhile the population of Freetown was able to secure commercial bank loans and access state services with comparative ease. This development steadily deepened the social gap between the two peoples and explains the perception of people in the Protectorate that that those in the Colony consumed all the country’s wealth.

50.

The cumulative outcome of

Reference 63 - 0.01% Coverage

all the country’s wealth.

50.

The cumulative outcome of socio-economic divisions, coupled over time with a host of other disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate, would induce people who had lived harmoniously for most of history to become polarised along ethnic and regional lines at moments of crisis. The polarity that is captured in the phrase ‘two nations in the same land’ was an ominous historical antecedent for future civil conflict with ethnic and regional undertones.

The Era of Party Politics

Reference 64 - 0.01% Coverage

Era of Party Politics 51.

The system that governed the Colony and the Protectorate as two separate entities lasted until 1947. Up to that point, the only contact between the two entities in terms of governance was the presence of three Paramount Chiefs on the colonial Legislative Council, as provided for in the Constitution of 1927. The numerical strength of the Protectorate was not reflected in the disbursement of institutional influence or state resources. It was iniquitous for such a small number of people as lived in the Colony to have such access to and control over state resources.

52.

Contradictory views on the

Reference 65 - 0.01% Coverage

control over state resources.

52.

Contradictory views on the management of state resources had fostered such mistrust between the Krios and the Protectorate people that it would largely shape the subsequent political alignments of both groups. The impact of this mistrust came to the fore in 1947 when a new Constitution (known as the ‘Stevens Constitution’ after its chief drafter Siaka Stevens) was proposed in order to prepare the country for independence. This Constitution amalgamated the Colony and the Protectorate into a single political entity, but divided their elite representatives into opposing factions, each dedicated to protecting the interests of its own people.

53.

Among the key provisions

Reference 66 - 0.01% Coverage

Legislative Council, comprising 22 members;

14 “unofficial” positions in the Legislative Council for representatives from the Protectorate. These representatives would be elected by fellow Paramount Chiefs and members of Tribal Authorities to the Protectorate Assembly (which had been set up in 1946 as a counterbalance to the Legislative Council in the Colony), and then on to the Legislative Council;

Vol Three A Chapter One

Reference 67 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 15

• 54.

7 “unofficial” positions in the Legislative Council for representatives from the Colony, who were to be directly elected.

The creation of a single legislature for the country signalled the demise of Krio dominance since the Krios were numerically far inferior. The Krios in the Colony argued vehemently against the 1947 Constitution on the basis that it was wrong and impracticable to have uneducated Chiefs making laws for people who were colonial subjects. The Krios therefore advocated that a separate legislature should be created for the Colony. To champion their respective positions, the factions from both Colony and Protectorate formed themselves into narrow, regionally-based political parties with little or no national agenda.

55.

In the Colony, the

Reference 68 - 0.01% Coverage

or no national agenda.

55.

In the Colony, the original ideals of the West African Youth League,²⁴ namely to bring together the working class in both the Protectorate and the Colony to fight the evils of colonialism, gave way to the movement of Creole ethnic protectionism. This movement in turn gave birth to the National Congress of Sierra Leone, headed by Dr. Bankole Bright.

56.

In the Protectorate, pressure

Reference 69 - 0.01% Coverage

meet the Creole challenge.

57.

The political agenda became a battle over which regional elite would succeed the British. Little consideration was given to the majority of the inhabitants in either the Colony or the Protectorate. The debate on the issue of a single national legislature was indicative of this battle. Dr. Bankole Bright was reported to have said, “the Colony and the Protectorate are two hills standing opposite each other and can never meet.”²⁵

58.

The feelings of the

Reference 70 - 0.01% Coverage

representatives in the Legislative Council:

“We warn the inhabitants of the Colony that they are embarking on dangerous grounds in making any claims of independence from us. We would urge them to reflect on what is happening between India and Pakistan and between the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine, before they persist in claiming exclusive rights. If our emancipation should come, as we earnestly hope it will, we could well depend upon our treaties to reclaim our here lands ceded to the British crown, now known as the Colony area, and I would therefore ask our Colony brethren to locate themselves elsewhere.”²⁶

59.

