

INSTABILTY IN LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE

by

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I.INTRODUCTION

Liberia and Sierra Leone, which were both victims of imperialism in the 1800s, continue to be held captive by foreign entities long after independence. Liberia was never formally colonized by the United States, while Britain colonized Sierra Leone. Similarly, Liberia and Sierra Leone have both had civil wars after independence. Liberia has had two civil wars since independence. The First Liberian Civil War was in 1989 to 1997 and the Second Liberian Civil War was in 1999 and did not end until 2003. Sierra Leone had its civil war in 1991 to 2002. All three of the civil wars began after rebel forces revolted against their corrupt governments. These two countries have never fully recovered from the aftermath of colonialism and their subsequent civil wars. Sadly, Liberia and Sierra Leone still suffer from corruption and instability, consequences I argue come from not just their past civil wars but neocolonialism. Neocolonialism in both Liberia and Sierra Leone is perpetuated through multi-national enterprise (MNE) and causes instability through exploitation and foreign dominance in their natural resources and manufacturing industries.

There is no simple answer to where instability stems from in these two countries and how to create stability. However, this paper will analyze different factors that led to instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone. It will then suggest possible ways to create harmony in their political, economic, and social spheres. The purpose of this paper is to answer why there is instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Are warlords and crony politics to blame, or is there a real institutional, economic, and industrial development problem that needs to be solved? Where lies the origin of the problem? Who needs to be at the forefront of solving these problems, and how can it be done? These legitimate questions need to be explored to get at the root of instability in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This paper will begin by defining key terms important to the text. I

will then discuss what other scholars have contributed to this topic and the common themes attributed. These themes include the need for comprehensive post conflict reconstruction, the harm of foreign dominance, the need for development in all sectors, and cooperation with all local, state, and international actors. Next, I will offer what theories I think are useful to examine, which will include reformation of land tenure, regulation of natural resources and of Multi-national enterprises (MNE), and the implementation of local Civil Society Organizations (CSO).

Defining key terms in the paper is essential in understanding Liberia's and Sierra Leone's obstacles to prosperity and peace. Both countries continue to operate under neocolonial control and have governments that rely on crony politics. Neocolonialism is when "control and power over the states and economies of the ex-colonies has been retained by the former colonizing powers."¹ As a result, "neo-colonialism increases rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world."² Liberian and Sierra Leonean politicians with a stake in private businesses and multi-national corporations exploiting the country and its natural resources are predominant. The governments of these two countries embezzle funds for their own personal use and make deals with MNEs so they can stay in power while their country suffers. Political parties are often formed around ethnicities rather than ideologies, which many argue help create cronyism in the political sphere. Ethnicity has been central to politics since colonial times when ethnic groups were pitted against each other for status in society. Cultivating parties formed not only around ethnicity but political patronage and cronyism. These was

¹ Nagesh Rao, "'Neocolonialism' or 'Globalization'?: Postcolonial Theory and the Demands of Political Economy," *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 1, no. 2 (2000): 168, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41209050>.

² Rao, "'Neocolonialism' or 'Globalization'?", 168.

brought to the countries from American and European colonizers and continues through neocolonialism by multi-national corporations that bribe politicians and government officials to support what is in the interest of corporations in the country rather than the people. “Cronyism is defined as ‘appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority, without proper regard to their qualifications.’”³ When “instead of maximizing the organization performance, the politician just wants to guarantee that this performance exceeds the minimum threshold needed for reelection”, political cronyism is present.⁴

Cronyism isn’t something new to politics or unique to Africa. Crony politics can be linked all the way back to ancient Europe and is also present in modern Africa. Some scholars believe a part of modernizing and the journey to capitalism is often a type of political clientelism similar to feudalism. Political clientelism is “a more or less personalized relationship between actors (i.e., patrons and clients), or sets of actors, commanding unequal wealth, status or influence, based on conditional loyalties and involving mutually beneficial transactions.”⁵ It “is a system of patron-broker-client ties and networks that dominate a society’s politics and government.”⁶ If you believe the theory that political clientelism is a step toward modernization, then most of Sub-Saharan Africa hasn’t reached the final stage to capitalism yet. In this theory, this type of crony patronage is “inevitable...in the march to modernity.”⁷ Others believe that the

³ Galina Zudenkova, “Political Cronyism,” *Social Choice and Welfare* 44, no. 3 (2015): 473, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43662602>.

⁴ Zudenkova, “Political Cronyism,” 474.

⁵ René Lemarchand, “Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building,” *The American Political Science Review* 66, no. 1 (1972): 69, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1959279>.

⁶ Sharon Kettering, “The Historical Development of Political Clientelism,” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 3 (1988): 419, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/203895>.

⁷ Thandika Mkandawire, “Neopatrimonialism and the Political Economy of Economic Performance In Africa: Critical Reflections,” *World Politics* 67, no. 3 (2015): 565, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24578352>.

reason political clientelism is prevalent in Africa is that it modernized too quickly, unlike the Western world, which had modernized over a longer period of time. In contrast, some think that cronyism and patronage are not as rampant in Africa as reported and that their mere existence is not the reason for Africa's instability and lack of progress.

Corruption is often stated as a significant factor in instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone. There isn't much dispute on whether there is corruption in the political and public spheres of the two countries. However, there is a dispute over the extent to which they are corrupt. Scholars also dispute who is responsible for the corruption and where the corruption lies. Government corruption "incorporate acts such as the use of public authority, office, or official position with the deliberate intent of extracting personal or private monetary rewards or other privileges at the expense of public good and in violation of established rules and ethical considerations."⁸ African politics are often considered to be ruled by neopatrimonialism and is described as "a range of practices that are highly characteristic of politics in Africa, namely despotism, clannish behavior, so-called 'tribalism,' regionalism, patronage, 'cronyism,' 'prebendalism,' corruption, predation, factionalism."⁹

Scholars discuss these issues and how they have been used throughout Liberia and Sierra Leone's histories. Liberia and Sierra Leone, have gone through colonialism to neocolonialism, warlords, civil wars, and political and economic instability. Throughout these periods of colonialism and neocolonialism, cronyism, corruption, patronage, political clientelism have been present. These problems attribute to their civil wars and political and economic instability.

⁸ Munyae M. Mulinge and Gwen N. Lesetedi, "Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa," *African Journal of Political Science / Revue Africaine de Science Politique* 3, no. 2 (1998): 15–16, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23493651>.

⁹ Mkandawire, "Neopatrimonialism and The Political," 564.

a. Literature Review

One central theme scholars argue is a major contention to domestic instability is the external actors like multi-national corporations. There is a lot of research on instability, exploitation, and neocolonial control in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Scholars hypothesize what factors are at fault for instability such as foreign control and what needs to be done to create stability in these regions. These topics focus on cooperation and communication of all actors, ethical standards, United Nations (UN) interventions, Civil Society Organization (CSO) implementation, regional peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction, and local voices and solutions. Next, we will review literature on these very issues.

Common questions scholars explore are who and what are the real perpetrators of instability in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Many believe it doesn't necessarily come from the people of these countries, but from sources outside of the country such as other countries and multi-national companies that reside in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Often times these multi-national companies are wealthy countries such as past colonizers that use these conglomerates as a channel to preserve neocolonial control. In "The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company and Liberia's Civil War: Evaluating Firestone's Intent to Operate During Chaos," Suzanne Kathleen McCoskey focuses on the hidden actors that perpetuate conflicts, specifically multi-national enterprises (MNE). McCoskey has an interesting solution to multi-national companies taking advantage of countries they inhabit. She researched to see if there is an international set of ethical standards produced for multi-national enterprises to prevent immoral or illegal ongoing within the company and in other countries. She found that there were no ethical standards issued for multi-national enterprises and believes that creating international ethical standards for multi-national enterprises could help create more responsible corporations and possibly de-escalate or

end conflicts. This idea is seemingly a good one; however, getting multi-national corporations to agree to a universal set of ethical standards seems daunting and would need much litigation for them not to create loopholes to these standards. It is important to question why and how a multi-national company continued operations as usual during Liberia's Civil War and examining Firestone's connection to the war.¹⁰

While researching, she states that she realized another factor that may be more important to analyze: the elite power players or international actors who contribute to the conflicts. She also discusses that hidden actors contribute to conflicts and that there are hidden causes that are not always so obvious. These hidden actors being MNEs and their countries, which often are past colonial powers such as the United States and Britain. McCoskey found that the veiled causes that start the conflict in these regions are a more significant issue than international corporations operating during the conflict itself and that these conflicts could be rooted or fueled by multi-national enterprises in the first place. These veiled causes are MNEs taking advantage of the lack of regulation in the country. Her readjusted focus in research is essential in understanding the outbreaks of civil wars in areas where multi-national enterprises exist. Without forcing international ethical standards on global enterprises, it is likely difficult to keep corporations from involving themselves in illegal or unethical situations that create conflict.¹¹

Scholars Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides in *United Nations Interventionism, 1991-2004*, have similar views on foreign jurisdiction, especially during the peace keeping processes after conflicts. They state that the factors manipulating countries in conflict are often unknown,

¹⁰ Suzanne Kathleen McCoskey, "The Firestone Tire & Rubber Company and Liberia's Civil War: Evaluating Firestone's Intent to Operate During Chaos," *Business & Professional Ethics Journal*, vol. 33, no. 2/3 (2014): 253–280, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44074816>.