A variety of political

Reference 71 - 0.01% Coverage

to the Conflict Page 16

Sierra Leone Organising Society. Moderate members of the Krio community joined the party as well. This effort to forge a link between the Colony and the Protectorate was not welcomed among the elite Krios.²⁷ Despite claiming to be a party for all the people of the Protectorate, the SLPP was composed almost entirely of Protectorate middle class interests, the only exception being Siaka Stevens, who was a trade union leader. The party was not a broad-based party of mass appeal and relied on Chiefs to “deliver” popular support in the communities. Its origins would affect its management of power in the postcolonial period.

60.

The 1951 Legislative Assembly

Reference 72 - 0.01% Coverage

in the postcolonial period.

60.

The 1951 Legislative Assembly elections pitted the NCSL against the SLPP. The result was victory for the SLPP. Protesting Krios, who constituted themselves into the Settlers' Descendant Union, challenged the constitutional legality of imposing "native" rule on them, without success. Having failed to stop the SLPP, political and economic survival for the Krios depended on creating an alliance with any group opposed to the SLPP. This strategy was to prove convenient in elections held at the end of the colonial period and it places in context the historical link between the Krios and the Northern-dominated All People's Congress (APC).

61.

The defeat of the

Reference 73 - 0.01% Coverage

All People's Congress (APC).

61.

The defeat of the Krios in the political theatre did not eliminate their impact on the newly self-governing state of 1951, as they continued to dominate the positions in the state bureaucracy. With its electoral victory, the SLPP was invited to choose members who would sit on the Executive Council, a kind of nascent cabinet. The Executive Council assumed a more indigenous character than the colonial administration, with the SLPP members becoming its Ministers and Sir Milton Margai becoming the Chief Minister.

62.

In 1956, the Protectorate

Reference 74 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 17

64.

In 1957, the British colonial authorities conducted another election. This time the NCSL found an ally in the Kono Progressive Union, an ethnic-based party, to challenge the SLPP. It appeared for a time as if the NCSL-SLPP party rivalry was subsiding and being replaced by a division based on ethnicity, class and regionalism. The KPU won all the parliamentary seats in the Kono District. The overall victory of the SLPP was assured, however, as the party had no effective rival in the rest of the Protectorate.

65.

The SLPP victory of

Reference 75 - 0.01% Coverage

members from his cabinet.

67.

The strikes of 1955, the formation of a splinter group from the SLPP, the defeat of the NCSL and the perceived Temne exclusion from cabinet had all contributed to the fragmentation of the political system by 1960. The constitutional talks underway in London, in contrast, called for some form of unity if the British were not to postpone the granting of independence. Anxious to rid themselves of colonial rule, the

political class coalesced by necessity into the United National Front and went to London to negotiate for independence. Among the main players in the delegation was Siaka Stevens of the PNP, who would become a key player in post-independence Sierra Leone.

68.

At the London talks

Reference 76 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 18

70.

The APC was also ideologically detached from the SLPP. The SLPP motto of “One People, One Country” signified that national unity was important to the party.³² The APC motto of “Now or Never” centralised the notion of capturing state power. While the SLPP claimed it wanted unity between the Colony and the Protectorate, the APC professed socialist ideals: a welfare state with no tribalism, no class distinctions, and no exploitation.³³ In addition, the APC was against the autocratic rule of Paramount Chiefs and wanted the whole institution of Chieftaincy to be democratised. Chiefs still provided the main bastion of support for the SLPP. Most important of all, the founding fathers of the APC were almost exclusively of Northern origin.

71.

From 1960 onwards, the

Reference 77 - 0.01% Coverage

exclusively of Northern origin.

71.

From 1960 onwards, the fight for political power would develop into a protracted rivalry between these two opposing parties. On the one hand, the APC sought to appeal to the proletarian masses and the influential tribes of the North; on the other hand, the SLPP drew on the backing of the middle class, traditional elite, dominated by the ruling houses of the South and East. From the 1960s onwards, party politics supplanted the Colony-Protectorate divide as the greatest obstacle to national cohesion and identity, and as a premise for prejudice, hostility and, ultimately, conflict.

The Sierra Leone People’s Party

Reference 78 - 0.01% Coverage

barely suppressed hostilities.

CONCLUSION 143.

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

144.

The colonial government was

Reference 79 - 0.01% Coverage

to the present day.

144.

The colonial government was also responsible for destabilising the system of Chieftaincy and creating a crisis of legitimacy around the traditional rulers. The colonial government formalised the Common Law but neglected the development of customary law, resulting in mass confusion and effective legal duality. Customary law became the preserve of the Chiefs who interpreted traditions and customs in an arbitrary fashion and utilised their authority to whatever ends they so desired. The rights of women, in particular, were denied during this period.

61 Madam Fatou Sankoh, member

Reference 80 - 0.01% Coverage

the Conflict Page 35

145.

During the post-colonial period, ethnic tensions were exacerbated by the emergence of domestic political parties. The elections of 1962 and 1967 had dangerous and divisive legacies for all the branches of government. Sir Albert Margai's overt manipulation of the Paramount Chiefs, the military sphere and the supposedly 'independent' judiciary devastated public confidence in the selfrun State. When the Sierra Leone Army intervened in 1967 in an attempt to pervert the course of democracy, a precedent was set for military men to play influential roles in politics for decades to come.

146.

It was during the

Reference 81 - 0.01% Coverage

proposed dissolution of the

2

Governor General is a post familiar to the constitutions of many former British colonies and members of the British Commonwealth. Its holder is the representative of the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In the independence settlement of 1961, the Queen remained the monarch and Head of State, with the Governor General acting as her immediate representative in Sierra Leone.

3

See the Independence Constitution

Reference 82 - 0.01% Coverage

to bestow upon them.

51.

The Independence Constitution of 1961 made provisions for the conduct of multi-party parliamentary elections every fifth year. Two other legal instruments that bolstered the conduct of elections in the immediate post-colonial period were the Franchise and Electoral Registration Act of 1961 and the Electoral Provisions Act of 1962. Section 37 of the independence constitution established an electoral commission comprising a chief electoral commissioner or chairman, plus between two and four other members to be appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. The commission was classified not as an independent body but as a unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; its administrative staffers were members of the civil service seconded to the Commission through the

Ministry. The Commission also lacked a self-accounting status; the Ministry of Finance handled its finances on its behalf.

31 The SLPP increasingly became

Reference 83 - 0.01% Coverage

Two

Governance Page 51

52.

Elections can be considered as three distinct time periods: the pre-election period; polling day itself; and the immediate post-election period. Exclusionary tactics were apparent in the pre-election period of the first post-colonial general election,³² held in 1962. The SLPP under Sir Milton Margai deployed the Chiefs against the opposition in Kono and many other parts of the country by cleverly side-stepping the Electoral Provision Act 1962. This Act formally debarred the Chiefs from interfering in political meetings, unless it had become disorderly or appeared likely to lead to a breach of the peace. However, the provision in question applied only during the official period of election campaign and not before its announcement. SLPP Chiefs therefore acted pre-emptively to stop the opposition from campaigning in their Chiefdoms.

53.

The District Council Elections

Reference 84 - 0.01% Coverage

and orderly.³⁷

32 33

The colonial authorities had staged two previous general elections in Sierra Leone, in 1951 and 1957. Both of them were won by the SLPP.

At the time of these

Reference 85 - 0.01% Coverage

of African Negro descent.

80.