¹¹ McCoskey, "The Firestone Tire."

external actors, such as countries, corporations, or organizations. During peacekeeping they believe there is a need for international organizations that are unbiased and independent from conflict in the region to be engaged. Furthermore, these actors can prevent further animosity with the locals and thwart deceptive actors from working in the area for a particular vested interest in the country. Impartiality should come with the territory with peacekeeping. However, with so many countries invested in a conflict, neutrality is one of the biggest difficulties.¹²

Some scholars go even further to say that when peace keeping in areas of conflict regional or sub-regional actors should not be able to intervene. Max A. Sesay, in “Civil War and Collective Intervention in Liberia,” contests the idea that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a sub-regional organization in West Africa, should have intervened and if it did so legally in the Second Liberian Civil War. Much like Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides, Sesay believes that regional or sub-regional actors could have more bias than international organizations such as the United Nations (UN). Sesay seems more of a proponent of the United Nations taking control over peacekeeping than regional organizations.¹³ Other scholars, such as Ademola Adeleke, believe ECOWAS was given too much power and that much power should not be given to sub-regional or regional actors. Adeleke furthers his argument by saying that Nigeria was the main powerful source backing ECOWAS and its military force Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and if they could overthrow Liberia they could easily take over other neighboring countries whom they disagree with. As Adeleke states, “The fact that Nigeria orchestrated the formation of Ecomog

¹² Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides, *United Nations Interventionism, 1991-2004* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹³ Max A. Sesay, “Civil War and Collective Intervention in Liberia,” *Review of African Political Economy* 23, no. 67 (1996): 35–52, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006227>.

demonstrates the ability of sub-regional hegemonic powers to use their influence in international organisations to build multinational coalitions in support of their particularist objectives.”¹⁴

Another argument is that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should be given more aid funds to create more sustainable solutions. Kelly Krawczyk suggests that CSOs have already proven to help bring stability and reconstruction in some areas of Liberia and if more funding and resources were given to them they could continue to rejuvenate Liberia. CSOs are defined as “a large domain which includes many actors groups and NGOs. Civil society is a separate domain parallel to but separate from the state where citizens associate according to their own interest to peruse a spectrum of NGOs activities using their freedom of association for a legal means.”¹⁵ Kelly says what makes CSOs attractive is that they can provide more knowledge and expertise in creating solutions and delivering upon them. More and more donors are going through CSO channels due to government letdown and distrust. “CSOs can strengthen governance, fill gaps in service delivery, and design and implement grassroots programs that reflect local context, needs, and realities, and are less susceptible to commercial or political capture (Koch et al. 2009).”¹⁶

Although, there are other scholars that suggest the opposite and instead believe NGOs do not challenge the status quo and only bring about meagre solutions that are easily accepted by

¹⁴Ademola Adeleke, “The Politics and Diplomacy of Peacekeeping in West Africa: The Ecowas Operation in Liberia,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33, no. 4 (1995): 591, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/161822>. ; Adeleke, “The Politics and Diplomacy,” 569-593. ; Sesay, “Civil War and Collective.” ; Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

¹⁵ Vaibhav Goel and Manoj Kr. Tripathi, “The Role of NGOs in the Enforcement of Human Rights: An Overview,” *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 71, no. 3 (2010): 769, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42748408>.

¹⁶ Kelly Krawczyk, “The Relationship Between Liberian CSOs and International Donor Funding: Boon or Bane?” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 29, no. 2 (2018): 296, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45105450>.

all. Adam Branch and Zachariah Cherian Mampilly say that NGOs only further preserve the same poor management systems in place by giving attention to small nominal issues and not working to dismantle the real problems, which are the institutions and systems themselves. They believe that the problem lies within the system and real change cannot be done until fixing the political and government structures that causes instability. Nevertheless, maybe the problem isn't that NGOs won't address the real issues but that they are not given the power and funding to do so. If funding and support goes to governments rather than NGOs and local CSOs than they aren't given the opportunity to tackle the system itself but only the smaller issues that they can reach. If we can't trust the governments tearing down the political structures that propagate instability and corruption then why wouldn't we put energy and support to NGOs that can stand up against the governments propagating it in the first place?¹⁷

All outlets to stability should be explored while sustaining a balance of power between all actors in peacekeeping and reconstruction. Regional actors may indeed have more of a stake in the outcome of a neighboring country's civil war than countries that do not border the conflict. However, the people most affected by a conflict should have a large say in how to peacekeep. United Nations interventions are supposed to come from a place of neutrality, and that is their appeal. Nevertheless, there will always be a bias because a country's political and economic outcome often will affect other countries worldwide. Therefore, it is essential to question regional actors and international actors equally. Still, to create as much neutrality and peace in a region, global and regional actors must work together to develop sustainable solutions.

¹⁷ Adam Branch and Zachariah Cherian Mampilly, *Africa Uprising: Popular Protest and Political Change* (London, UK: Zed Books, in association with International African Institute, Royal African Society, World Peace Foundation, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350218116>.

If regional actors and international actors are to work together to create sustainable solutions after conflicts such as the Sierra Leonean Civil War and the First and Second Liberian Civil Wars they must be on the same page. Berdal and Spyros consider the lack of UN involvement and communication with the regional actors and organizations in the countries that they are working to create peace specifically in the case of Sierra Leone. They talk about the absence of transparency from supporting actors surrounding conflicts. Instead of taking regional or international sides to resolutions maybe it should be looked at from a perspective of cooperation from all parties.¹⁸

Scholars debate whether the United Nations should intervene in conflicts. They consider at what point the UN should intervene in conflicts, and if the UN ultimately helps crises when it does intervene. Oftentimes, when a conflict or war breaks out in a country the United Nations steps in once a peace treaty has been executed to peacekeep. Did the United Nations do its job in Liberia and Sierra Leone? Did they create peace and work to stabilize the countries? How often does the UN create peace in countries it intervenes in? The research in *United Nations Interventionism, 1991-2004*, focuses on the United Nations and its obstacles in peacekeeping missions. The authors examine case studies in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, East Timor, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone and the failures of UN peacekeeping missions in these regions from 1991-2004. According to the authors, there are many reasons why United Nations' peacekeeping missions fail. These include the actual legitimacy of the UN and the expansion of pessimistic attitudes towards UN peacekeeping. Furthermore, failures on the ground and conflict-zone countries disapproving of international interventions impede

¹⁸ Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

peacekeeping. They also state that international conflicts have been occurring more frequently, resulting in an increase in demand for UN interventions, making it harder for the UN to keep up. However, the authors do not contend that the UN failed in all the interventions they studied but explain the failures inside the missions. They also propose preventions. It is essential to examine the United Nations' interventions since they are often at the forefront of peacekeeping in countries and have intervened in Liberia and Sierra Leone's civil wars. Nevertheless, people who live in the regions of conflict need to be at the forefront of the conversation and not the international organizations. Regional actors and organizations are far more critical in creating peace and stability in conflict zones.¹⁹

On the contrary, some scholars argue that international organizations, such as the UN, should have more control over interventions in conflicts and unstable countries that international funds go toward helping. Berdal and Spyros argue that the UN needs more authority and fewer restrictions to successfully create peace in conflict regions and keep peace afterward. They give Rwanda as an example to this argument. This argument deems that the United Nations needs to be the primary organization in charge of resolving conflicts. The United Nations is an international organization composed of many member states. These states have diverse interests and abilities toward interventionism, which could contribute to less biased governing over states in conflict. If the United Nations works beside regional organizations and actors to a greater extent, this will lead to greater communication. Greater communication could establish more successful interventions in the long run. Nonetheless, it is outrageous to believe that an international institution should have more authority over an independent country than its own

¹⁹ Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

people. International organizations such as the United Nations no doubt need to help countries in crisis due to their massive size, power, and financing. However, there is no reason foreigners should override local authority in a sovereign nation. Africans certainly do not lack the agency to sustain peace and stability.²⁰