In 1906, the laws created to govern land tenure discriminated on grounds of ethnicity. Different land laws were applied to Sierra Leoneans depending on whether they were “natives” (those originating from the Provinces) or so-called “non-natives” (those originating from the Colony of Freetown, who were predominantly Krios). “Natives” could hold an indefinite interest in land in the Provincial areas but “non-natives” could only acquire land and hold it on limited tenancy. The Provincial Land Act of 1906 stated that “no non-native shall acquire a greater interest in land in the Provinces than a tenancy for fifty years.” The same statute contained the further clause that “nothing in this Section shall prevent the insertion in any lease of a clause providing for the renewal of such lease for a second or further terms not over twenty one years.”⁶³

81.

The Provincial Land Act

Reference 86 - 0.01% Coverage

the Laws of Sierra Leone.

Due to its colonial history, most of Sierra Leone's laws were either adopted or adapted from England. Section 74 of the Courts Act 1965 made pre-1880 laws of England automatically applicable to Sierra Leone. Examples of laws adopted pursuant to this section include the Statute of Frauds 1677, the Wills Act 1837 and the Common Law Procedure Act 1852. Post-1880 English statutes that were adopted additionally include the Conveyancing Act 1881, the Settled Land Act 1882, the Perjury Act 1911, the Forgery Act 1913, the Larceny Act 1916 and the Married Women's Maintenance Act (Cap. 100) enacted in 1888.

Vol Three A Chapter Two

Reference 87 - 0.01% Coverage

the country's proud heritage.

98.

During the colonial period, newspapers like the West African Reporter (1876 – 1884) and the Sierra Leone Weekly News (1886 – 1951) had not only criticised the colonial authorities, but also created awareness about issues of common concern such as education, health and agriculture.⁶⁹ During Sir Milton Margai's three-year tenure, there was no deliberate attempt to gag the press by the regime.⁷⁰ There was pluralism in relation to the print media, albeit that the government controlled the only radio and television stations, as was the case in many parts of the world in that era.

99.

Sir Albert Margai introduced

Reference 88 - 0.01% Coverage

in society.

CIVIL SOCIETY 109.

Civil Society in the colonial era was mainly composed of elitist Freetown-based groups active in pressuring the colonial authorities to open up the political space between 1920 and 1947. By 1950, these groups had coalesced to form a political party – The National Council of the Colony of Sierra Leone (NCCSL) – dedicated to promoting the interests of the Krio ethnic group in the accelerated decolonisation process of the 1950s.

110.

The two major civil

Reference 89 - 0.01% Coverage

that the leader of the

National Council of the Colony of Sierra Leone (NCCSL) instigated the riot as a last-ditch effort to undermine the inevitable dominance of the SLPP in the postcolonial period.⁷⁷ Sir Milton Margai refused to talk to the workers and instead suppressed the riot after violent days, during which much destruction was done. Several strikers were killed and property belonging to some prominent cabinet ministers was destroyed.⁷⁸ This clash set the tone for a difficult relationship between workers and the ruling elite. Workers' demands were generally met with intransigence and force by the state.

113.

Notwithstanding the Elections Before

Reference 90 - 0.01% Coverage

Two Governance Page 69
127.

In this sense, the church men and imams were no different from their colonial forebears who encouraged the people to read their Bibles and Korans while their land and other resources were appropriated by the colonial government. The religious institutions have engaged the Government only once in public, when in 1993 an officer of the NPRC regime, Colonel Gabriel Mani, assaulted a notable religious figurehead, Bishop Keillie of Bo Diocese. Up to 1991 therefore, faith institutions in Sierra Leone buried their heads in the sand and intoned that everything was fine in the country, admonishing the faithful through their sermons to be loyal to constituted authority.

128.

It took until the

Reference 91 - 0.01% Coverage

and Murray Town in Freetown.

When the British colonial authorities created the Sierra Leone Army, they used dual criteria for recruitment.⁸³ In the South and East, where more people had undergone western type education,⁸⁴ there was an insistence on educational qualifications. This requirement coupled with the fact that seven of the country's 12 districts were in the South and the East led to a preponderance of Southerners and Easterners in the officer corps of the Army in the immediate post-colonial period.⁸⁵

131.

In the North, a

Reference 92 - 0.01% Coverage

eve of the conflict.

166.

The pipe borne water supply was also concentrated entirely in Freetown at the expense of the Provinces. Whereas throughout the colonial period up to the first half of the 1970s all District Headquarter towns and some Chiefdom towns had pipe borne water, none except Bo and Kenema had retained such facilities up to the eve of the conflict.

167.

By 1991, the road

Reference 93 - 0.01% Coverage

past has offered.

CONCLUSION 176.

The Commission concludes that all the post-colonial regimes contributed shamefully in creating the structural and proximate contexts that led to the conflict in 1991. While the administration of Sir Milton Margai was perhaps less more tolerable of dissent than his successors, Sir Milton also engaged in dictatorial and vengeful practices that undermined the unity and cohesion of his party and laid the foundation for polarisation in the body politic. Terrible practices of governance began in Sierra Leone's honeymoon period and were encouraged by Sir Albert Margai, consolidated and then taken to new heights by Siaka Stevens.

177.

The duality of the

Reference 94 - 0.01% Coverage

small size of the force:

“Before the war, we just had this single full battalion; just First Battalion. It consisted of a little below 1,000 extremely old soldiers, who have been here before, during the advent of the post-colonial days. So they were permanently here and they were in their [relatively] large numbers. Then we had the Second Battalion of about 500 to 600 personnel; then the

93

Colonel K. I. S

Reference 95 - 0.01% Coverage

in this regard as follows:

“I believe that Hinga Norman and Kabbah saw the conflict in Sierra Leone from two different viewpoints. Norman was a born soldier who had been in the colonial Army from the age of fourteen. As a soldier and as Deputy Minister of Defence, I believe he saw his role as defending the country and defeating the enemy on the battleground. Norman had never actually lived outside Sierra Leone and had no interest in living anywhere [else]. Sierra Leone was the only home for Norman.

[...] Kabbah, on the other hand

Reference 96 - 0.01% Coverage

pay for that.”¹⁶

40.

It is difficult to determine where the idea of amputation in the conflict came from. There are however examples from different parts of the world that could have motivated the combatants who used amputations to devastating effect. During the colonial period in the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), the Belgians cut off the hands of workers who didn't bring home enough rubber. Mozambique's RENAMO rebels also carried out amputations during the 70s and 80s, and in Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army has amputated ears, particularly, and tongues. Nazi Germany was also reputed for terrible medical experiments on victims that included amputations and mutilations. What makes the Sierra Leone case unique is that people elsewhere usually lost limbs to land mines. In Sierra Leone, they were hacked off by human beings using an ax or a machete. What is more, the amputees elsewhere typically lost a leg or sometimes two legs, which though horrible still allows the victim to function with crutches or a wheelchair. In Sierra Leone, most amputees have lost an arm, and many are what technicians call "double upper-limb amputees."

15 16

Foday Kabbah, TRC

Reference 97 - 0.01% Coverage

1997.

Targeting of Nigerians 192.

The relationship between Nigerians and Sierra Leoneans blossomed from the colonial era. The colonial authorities recruited many Sierra Leoneans as missionaries and civil servants in Nigeria. Many of them

subsequently settled in Nigeria. Furthermore thousands of slaves who had been freed from the slave ships arrested on the high seas and resettled in Sierra Leone were able to trace their homes in Nigeria and re-establish contact with their family members. The links between both countries have therefore been very strong. Up until the start of the war, majority of the students at the Fourah Bay College were Nigerians. Inter marriage between both nations had been quite strong and thousands of Nigerians had settled in Sierra Leone carrying on legitimate business activities

193.

It was no surprise

Reference 98 - 0.01% Coverage

the history of the institution.

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces traces its history back to British colonial days. From its inception, the RSLAF has had series of title changes and underwent rapid transformation from the colonial days to date. The original name was the Royal West African Rifles. It was later transformed into the Royal Sierra Leone Rifles, and subsequently the Royal Sierra Leone Regiment. The army served with distinction in both first and second world wars gaining the battle honours of Cameroon, in what was then German West Africa, and Myohaung, in Burma in 1944. Following independence in 1961, the armed forces became known as the Sierra Leone Regiment and finally, the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) after the attainment of republican status in 1971. In 1995, the NPRC military regime renamed it the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AFRSL). President Kabbah on 21 January 2002 renamed it as the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

276.