The ideas Berdal and Spyros contribute rest on the power of the UN without acknowledging the reason for the beginning of the conflicts in the first place. It seems these theories skip through the basis for continuous conflict and jump to how to end them. For the UN to claim more power to resolve conflicts, it will face many legalities, treaties, and litigation. The process of creating a UN with more legitimacy over countries embroiled in conflict will likely take decades to accomplish, if ever. However, scholars Berdal and Spyros could be on the right track by pushing forward more communication and integration between regional and international organizations to implement long-standing structures for peace. Communication between the two also satisfies local people by allowing external international organizations the opportunity to learn what assistance the people actually want and need in the conflict regions. Communication and integration between international and national organizations and actors seem to be an easier, more direct way to create peace in conflict countries that do not necessarily involve litigation. Still, these authors' neocolonialist points of view is wrong in believing the United Nations needs more authority and needs to instead work with local peoples to create more independent institutions and development in the countries they work with, like Liberia and Sierra Leone.²¹

²⁰ Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

²¹ Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

Government organizations need to practice transparency while creating peace and reconstruction in regions of crisis, but there should also be communication between government and non-government organizations (NGOs). Attitudes toward more communication and cooperation at the national and international level are deemed essential to stabilize a country during conflicts and after peace has been achieved in a conflict zone. However, cooperation shouldn't just be between international and national governments, but non-government actors, organizations, and companies as well.

Transparency is desperately needed in land tenure, land laws, and mineral rights in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. By being vague and confusing, they cause conflicts due to no official registry of who owns what. A case study involving a conflict in Sierra Leone over mineral rights gives a perfect example to this point. "Fighting for Black Stone: Extractive Conflict, Institutional Change, and Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone" discusses what is defined in the article as institutional hybridity and its use of it in areas of conflict. McKenzie Johnson first explains the mineral rights conflict that erupted in 2015 at a mining site called Kamasortha outside of the town of Sella Limba, Sierra Leone. The conflict was between MIACCO, a cooperative of local landowners, and a multi-national corporation called AMR-Gold Exploration. Both companies believed they had the rights to mine tantalite. As a result, MIACCO claimed land ownership rights while AMR claimed mineral rights.²²

McKenzie Johnson proposes using institutional hybridity as an instrument to help alleviate conflicts and, if implemented long-term, sustain peace. Johnson defines institutional

²² McKenzie F. Johnson, "Fighting for Black Stone: Extractive Conflict, Institutional Change and Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone," *International Affairs*, vol. 97, no. 1 (2021): 81–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaa056>.

hybridity as the integration of government organizations with non-governmental organizations. She believes this integration will create better communication and cooperation between government and non-government actors in the region. Johnson states that institutional hybridity in the area of conflict will encourage problem-solving and implementation of peace processes that all local actors could agree to. However, government and non-government institutions often work together already and rely on one another. Furthermore, she fails to discuss which government and non-governmental organizations would integrate and how the integration would operate. Johnson contends that although institutional hybridity did not end the violence itself in Sella Limba, it did create results that were acceptable to the local people. It also enabled local actors to participate in the proceedings rather than only corporations and power elites.²³

She believes peacekeeping can be achievable in conflict areas if institutional hybridity is employed more widely. Johnson has backed the evidence with a case study in Sella Limba, a chiefdom in Sierra Leone, from her fieldwork in Sella Limba in January and February 2016. Her case study shows that implementing institutional hybridity in Sella Limba has produced favorable outcomes in the area of conflict. She conducted 72 semi-structured interviews with government officials, locals, mining companies, and international and civilian actors. In addition, she ran four focus groups with the landowners, artisanal cooperatives, and the town chief and council. Finally, she examined legal documents, reports, and the mediation council's final report.²⁴ However, using only one case study from one conflict in Sierra Leone isn't sufficient evidence to show the value of using institutional hybridity as a framework for post-conflict peacekeeping. There is also the question of what precisely institutional hybridity is and how it

²³ Johnson, "Fighting for Black Stone."

²⁴ Johnson, "Fighting for Black Stone."

would be enacted. She does not discuss the actual practicality of accomplishing institutional hybridity, which organizations should be included in this analysis, and which governmental bureaus should be involved. Nevertheless, if international and national actors need to ensure greater communication and cooperation, so do, and maybe especially so do, NGOs and the government.²⁵

What is commonly overlooked is the need for post-conflict peacekeeping and a comprehensive plan that details steps for a country to sustain peace and create long term stability in a country that was affected by a civil war. *Post War Regimes and State Reconstruction in Liberia and Sierra Leone* focuses on creating a post-conflict peacekeeping framework that would maintain peace after the end of conflicts and wars. It goes into the work that needs to be done after Liberia and Sierra Leone's civil wars and ways to create stability. The extent of a proposed peacekeeping post-conflict process is not stated but is believed to be needed to successfully peace keep. One of the ideas the authors present is to have a post-war reconstruction plan designated to take place for 2 to 5 years or so after the war or until peace and stability is achieved. Like *United Nations Interventionism, 1991-2004*, authors Amadu Sessay et al. encourage post-conflict reconstruction. The book suggests organizations and states should not walk away from conflicts before the territories in conflict are secured for the long term. These sources look into what is to be done now, not necessarily analyzing why and who is at fault.²⁶

Some scholars believe the responsibility for stability and peacekeeping in post-conflict countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone should be left onto regional actors and countries. A

²⁵ Johnson, "Fighting for Black Stone."

²⁶ Amadu Sesay et al., *Post-War Regimes and State Reconstruction in Liberia and Sierra Leone* (Dakar, SN: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2009). ; Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*.

method Amadu Sessay et al. considered to prevent conflicts arising in Sierra Leone and Liberia was to hold the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) organizations accountable for upholding the responsibility of looking after these two countries' governments actions and politics to ensure they do not seem to be falling into territory that could lead to conflict or war. Then, if these organizations fear the countries could fall into conflict territory, they would step in. If these countries' governments keep them the top priority, conflict is less likely to break out. However, if the governments, organizations, and regional and international actors do not recognize the people's interests, needs, and wants, sustained peace is not guaranteed. These ideas are solid, especially for regional and local African organizations to lead in stability efforts and preventative measures. All too often, we see the presence of assumptions that stereotype Africans without initiative or gumption. These stereotypes are popular in literature and harm progress in these regions. No one knows more about the issues and what Liberians and Sierra Leoneans need more than they themselves do. This belief holds regional and locals accountable verses an international overreach. This idea once again plays into the need for communication from regional and local actors and not just international voices.²⁷

Authors, Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides agree with Amadu Sessay et al. and also delve into the need for post-conflict engagement. The authors determine that UN member states need to give funds to end these conflicts and give more funds to post-conflict efforts to create sustainable peace in the conflict region. Unfortunately, countries that contribute to ending these conflicts commonly rush to wash their hands from the conflict rather than ensuring the region has been effectively restructured for viable peace. Yes, funding for all aspects of peacebuilding is

²⁷ Sessay, *Post-War Regimes and State*.

essential. Still, the lack of funding does not prove to be the major obstacle in sustaining peace and economic and political stability in conflict regions, including Liberia and Sierra Leone.²⁸

Some scholars concentrate on the overall lack of economic development in these countries and how it is leading factor to instability and conflicts. Thandika Mkandawire contends that instability comes from underdevelopment and says that underdevelopment is the reason why neo-patrimonialism is present. Focusing on states economic development and the influence it has on stability in a country is crucial especially after independence and war. In “Neopatrimonialism and The Political Economy of Economic Performance in Africa,” he states that Africa’s issues stem from where the countries are in economic development and not because of cronyism, corruption, etc. That cronyism, corruption, neo-patrimonialism etc. comes from underdevelopment and that these issues could be resolved if economic development is stimulated. That economic growth is lacking and causing instability, and that cronyism is just a consequence of the real issues. Mkandawire says there is no evidence to suggest that African states’ economic failures are because of the use of neo-patrimonial policies and procedures but from the need for more economic development. He says there is “ample historical and empirical evidence to suggest that such transactions may not be the cause of weak institutions but rather a consequence of them.”²⁹ His theory that neo-patrimonial behaviors occur because of weak government and financial institutions is sound. However, does this theory also hold up for political and social instability or just economic? There doesn’t seem to be enough evidence to suggest that corruption and favoritism do little to factor into instability in African states and actually suggest the opposite. Nevertheless, I also believe that creating a healthy economy in

²⁸ Berdal, *United Nations Interventionism*. ; Sesay, *Post-War Regimes and State*.

²⁹ Mkandawire, “Neopatrimonialism and The Political,” 577.