The RSLAF was founded

Reference 99 - 0.01% Coverage

Economy of Mineral Resources 11.

To understand the failure of the state in Sierra Leone and the role that minerals played in the conflict, we need to consider the nature of the state that emerged in 1961. At independence, there was euphoria that the new indigenous leadership would extend development and services to the people exponentially. In Sierra Leone, as in many other parts of Africa, the first few years following colonialism actually witnessed economic growth. Two key factors reversed this trend and set the country on a very different trajectory from the forward path desired by the people.

12.

The first factor was

Reference 100 - 0.01% Coverage

Mineral Resources Page 6

15.

The political elite had preferential access to the machinery of the state. Politicians, senior civil servants and military officers exercised a great deal of power over access to foreign and domestic capital and markets, which they used to accumulate large fortunes and to consolidate their control of the economy. Exploitation occurred through a burgeoning de facto market in government contracts, licences and offices. The productive and regulatory capacities of the state became severely eroded and compromised. This led to the “informalisation” of the state.⁶ The state was misappropriated for the private benefit of the political elite, just as it had been in colonial times.

16.

This brief background helps

Reference 101 - 0.01% Coverage

and require sustained application.⁷

The Diamond Industry before the Conflict The colonial period

17.

A variety of minerals

Reference 102 - 0.01% Coverage

Conflict The colonial period

17.

A variety of minerals, including gold, iron and diamonds, were discovered in Sierra Leone in the 1930s; rutile, or titanium ore, was discovered in the 1960s.⁸ Diamonds were discovered in the Kenema and Kono Districts. The colonial government, through the Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST), established the Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST) in 1934. CAST was a corporation controlled by the Selection Trust Group of London, with a portion of the shares held by De Beers.⁹ The SLST was granted exclusive mining and prospecting rights throughout the country for 99 years.¹⁰ In 1933, an iron-ore mine was opened at Marampa in Port Loko District and was generating almost 30% of the colony's export revenue by 1938.¹¹

18.

The mining sector became

Reference 103 - 0.01% Coverage

levels of the transaction.

19.

Beginning in the 1930s and 1940s, the colonial government adopted the strategy of relying on local chiefs to exercise control over the expanding diamond industry. However, the central government in Freetown had little control over the chiefs' actions and therefore could not curb nascent illicit mining:

"As the state's chosen administrative

Reference 104 - 0.01% Coverage

Mineral Resources Page 8

24.

In 1955, the colonial government terminated the SLST – De Beers monopoly and introduced the Alluvial Diamond Mining Scheme (ADMS), under which Sierra Leonean miners could buy licences.

Previously, Sierra Leonean nationals had

Reference 105 - 0.01% Coverage

buy licences.

Previously, Sierra Leonean

nationals had not been allowed to own mining concessions.²¹ Parts of the SLST Yengema concession that were unsuitable for large-scale mining were leased to local, small-scale miners,²² who were required to sell all their diamonds to SLST. By allowing Sierra Leonean miners to operate mines, the colonial government sought to curtail smuggling and restore security to the SLST lease area.²³ The colonial government also established the Mining Area Development Administration (MADA), a state development expenditure programme incorporating local authorities into the decision-making process.²⁴

²⁵.

This new system gave

Reference 106 - 0.01% Coverage

within the sub-region.

²⁰⁸.

Successive post-colonial governments in Sierra Leone have mismanaged the diamond industry and placed its effective control in the hands of non-Sierra Leoneans in a way that has not benefited the majority of the people. The state never had effective control of the diamond industry prior to or during the conflict period.

²⁰⁹.

The APC government abdicated

Reference 107 - 0.01% Coverage

OAU) summit in 1980.

⁷.

As part of a wide range of foreign policy tools to influence events outside Libya, Ghaddafi provided a safe haven and weapons training for individuals who wished to instigate revolutionary struggle in their own countries. These were people who had been branded as terrorists, dissidents and insurgents⁴ by their own governments but who (in many cases) were engaged in resistance to overthrow dictatorial and colonial regimes. Ghaddafi also created front organisations for their operations in neighbouring states.⁵

⁸.

A number of formal

Reference 108 - 0.01% Coverage

in the eastern hinterland.

³.

In the eighteenth century, the abolitionist campaign led to the decision in Britain to relocate freed slaves to Sierra Leone. The British government purchased land from a Temne King in order to settle freed slaves on and around the western peninsula. This new community took on the name "Freetown" and its population became known as Krios. In 1808, the British created the Crown Colony, centred on Freetown and its environs, and in 1896 made the outlying areas into a Protectorate. For over 150 years the British dominated all spheres of life in the country. It was during this period that the Freetown-based Krios advanced educationally and economically at the expense of the people in the hinterland. The Krios developed into a highly educated group of colonial subjects compared to their counterparts in the Provinces.

⁴.

Sierra Leone celebrated its

Reference 109 - 0.01% Coverage

93

WOMEN AND POLITICS 43.

A paradox exists in Sierra Leone in the realms of women and politics: some women have been political pioneers, whilst the vast majority have languished on the sidelines. This paradox has its origins in the history of how women in Sierra Leone became involved in politics. At the end of World War I, women of Krio origin, born in the Colony,⁸ made their voices heard in the political arena. At the same time, in the Protectorate, a few women wielded political power by becoming Paramount Chiefs or Section chiefs. In Freetown, women of Protectorate extraction, e.g. Mende and Temne, served and still serve as both Section and Tribal Headmen.⁹

44.

The activities of those

Reference 110 - 0.01% Coverage

and Tribal Headmen.⁹

44.

The activities of those first, feisty women politicians in the Colony resulted in some landmark events. In 1938, Constance A. Cummings-John became the first woman to stand for office in Freetown in the municipal elections, which she went on to win.¹⁰ In 1951, the Sierra Leone Women's Movement (SLWM), a non-political representative organisation, was established. Its goals were "to improve the status of all Sierra Leonean women, whether born in the Colony or in the Protectorate, and to seek female representation on government bodies concerned with education, social welfare and the economy."¹¹ Due to the formation of this group, in 1954, one of the founding members, Mabel Dove, became the first woman in West Africa to be elected to the legislature.¹² The SLWM had a broad base of membership, with about 2,000 members from the Colony and about 3,000 from the Protectorate.¹³ The movement has been described as the only mass-based organisation in the 1950s that actively worked to unite all ethnic groups within its structure and to inculcate a common national identity among Sierra Leoneans.¹⁴

45. Women made real progress

Reference 111 - 0.01% Coverage

Mende Headman in Freetown.¹⁵

46. Women personalities continued to make their voices heard on political issues in Freetown right through to the time of independence, despite the fact that the vast majority of women were excluded. In the 1957 election, despite the apathy shown by most women, four women did contest for election under the auspices of the SLPP and the two contesting seats in the Colony won.¹⁶ It is instructive to note that neither of these two women ultimately took up their seats in Parliament, due to election petitions filed against them.

8 9

The "Colony", or

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filed against them.

The “Colony”, or the “Crown Colony”, was the name given to Freetown during colonial rule. The remainder of the territory of Sierra Leone was known as the “Protectorate”.

See Denzer, LaRay; “Women in

Reference 113 - 0.01% Coverage

and the struggle for independence.

54. Women in Freetown had enjoyed access to various levels of education from as early as 1787. Their counterparts in the Provinces had access to only one secondary school, which was established in the 1940s. Women in the Provinces, mostly uneducated and affected by poverty, lacked awareness of their political rights and did not participate in any political activities. In short, women in the Colony enjoyed a head start on women in the Provinces in terms of both education and politics.

55.