Liberia and Sierra Leone would help solve many of the issues surrounding instability including corruption.³⁰

There is a viewpoint that instability is cultivated in African nations such as Sierra Leone and Liberia by past colonizers practices and ideologies and these states instead need to use their own and ditch neocolonial structures. What if the central issue with stability in Liberia and Sierra Leone are because their governments and societies were originally modeled to represent Western ideologies and practices and now that they are independent countries they struggle with working from the previous model handed to them from former colonial powers? Peter P. Ekeh, in “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement,” makes a thought-provoking statement when he says “that the only non-Western nations to have successfully modernized-Japan and China-are those that have not been colonized.”³¹ He asks the reader, “Is it an accident that all Asian and African nations formerly colonized by Europeans have a uniform history of failure in attempts to modernize?”³² This is such a powerful statement. Have most scholars looked at the instability in Africa wrong this entire time? Is the real issue that solutions to African nations’ problems have been to try and keep the Westernized bureaucratic ideologies and policies instead of allowing African countries to use their own administrative solutions? Why do Liberia and Sierra Leone need to model their governments like the United States and Britain? Former colonizers Britain and the United States are not the only prosperous modern countries in the world, and their model governments do not fit every country. For Liberia and Sierra Leone to create economic development and stability, they need to become their own

³⁰ Mkandawire, “Neopatrimonialism and The Political.”

³¹ Peter P. Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17, no. 1 (1975): 99, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/178372>.

³² Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two,” 99.

without the stronghold of westernized nations on their industries, politics, and culture. Nevertheless, if Africans should ditch past colonizers' government and societal models, what model should they use? In what ways do these past colonized countries build their own political strategies and model from what was previously pushed on them to work from? Has there already been a push away from the former colonizer's past political and administrative practices? There isn't a discussion on what influence Africans have and what they have accomplished post-colonization, which is fundamental in African development. Peter fails to discuss the accomplishments of African nations, but has made a great point that Africa should not use a past colonizers blueprint to run a nation unique to Western principles.³³

Another factor leading to the lack of development, stability, and modernization in African nations is the fact that they have been colonized and are run by neocolonial powers. They have not been able to modernize and create capitalism and economic prosperity nationally because the U.S. and Britain continue to run the manufacturing sector through MNEs that only benefit U.S. and Britain and not Liberia or Sierra Leone. These countries continue to have to rebuild and move on from colonial control that has stayed unofficially after their independence and find their own way. Building an independent nation from past colonizers means building from the ground up in every area of society. Understandably, these states have obstacles to development and nation building and shouldn't be compared to countries with several more centuries of independence and nation building. One of the biggest obstacles for Liberia and Sierra Leone is to become economically prosperous while MNEs have a large control over these countries. Especially, since they are still largely controlled by outside corporations owned by other wealthy nations. There is an unfair disadvantage and lack of control these countries have to their own

³³ Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two."

natural resources and economy. Furthermore, should Liberia and Sierra Leone update trade, land, resource, and production negotiations with Western nations and multi-national corporations that were initially made to profit past colonizers and the West? The United States and Britain ensured they had control of Liberia and Sierra Leone's production and natural resources even after their independence. Other countries have taken suite and have made their way into the ownership of these countries resources, land, and goods as well.³⁴

The most common theme seen in literature over instability and conflict in both Liberia and Sierra Leone is foreign control, lack of development, and post-conflict reconstruction. After Liberia's and Sierra Leone's independence, there still seems to be much neocolonial control on their government, political, social, and commerce domains. These countries need the support of the West and international organizations, but not for continued neocolonial operations. African legislation and decision-making should be at the forefront of development in African countries. Instead, currently, MNEs who are run by powerful wealthy countries are controlling the decision making from their countries' power, financing, bribes, and political patronage with top officials in the government. Both international and national organizations must work to incorporate sustainable solutions in all domains of society with Liberians and Sierra Leoneans leading.

b. Intervention

The many barriers to stability in Liberia and Sierra Leone will be explored. There isn't a one size fits all solution to development and stability in the past colonized states, Liberia and

³⁴ Judson M. Lyon, "Informal Imperialism: The United States in Liberia, 1897–1912," *Diplomatic History* 5, no. 3 (1981): 221–243, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24911242>. ; Ankie M. M. Hoogvelt, and Anthony M. Tinker, "The Role of Colonial and Post-Colonial States in Imperialism - A Case-Study of the Sierra Leone Development Company," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 16, no. 1 (1978): 67–79, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/159765>.

Sierra Leone. Each nation has its own history, culture, and problems. Sierra Leone and Liberia have gone from colonization to post-colonization and live with the effects of residual colonization. Some of the residual colonialization is in the form of multi-national enterprise domination. Liberia and Sierra Leone have economic, infrastructure, and institutional complications. These complications likely originate from their past colonial history. One must examine how to create development while giving back the power to Liberians and Sierra Leoneans. Corruption and unequal distribution of wealth are common. Land ownership and multi-national investments are muddled. Who and how should development, conflicts, and crises be handled are constantly contested.

It is important to acknowledge why there is instability and how it happened. This paper examines the factors that led to instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone and the factors that continue instability. There will also be an assessment of how to resolve these conflicts. The amalgamation of theories and hypotheses for stability and development in Sierra Leone and Liberia will be discussed. Past colonizers have kept control over these two states by exploiting their natural resources through multi-national enterprises. There isn't one source of the current instability in Liberia or Sierra Leone but a multitude of factors. Most importantly, International and National organizations must work together with locals leading the way to stability.

This paper does not invent a radical plan to fix the issues in Liberia and Sierra Leone but discusses what must be addressed. Western states do not like to discuss their past colonizing activities and admit to the harms that were done, and certainly do not like to admit that they could be the reason for instability in those regions. Nevertheless, history says otherwise, and acknowledging past injustices is the first step to stability. Going over colonization to the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone is pertinent to knowing the root of the issues and constructing

solutions. One cannot examine the problems without starting at the beginning of colonization. Current issues do not magically appear, so discussing colonization, political instability, and past civil wars is necessary to understand instability.

This paper advances the dialogue of acknowledging that there is a need for reconstruction of Liberia's and Sierra Leone's production, land ownership, business practices and ownership, politics, and economy and much of it needs to be taken out of the hands of wealthy nations. There is a need for transparency between the governments and multi-national corporations in the country. Multi-national corporations and governments need to be equally held accountable. One cannot fix one of these areas and hope for stability. There are several areas of each of these countries' society that needs to be properly helped and likely need aid in doing so. Liberia and Sierra Leone both need to take back their industries and natural resources. To combat corruption there needs to be a separation of the government from private businesses such as their natural resources.

It is also essential to explore corruption and local issues that cause conflicts. Local conflicts are just as significant to the instability problems as the historical, governmental, and institutional ones. Stability and other developmental procedures ultimately need to satisfy the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone, but with a plan that includes all recipients. Strategies must include international, national, regional, local, institutional, commercial, and industrial dominions. To construct an economic, peacekeeping, and stability plan, everyone must be involved at every level of society. In reality, one area of society can't be fixed, and everything else falls into place. Decades of destruction will not be fixed easily and will not solve itself, nor will throwing money at the problem. Serious deliberation from all parties must come to terms with strategies to combat instability in each country. There isn't a lack of agency. However, there

is a lack of collaboration, accountability, and consensus, which must be met at the international and local levels for both Liberia and Sierra Leone.

I will propose suggestions on how to create stability in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. Regulation of both countries natural resources and MNEs is crucial in national development. Both countries will then be able to stimulate national business and companies rather than international companies. This in return will help their economies but also in investing in national companies rather than international, the government will not as easily be bribed to support the MNEs. When government is less likely to support international business and support regulations on them, corruption from these large corporations will likely decrease. Supporting local people and national business could stimulate the economy and create higher employment rates and increase wage. Higher wage has shown to decrease corruption.³⁵ Decreasing the unemployment rate could also combat corruption by giving people paying jobs, and in turn, less reason to interact in illicit activities.³⁶ Local CSOs can help regulate funding and ensure it is going toward

³⁵Erik Dietzenbacher, Vãn Hà Le, and Jakob De Haan, “Higher Government Wages May Reduce Corruption,” CEPR Centre for Economic Policy Research, June 16, 2013, <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/higher-government-wages-may-reduce-corruption>. ; “Knowledge Tools for Academics and Professionals Module Series on Anti-Corruption Module 4 Public Sector Corruption,” UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d., https://grace.unodc.org/grace/uploads/documents/academics/Anti-Corruption_Module_4_Public_Sector_Corruption.pdf. ; Jeremy Foltz, and Kwaku Opoku-Agyemang, “Do Higher Salaries Lower Petty Corruption? A Policy Experiment on West Africa’s Highways,” (University of California, Berkeley, 2015), https://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/miscellaneous_files/118_-_Opoku-Agyemang_Ghana_Police_Corruption_paper_revised_v3.pdf. ; Samira Lindner, and Transparency International, “Salary Top-Ups and Their Impact on Corruption,” Anti-Corruption Resource Centre U4, December 17, 2013, https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/helpdesk/Salary_top-ups_and_their_impact_on_corruption_2013.pdf.

³⁶ Steven Raphael, and Rudolf Winter-Ebmer, “Identifying the Effect of Unemployment on Crime,” *The Journal of Law & Economics* 44, no. 1 (2001): 262, <https://doi.org/10.1086/320275>.

the area's most in need and not ending up in a politician's pocket. Land management is essential in creating stability and prosperity and needs to be regulated with indigenous people central to the conversation. There needs to be a national registry of land to simplify and create clear and understandable land laws to the current ambiguous land tenure. Land reform should start at regulating government and corporations' land grab of indigenous peoples' and farmers' land. All of these solutions will take time and cooperation to achieve. Nevertheless, if Liberia and Sierra Leone can conquer these pressing issues by stimulating their economies they can create stability and more easily deviate from conflicts and corruption.

The first chapter will examine Liberia's colonial history and its struggles after independence. The chapter will discuss foreign investment in Liberia's rubber industry, palm oil, and land tenure rights issues. The discussion will include what led to Liberia's first civil war and discuss the First and Second Liberian Civil Wars. Then the chapter delves into the aftermath of these wars and the lasting issues today. The second chapter will begin with Sierra Leone's history from colonization to its civil war. Like the first chapter there will be an analysis on the impact of Sierra Leone's colonialism, exploitation, the Sierra Leonean civil war, and problems plaguing the state today. Finally, we will conclude with final thoughts and a hypothesis on what factors led to and continue to cause instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone, who should be responsible in fixing these issues, and what steps need to be taken in order to create more stability in these two countries.

II. LIBERIA

a. Introduction

From the beginning of colonization in the 19th century, external influence and control has always dictated the state of Liberia. Some ethnic groups moved to Liberia from neighboring African states around the 16th century, and eventually, were considered to be the indigenous population. However, The Liberian state didn't really grow until the American Colonization Society (ACS) entered into Liberia. As a result of the American Colonization Society, droves of American freemen were transported to Liberia in the 19th century, adding to the diversity of Liberia. The American freeman who were repatriated to Liberia were later coined as Americo-Liberians.

Though, Liberia was never formally colonized, the United States had imperial authority over the country and arguably continues to through multi-national enterprise. Foreign governance never really stopped after Liberia's independence from the ACS and United States' imperialism. International governments and multi-national enterprises continue to have a significant stake in the country. "The 'giant monopolistic corporations' are at the head of capitalism in Africa. The actions and existence of these corporations constitute today's imperialism in Africa."³⁷ Liberians are still primarily controlled by the United States and the Western world. This overreaching foreign domination is predominantly responsible for Liberia's never-ending strife. From the beginning of colonization to later administrations after independence, the ethnic groups were pitted against each other for social status. Corruption and mismanagement of the country's funds and natural resources have plagued the state. A series of warlords and crony

³⁷ O. E. Udofia, "Imperialism in Africa: A Case of Multinational Corporations," *Journal of Black Studies* 14, no. 3 (1984): 354–355, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2784064>.

politicians evoked two civil wars starting at the end of the 1980s and early 2000s.

Outside colonizers and Western corporations have been a part of Liberia's history for a long time, which is why the history of nineteenth century Liberia is relevant to examining Liberia's two civil wars in the twentieth century and the current struggles with corruption in the twenty-first century. Corruption and outside influence have been part of Liberian politics since the nineteenth century. The history of the nineteenth century illustrates the unrelenting internal strife and exploitation prevalent throughout the subsequent centuries. Liberians have fought outside control since the American Colonization Society set foot on the land.

This chapter will review the beginnings of Liberia to, the consecutive civil wars, and ending on current corruption. Corruption and cronyism have been the norm for Liberia since United States' informal colonialism and have never dissipated. Liberia's first and second civil wars revolved around these issues, yet they remain bounteous.

b. Colonization and 19th Century Liberia

Liberia has a long history of outside intervention. Colonization and multi-national enterprise can be directly linked to Liberia's contentions and conflicts. The American Colonization Society (ACS) repatriated enslaved Africans to Sierra Leone in 1822 “to promote white nationhood.”³⁸ The land at the time was known as Sierra Leonean land, but it is now considered Liberian. Many of these repatriated people were forced to move because the United States did not want free blacks living in the country. 43,000 square miles was acquired by the ACS. They were given \$100,000 from the United States Congress for land purchase, home building, and other settler necessities. The American Colonization Society physically forced the

³⁸ Haroon Kharem, “Chapter Four: The American Colonization Society,” in *Counterpoints* 208 (2006): 84. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42980005>.

indigenous people of what is known today as Liberia to trade their goods with the new American Liberians. Babatunde Tolu Afolabi, in *The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War*, says that the indigenous people "later realized that they had been deceived into selling their prized land", which "sowed the seeds of discord and led to a relationship characterized by a lack of trust, enmity, and disdain."³⁹

Many of the ethnicities came from different regions of Liberia and West Africa, while others came from slave ships and the Americas. "Liberia's first inhabitants were ancestors of the Gola and Kissi peoples from north-central Africa who arrived as early as the 12th century," according to the Minority Rights Group International.⁴⁰ Other indigenous peoples include the Kruan people whose ethnicities are Kru, Kuwaa, Bassa, Krahn, and Dei from north and east Africa. By the 15th century, the ethnic groups from the Mande language group moved to Liberia, which is the Gio, Mano, Loma, Gbandi, Mende, and Kpelle.⁴¹ Each group had its own culture and societal norms but was forced into one societal caste system by the American Colonization Society (ACS). The forced assimilation did not create harmonious relationships among the different ethnicities. On the contrary, the ACS provoked conflicts in Liberian society for hierarchy in the caste system instead of promoting equality.

The settlers or Americo-Liberians, introduced a new social class system in the country, which perpetuated prejudice and rivalries. "Rooted in existing Western ideas about civilization

³⁹ Babatunde Tolu Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution & the Descent into Civil War: The Politics of Peacemaking in Africa: Non-State Actors' Role in the Liberian Civil War* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, GB: James Currey), 51-52. ; Bernice E. Finney, "The American Colonization Society," *Negro History Bulletin* 12, no. 5 (1949): 118, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44212334>. ; Kharem, "Chapter Four: The American," 76.

⁴⁰ Minority Rights Group International, "World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples Liberia," 2007, <https://minorityrights.org/country/liberia/>.

⁴¹ Minority Rights Group International, "World Directory of Minorities."

and race, this terminology and mind-set separated colonists and indigenous people into competing categories, justifying the former's presence and the latter's subjugation and, relatedly, declaring the one's supremacy and the other's lesser humanity."⁴² They "considered themselves a 'superior people;' thus, there was no sense or feeling of oneness with [indigenes]."⁴³ Babatunde Tolu Afolabi says the top of the class was the ACS members, who were mostly white and controlled "Liberia's governing institution and controlled the political and economic arenas."⁴⁴ The next class was the people of mixed ancestry, African and European. The people of mixed race were educated, which resulted in them having government-status jobs under the ACS. The lower class was a mixture of different people and hierarchies. The higher class of the lowest class were the darker-skinned Americo-Liberian settlers who were often prohibited from the political elite due to the meager jobs they had held. Finally, the lowest rank was the indigenous and Congolese people, who had been taken from slave ships and placed in Liberia as settlers.

In 1839, the ACS left the country, and the mixed-race people dominated. This then made the darker-skinned settlers middle class. However, the indigenous and Congolese stayed in the lowest class.⁴⁵ A London newspaper, *The Spectator*, wrote in 1831 that Liberia was advancing since colonization and "the Blacks, under an American birth and education, may be able ultimately not only to advance themselves to a colony of wealth and influence, but become the

⁴² Claude A. Clegg, "Inventing Liberia," in *The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 110-111, https://doi.org/10.5149/9780807895580_clegg.8.

⁴³ Augustine Konneh, "Citizenship at the Margins: Status, Ambiguity, and the Mandingo of Liberia," *African Studies Review* 39, no. 2 (1996): 142, <https://doi.org/10.2307/525439>.

⁴⁴ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 53.