Tradition and culture also

Reference 114 - 0.01% Coverage

resources for the country.

3.

British colonial rule in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries divided Sierra Leone into two entities: the Colony, which was the name assigned to Freetown and its environs; and the Protectorate, which encompassed all the Provinces in the interior. There was a degree of unease in relations between the inhabitants of these two entities, partly premised on the stark inequalities in access to education, social services and economic resources that British rule had created in favour of the Freetown-based Krios. As independence was attained on 27 April 1961, however, political disagreements soon became the main reason for rivalries. Within little more than a decade of self-rule, Sierra Leone had seen fiercely controversial elections, poisonous “personality politics” and various successful and unsuccessful military coups.

4.

The country’s longest-serving

Reference 115 - 0.01% Coverage

commented in his submission that:

“At independence, Sierra Leone inherited a western type of education system aimed largely at the urban middle class. The system was biased... In essence the system was aimed at nurturing civil servants and government administrators in the colonial and independent government. Yet the majority of Sierra Leoneans, unable to afford formal education, were excluded from the education system... Given the exclusive nature of the country’s education system, it is not surprising that literacy levels remained as low as 8% at independence, or that in the 1970s fewer than 15% of children aged between 5 and 11 years attended school, or that only 5% of children between 12 and 16 years were in secondary school.”¹³

25.

Historically, the colonial government

Reference 116 - 0.01% Coverage

in secondary school.”¹³

25.

Historically, the colonial government had mainly concerned itself with educating the sons of Chiefs in the provinces and the sons of the elite and the Krios in the western areas, as these groups were intended to provide future civil servants for the colonial government. The majority of the population was largely left to remain illiterate. The unforeseen consequence of this kind of policy meant that the majority were not able to access education.

26.

The decline in the

Reference 117 - 0.01% Coverage

conflict.

CHILDREN AND HEALTH 39.

The state of health in Sierra Leone has been on a steady decline throughout the post-colonial period. In 1960, the infant mortality rate stood at 220 per 1,000 live births, while by 2000 the under-five mortality rate was 390 per 1,000 children.²⁰ The decline in economic growth in the 1980s affected the health sector negatively. The surge in 1983 of both the infant and under five mortality rates, as well as other negative indicators for the country, led the United Nations to classify Sierra Leone as the least developed country in the Human Development Index of that year.²¹ Sierra Leone has had the dubious distinction of holding this title consecutively from 1983 to 2004. According to the World Bank:

“While the recent conflict exacerbated

Reference 118 - 0.01% Coverage

child.

Age of Majority 65.

The age of majority in Sierra Leone is 21 years old, based on the common law, which was adopted from English law under colonial rule and maintained after independence to present day.⁵² Under the 1991 Constitution a citizen who is 18 years old has voting rights.⁵³ Criminal responsibility starts at ten years of age. The Children and Young Persons Act Chapter 44 of the Laws of Sierra Leone, the main legislation on children and juvenile justice, defines a child as a person under the age of 14 years and a young person as a person who is above 14 years and under the age of 17 years.⁵⁴

50

The laws of Sierra

Reference 119 - 0.01% Coverage

political system were dashed.

30.

The 1980s saw the emergence of well-organised radical groups and study clubs on university and college campuses, including the Green Book study club (promoting Ghaddafi’s ideas of revolutionary mass participation from Libya), the Pan African Union (PANAFU), which called for a popular movement,²² and the Socialist Club. Unlike other campus clubs, PANAFU brought both categories of youth together and was concerned with educating its members about apartheid in South Africa and neo-colonialism in Africa. PANAFU operated outside the campuses and had revolutionary “cells” in central and eastern Freetown.

31.

Following a student demonstration

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must start this work now.”

“The journey of a hundred years begins with a single step. Our beloved country has been moving along the road to total liberation since the colonial days”. - from “Let us Come Together with Love to Solve the Problems of Sierra Leone”, an 83-page visionary essay By the RUFP Prisoners at Pademba Road Prison Salone Piken

By Emmanuel Bryma