⁴⁵ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 51-53. ; George Klay Kieh Jr., "Combatants, patrons, peacemakers, and the Liberian civil conflict," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 15, no. 2 (1992): 127, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576109208435896>.

germ of civilization, which may spread and increase among the countless tribes of Africa."⁴⁶

Western cultures saw African tribes as antiquated and savage and believed that the Western way of life and societal norms were the right way for people to live. These views penetrated Liberian society and helped create the Liberian caste system.

Disagreements often occurred between the indigenous peoples and the White and freed Black settlers over land and other abuses. The White settlers under the ACS took over the land and gave much of it to the formerly enslaved Black people, later known as the Americo-Liberians. The settlers did not pay land purchasing fees, and many indigenous people who worked for the new settler landowners were paid very little. Settlers violated systems set in place, such as the apprenticeship system. They also seized land illegally, and they monopolized all commerce in the state. The local peoples claimed that Americo-Liberians used indigenous women for sex without intentions of marriage. Discrimination and segregation were also present between the two groups.⁴⁷

The True Whig Party, the first political party in Liberia, was established in 1869 and was created by Americo-Liberians that governed the indigenous people and imposed their own Western culture and norms. They wanted the indigenous people to assimilate and establish Western practices such as becoming Christian, establishing westernized education, and freemasonry. Though Liberia became an independent country in 1847, it was still very much controlled by the colonizers through the True Whig Party.⁴⁸ Babatunde Tolu Afolabi exclaims

⁴⁶ "Liberia Is a Little Book Descriptive of an American Colony of Blacks," *The Spectator*, 1831.

⁴⁷ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 52-53.

⁴⁸ "Maps of Liberia, 1830-1870, History of Liberia 1847 to 1871, Digital Collections, Library of Congress," The Library of Congress, United States Legislative Information, 2015, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/maps-of-liberia-1830-to-1870/articles-and-essays/history-of-liberia/>.

that "in the manner through which the affairs of the Liberian state was conducted, it can be argued that a form of 'internal colonization' occurred."⁴⁹

c. Foreign Investment and Rubber

Multi-national enterprises such as the United States' Firestone Natural Rubber Company largely dominated Liberia in the twentieth century. Though Firestone helped employ thousands of Liberians, it also pushed out local firms and largely monopolized the rubber industry. In *The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia*, R.J. Harrison Church says that by 1951, "Firestone was the only considerable employer in Liberia."⁵⁰ Church goes on to say that "Firestone was almost the only source of government revenue and of exports, of which rubber (mainly from Firestone and almost all the result thereof) commonly accounted for some 95 per cent."⁵¹ Another big problem with a U.S. multi-national corporation taking over Liberia was that around one-half of the rubber plantations were owned by politicians and were selling rubber.⁵² The Liberian politicians have a stake in the company and the monopoly of the rubber industry. When politicians have their hand in private industry, cronyism is common because politicians focus on their own revenue versus what is in the people's and the nation's best interest.⁵³

By 1969, rubber was one of Liberia's most significant cash crops, including its exports. That has continued until the present. However, R.J. Harrison Church states that it "originates almost entirely from foreign concessions rather than from the mainly indigenous enterprises."⁵⁴ Even the industries that create mass amounts of revenue and employment are run

⁴⁹ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 51-56.

⁵⁰ R.J. Harrison Church, "The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia," *Geography* 54, no. 4 (1969): 433-434, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40567142>.

⁵¹ Church, "The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia," 433-434.

⁵² Church, "The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia," 436.

⁵³ Zudenkova, "Political Cronyism," 473, 486.

⁵⁴ Church, "The Firestone Rubber Plantations in Liberia," 437.

outside Liberia by foreigners, who bring profits back to their home countries. The local people often work for companies managed by foreigners rather than local entities to help the local economy. This has become another form of colonization. Past colonizers are still reaping the benefits of Liberia and keeping extensive control of power over the country even after Liberia's independence.

Multi-national corporations capitalize of their power while doing little for the host country besides exploiting its natural resources, people, and causing environmental destruction along the way. African countries such as Liberia for cheap labor and production and export products back to the parent country. “The corporate giants (multinational corporations) dominate means of production..., they sustain transfers of income for their own benefits and at their own discretion.”⁵⁵ These corporations do what is best for their country while exploiting the host country. The people in the host country are often prohibited from having a say in operations and being employed in higher positions within the company. These corporations are then given a free reign over the host country’s production without any push back from the local people who live there. These companies not only deny locals access to the administrative and policy-making areas of these companies, but bribe the government and fund politicians and policies that maintain their status and freedom in the host country. “Multinational corporations are guilty of intervention in elections in host countries through illegal campaign contributions to support unpopular candidates and regimes or to oppose particular public policies. In this, African economies are dampened and economic developments are thwarted.”⁵⁶

Multi-national corporations are central to instability in Liberia and many African

⁵⁵ Udofia, “Imperialism in Africa,” 355.

⁵⁶ Udofia, “Imperialism in Africa,” 360.

countries. Liberia and other African countries continually try to fight off imperialism from these capitalist enterprises, but the wealth and power backing these massive corporations restrict their economic development. Financing is needed in developmental sectors of the country, but without reforms and regulations the policies and funding will continue to sway in the direction of wealthy corporations and power elite. This propagates heads of state to continue to give power to these corporations, which perpetuates the corruption, patrimonialism, patronage, and cronyism that already overwhelms the government. Additionally, conflicts emerge between civilians and corporations due to the inequality and malfeasance present in the operations of these companies. Which in turn creates a constant state of struggle and hostility for the countries' people.⁵⁷

Multi-national corporations have been a way for Western countries to continue imperialism of Africa through capitalist production. "From the early colonial trading centres to the sophisticated financial participation of the conglomerates, the history of multinational corporations contains all the forms of organization which, at every stage, made possible the penetration and expansion of the capitalist mode of production."⁵⁸ Western countries have been able to profit while the host countries' economies fail and are stuck asking for finances from the parent country while they struggle with accessing basic necessities. Imperialist ventures are perpetuating instability in the regions they inhabit and suppressing the host countries' growth. This creates a host country's dependency on the parent country for financing for basic necessities while the corporations are a part of the problem of poverty and suppression.⁵⁹

Liberian communities accuse these conglomerates of human rights abuses, but are often

⁵⁷ Udofia, "Imperialism in Africa," 355-360.

⁵⁸ G. Massiah, "Multinational Corporations and a Strategy for National Independence," *The African Review: A Journal of African Politics, Development and International Affairs* 5, no. 4 (1975): 394, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45341390>.

⁵⁹ Massiah, "Multinational Corporations," 393-396.

afraid to speak out due to the government's alliance with these massive corporations. "Rural communities are at the receiving end of human rights violations perpetuated against these companies and the police while the state appears to be turning a blind eye to their plight."⁶⁰ Corporations have been accused of forcing local farmers to work for them and if they refuse are beaten and imprisoned.⁶¹ Corporations are also accused of exploiting children and being a part of child slavery. These multi-national enterprises (MNE) are also accused of spying on communities and attempting to silence people in opposition to their operations. People have also claimed to come up missing in the communities that these companies operate in, including babies.⁶²

Multi-national corporations in Liberia are given huge plots of land and millions of dollars to expand operations while destroying communities homes and the environment. These corporations "have absolutely no regard for communities they have inflicted so much damage[s] on."⁶³ The government and corporations make money off these manufacturing operations while communities are left homeless and powerless against the power elite. "The abuses include mass land seizures and displacements of indigenous, destruction of sacred heritage and livelihood sites."⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Lerato Pagiwa, "Liberian Rural Communities Face 'David vs Goliath' Battle with Multinationals," CIVICUS Global Alliance (CIVICUS, June 12, 2017), <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/interviews/2858-liberian-rural-communities-face-david-vs-goliath-battle-with-multinationals>.

⁶¹ Pagiwa, "Liberian Rural Communities."

⁶² William Selmah, and Edwin Fayiah III, "Power Dynamics of Multinational Corporations in Liberia," Farmlandgrab.org (Public Trust Media, October 5, 2020), <https://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/29897-power-dynamics-of-multinational-corporations-in-liberia>. ; Pagiwa, "Liberian Rural Communities."

⁶³ Selmah, "Power Dynamics of Multinational."

⁶⁴ Selmah, "Power Dynamics of Multinational."

d. Land Tenure Rights

The botched land tenure system is another factor of instability that has remained unchanged since the 1800s. Land rights in Liberia have never been transparent, and the ambiguity of the laws has worked in favor of the government while working against the general public. In the 1800s, the ACS created a statutory land tenure plan. The land was purchased from African Chiefs. In the 1820s, once the settlers started pouring in, the ACS gave each settler ten acres of land and twenty-five for married couples. The settlers were also given permanent land rights. The land rights were considered under a customary system in regions where Americo-Liberians did not primarily live. The customary system did not provide land rights to individuals but to whole communities. Statutory tenure is land rights to specific individuals, companies, and the government. There was a mix of statutory and customary tenure. Initially, statutory tenure was prominent in coastal and urban areas, while customary tenure was common in the interior or hinterlands. As time passed, statutory tenure gained more territory, known initially as customary land. Once Liberia was independent, the Americo-Liberians took more land for themselves further East and South. Conflicts often broke out over land ownership and “was a significant contributor to the war.”⁶⁵

The two consecutive civil wars fostered unclear land ownership to an already ambiguous land tenure law system. As the wars went on many people fled the country and rebels seized the

⁶⁵ Leif Brottem, and Jon Unruh, “Territorial Tensions: Rainforest Conservation, Postconflict Recovery, and Land Tenure in Liberia,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99, no. 5 (2009): 1000, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20621269>. ; Evelyn L. Namubiru-Mwaura, Anna Knox, and Ailey Kaiser Hughes, “Land Policy and Institutional Support (LPIS) Project Customary Land Tenure in Liberia: Findings and Implications Drawn From 11 Case Studies,” *Of Land and Licenses*, https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/USAID_Land_Tenure_Liberia_LPIS_Synthesis_Report.pdf (accessed April 21, 2023). ; Caleb J. Stevens, “The Legal History of Public Land in Liberia,” *Journal of African Law* 58, no. 2 (2014): 250–251, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24735215>.

land as their own. After these wars some people went back to their homes to often find other people living there and claiming the territory. These refugees had no home to go back to, which nurtured conflicts post-war. Ethnic related conflicts were also further perpetuated as the refugees tended to be Mandingo and were supporters of LURD while the rebels who settled on the land were the Mano and Gio who fought under Charles Taylor's regime.⁶⁶

Today, native communities are fighting for their land rights since statutory land rights trump their customary land rights. "There are constant and persistent clashes in Liberia involving customary versus statutory rights over the management, authority, and control of land resources (GRC 2007)."⁶⁷ The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Liberia says that "today, customary institutions that were once recognized by the government are now being threatened, and the recognition of native rights to land has become increasingly weak."⁶⁸ The land tenure laws in Liberia contradict one another and disregard customary laws in favor of statutory ones. Statutory land prices that apply to the state have not changed since the ACS took control of the country in the 1800s. Public land is not straightforward, and the laws around it avoid clarification. This allows the state to dodge having to get involved in customary land issues and prevents the state from getting involved in disagreements on customary land disputes versus statutory disputes.⁶⁹

The government and corporations take advantage of the land tenure system and claim land previously bestowed to the indigenous population. Corporations operating in Liberia

⁶⁶ Jairo Munive Rincon, "Ex-Combatants, Returnees, Land and Conflict in Liberia," (2010): 7, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep13360>.

⁶⁷ Brottem, "Territorial Tensions," 1000.

⁶⁸ The United States Agency of International Development Liberia, "Land Policy and Institutional Support (LPIS)," 13, <https://www.land-links.org/> (accessed November 7, 2022).

⁶⁹ Stevens, "The Legal History of," 250–265.

expropriate land by circumventing ambiguous land laws. According to USAID Liberia, "the establishment of Firestone in the 1920s paved the way for commercial concessions to... become a legal basis for conversion of land rights to the statutory tenure system."⁷⁰ Statutory law and customary law in forest tenure are also at odds with each other. People who own forest land titles do not own the trees on the land.⁷¹ The vague and unclear land regulations benefit corporations and the government but disadvantage the community.

Liberia has attempted to combat land rights issues for Liberians, but has not achieved success. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf created the Land Rights Act in 2013 to combat the land injustices against customary land owned by the indigenous peoples. Still, even after the implementation, there are numerous issues with land rights. The act was created by Sirleaf in 2013 but was not enacted until 2018 under the current president George Weah. The act's purpose is to create a coherent framework for customary land while ensuring the security of customary land. However, the act does not apply to people living around land claimed for commercial concessions. Jennifer O'Mahony of the nonprofit Mongabay says, "areas allocated to rubber, oil palm and logging concessions cover around a quarter of Liberia's total land mass."⁷² In 2019, the news that commercial concessions were allowed to continue taking customary land promised to the people began to spread. We have yet to see the act's consequences and its loopholes, but

⁷⁰ The United States Agency, "Land Policy and Institutional," 9.

⁷¹ The United States Agency, "Land Policy and Institutional," 13.

⁷² Jennifer O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights Law Hailed as Victory, But Critics Say It's Not Enough," Mongabay Environmental News, March 22, 2019, <https://news.mongabay.com/2019/03/liberias-new-land-rights-law-hailed-as-victory-but-critics-say-its-not-enough/>.

more will need to be done to satisfy the people of Liberia.⁷³

Oil palm concessions are becoming the latest commercial entity to seize land and cause controversy. Palm oil is in high demand and is used in a multitude of food and products and are made by Nestlé, Procter and Gamble, and Unilever, all huge multi-national corporations.⁷⁴

Jennifer O'Mahony says, "Liberian activists and the international community...[are] warning that land disputes on oil palm concessions were becoming a time bomb for conflict in a country only barely recovering from the 1989-2003 civil wars, and urging lawmakers to give indigenous communities full rights to land the government had handed out as its own."⁷⁵ Villagers are afraid that commercial enterprises are taking over all the accessible farmland.

The little trust left in the government and multi-national enterprises working in Liberia to advocate land rights for the people is rapidly deteriorating. Golden Veroluem Liberia is a prominent Singaporean corporation that produces palm oil in Liberia for distribution. In 2015, an employee of Golden Veroluem Liberia had concerns over the workplace conditions and asked to speak with the administration about his concerns. Management denied his request, and instead of meeting with him, the riot police ambushed him. After the riot police ambush, another employee was arrested who was not on the plantation at the time of the confrontation. While in custody, the man arrested died. There was no autopsy of his body, and he was promptly buried. The quick burial without an autopsy is surrounded by controversy. There were two other victims of this

⁷³ O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights." ; International Labour Organization, "Land Rights Act, 2018," Liberia - Land Rights Act, 2018, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=108719 (accessed November 10, 2022). ; International Institute for Sustainable Development, Liberia National Land Conference, November 2022, <https://www.iisd.org/events/liberia-national-land-conference>.

⁷⁴ O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights."

⁷⁵ O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights."

incident. One pregnant woman was detained, and another was forcefully stripped in detention.⁷⁶

One of the constant instability issues in Liberia since Americo-Liberian dominance is indigenous peoples' access to land. Americo-Liberians have been allowed to own land per individual, but all other ethnicities can only own land as a tribe or community. Still today, Americo-Liberians have been allowed to dominate and flourish while the lower classes must abide. Most people do not even know what their legal rights are when it comes to land access. This helps the prosperous stay above the rest. Jennifer O'Mahony says, "residents and activists say concession communities are living in increasingly dire conditions, and [many communities] have not even fully participated in official mapping."⁷⁷ Land tenure rights have never been fully addressed in the history of Liberia and need to be fixed to generate stability. Not only are the laws ambiguous but "under Liberia's deed system, only the number of acres and approximate boundaries are recorded, and there exists no registry."⁷⁸ The country needs to create a national registry to avoid land conflicts. However, these issues are tumultuous and can easily create more violence. Instead of having the government or an international organization help create solutions and a registry I think having local trusted civil society organizations (CSO) communicate and cooperate with other locals to cultivate solutions could render better results.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights."

⁷⁷ O'Mahony, "Liberia's New Land Rights."

⁷⁸ Brottem, "Territorial Tensions," 1000.

⁷⁹ Aaron Weah, "Building Networks for Peace in Liberia," Edited by Lesley Connolly and Laura Powers, *Local Networks for Peace: Lessons from Community-Led Peacebuilding* (2018): 9, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19651>. ; Goel Vaibhav, and Manoj Kr. Tripathi, "The Role of NGOs In The Enforcement of Human Rights: An Overview," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 71, no. 3 (2010): 769–793, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42748408>.

e. True Whig Party Opposition

Though political rival parties formed against TWP, the Americo-Liberian class under the TWP continued to reign over the country and created longstanding animosity between classes and ethnicities in Liberia. The inequity the TWP forced upon other ethnicities, and political rivals since its inception in the 1800s helped develop the complicated history of politicians' and leaders' reliance on nepotism and cronyism since. The dependence on crony politics establishes a system of us vs. them that destroys government institutions and forms rebels. Rebellions continue to be inevitable if each new leader and government practices a form of cronyism and corruption.

The Americo-Liberian True Whig Party dominated Liberian politics as an essentially one-party system until 1980, which went unquestioned by the Western world. However, the League of Nations took notice of Liberia in the late 1920s when allegations surfaced of forced labor.⁸⁰ The investigation drove President Charles Dunbar Burgess King to resign in 1930. Afterward, the Secretary of State Edwin Barclay became the president for a little over a decade.⁸¹ Following Barclay's presidency were William Tubman (1944-1971) and William Tolbert (1971-1980). Tubman and Tolbert, presidents under the True Whig Party, were the first presidents to implement reforms and laws that helped the country's indigenous and lower-class people.

A major reform was enacted in the 1960s that positioned counties with indigenous people as equal to settler counties. This reform inspired the indigenous people to participate in the

⁸⁰ U.S. Department of State, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1930v03/d300> (accessed October 25, 2022).

⁸¹ Christy Cuthbert, "Liberia in 1930," *The Geographical Journal* 77, no. 6 (1931): 529, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1785043>.

administrative and political sectors.⁸² Once the indigenous people tasted equality, they realized they deserved more. The newfound confidence of the indigenous peoples provoked hostility, which was a leading factor in the First Liberian Civil War.⁸³

During President William Tubman's presidency in the True Whig Party from 1944 to 1971, Liberia was economically prosperous and was recognized worldwide until William Tolbert headed the state. Its prosperity came from its rubber and iron ore exports. Liberia also had the largest cargo ship fleet in the world.⁸⁴ Liberia was the biggest exporter of rubber. Tubman passed away in 1971, and his vice president, William Tolbert, became President. The economic recession in the 1970s affected Liberia's economic prosperity. The price of goods plunged, impeding their exports' affluence. Despite pushback from the more conservative people in the True Whig Party, Tolbert introduced reforms and other programs to help improve indigenous people's lives. These amendments were not enough for the lower-class and indigenous people who wanted further equality and prosperity than they were awarded. Further hostility between the groups grew as the True Whig Party passed only moderate reforms that kept them as the ruling class.⁸⁵

Gabriel Baccus Mathews and other university-educated scholar youths formed the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL). Around 1974, enraged Liberian students studying in the United States mobilized to fight the Liberian government in hopes of a revolution. Julius Emeka Okolo in *Liberia: The Military Coup and Its Aftermath* states that Mathews "considered himself

⁸² Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 16.

⁸³ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 56-58.

⁸⁴ "Liberia, Owners' Haven, Boasts World's Biggest Merchant Fleet," *New York Times*, March 22, 1970, 206. <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/03/22/archives/liberia-owners-haven-boasts-worlds-biggest-merchant-fleet-flag-of.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

⁸⁵ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 56-58.

a pragmatist and PAL a revolutionary mass movement of workers, students and rural peasants, whose objective was to bring about, by violent or non-violent methods, revolutionary change 'wherever possible' in Liberia."⁸⁶ The group began working in Liberia by January 1978. In December 1979, it became a legitimate political party under Progressive People's Party (PPP). Only four months later, the Liberian Senate and House banned the party. The ban kept the current government, the True Whig Party (TWP), as Liberia's only lawful political party. The Progressive People's Party (PPP) later became known as the United People's Party (UPP). PAL and MOJA disturbed the operations of the TWP government.⁸⁷

April 14, 1979, The True Whig Party's opposition began to show its true power. The Minister of Agriculture, Florence Cheneweth, proposed a solution to farmers quitting their jobs to work in the rubber industry. The Minister's solution was to raise the price of rice in Liberia to \$25 per 100-pound from \$22 per 100-pound bag. Cheneweth's proposition caused the PAL to order a peaceful demonstration across Liberia. However, the peaceful demonstration turned into riots and looting. The demonstrations soon became violent, with an estimated 40 to 100 deaths, 500 people injured, and millions of dollars in damage. The Liberian military and police were called into action. However, some of the Liberian soldiers even joined in on the riots. Much of the military consisted of lower-class indigenous peoples who were also fed up with the government. In return, President Tolbert had soldiers from Guinea come over the border to try and get the country back in order since Liberian's military was ineffective. After the riots, the price of rice stayed the same. Tolbert claimed that PAL tried to overthrow the government and began arresting opposition groups such as PAL and MOJA members. He closed the University of

⁸⁶ Julius Emeka Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup and Its Aftermath," *The World Today* 37, no. 4 (1981): 151–152, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40395282>.

⁸⁷ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 60, 59-60.

Liberia, claiming it inspired the radical groups to overthrow the government. The government charged 32 people with treason and assembled the National Reconstruction Commission to investigate the demonstrations around the nation further.⁸⁸

President Tolbert's regime's likability continued to plunder with its implementation of moderate resolutions and further suppression of discontent civilians and opponents of the government. By the end of June, the commission decided to release and give general amnesty to all detainees. The price of rice decreased from \$22 per 100-pound to \$20 per 100-pound. The University of Liberia was also allowed to operate once again. Nevertheless, Liberian's distrust of the government stayed. Though the government tried to appease the masses, penalties were still given. Strikes were deemed illegal. The government claimed wicked people formed PAL in hopes of discrediting them and strengthening the nation's dependence on the TWP. Tolbert announced that the presidential elections would hold off for another month in October 1979 and that elections would run from November to June of the following year, 1980. This was just another appeal to create more likability for Tolbert before the Presidential elections concluded. PAL, now known as PPP, was a legal party threatening the TWP's reign. The Tolbert regime tried to charge PAL with anything they could. PAL's leaders called for Tolbert to resign and called for a strike. Tolbert arrested 80 members of the PPP on sedition and treason. MOJA denounced PAL's actions but also that of the government. MOJA condemned the government for torturing the imprisoned PPP members. According to Julius Emeka Okolo, Amnesty International also got involved after finding out that under the Tolbert regime, the Liberian Ministry of Justice was "offering \$1,500 to \$2,500 rewards for the capture 'dead or alive' of 20

⁸⁸ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 152-153.

PAL-PPP suspects."⁸⁹ The government finally banned the PPP and began arresting military members across the nation suspected of involvement. These actions by the Tolbert regime ultimately provoked the coup on April 12, 1980.⁹⁰

In April 1980, indigenous ethnic groups challenged the Americo-Liberians and staged a coup. Two revolutionary groups emerged, the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL). Babatunde Tolu Afolabi says MOJA was created "by Togba Nah Roberts, an economics professor at the University of Liberia and an ethnic Kru; Amos Sawyer, a political science professor, also of the University of Liberia; and Henry Fahnbulleh Jr...[a] pan-Africanist in scope and anti-colonial."⁹¹ MOJA's objective was to bring awareness of the oppressive government to students, farmers, and the working-class people of Liberia to dismantle the government. MOJA acted through demonstrations, worker strikes, boycotts, and walkouts.⁹² MOJA, upon inception, did not intend to become a political party but had consistent goals of fighting social injustices and spreading democracy.⁹³

f. The Samuel Doe Regime

The Liberian Civil War resulted from years of corrupt rulers, including Samuel Doe's crooked regime backed by the United States. Samuel Doe, a Master Sergeant for the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), was not well known before the coup in April of 1980. He did not have strong political beliefs or ideologies but had a strong distaste against the discrimination of the

⁸⁹ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 154.

⁹⁰ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 152-154.

⁹¹ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 60.

⁹² Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 152.

⁹³ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 151-152.

indigenous peoples, especially the indigenous group he belonged to, the Krahn.⁹⁴ He declared that the reason for inciting a coup was because he believed Tolbert was responsible for the "government neglect of the Liberian poor, rampant corruption, illegal searches, and seizures, detentions, and convictions without trial, a high rate of unemployment, the skyrocketing cost of living and an appalling health situation."⁹⁵ Doe blamed the instability on Tolbert and the fact that he was an Americo-Liberian and a fellow colonist. However, once in office, Doe committed the same atrocities he claimed to overthrow Tolbert for. The Krahn and Doe's followers were favored while the rest of the population were alienated, creating more unrest. Doe justified his actions while condemning the previous leader's crimes. The Doe regime rationalized their brutalities by supporting the Krahn, an indigenous ethnic group that had been suppressed and overrun by colonizers for decades, while Tolbert represented the colonizers.

Doe stoked ethnic rivalries by reforming the AFL and the military. He did so by kicking out the Americo-Liberians in their AFL positions and replaced them with his ethnic group, the Krahn. He replaced many of the Gios and Manos in the military with the Krahn as well. "By perpetuating these ethnic divisions inside the AFL, he turned the army into an ethnic-dominated instrument of oppression."⁹⁶

On April 12, 1980, Samuel Doe staged a coup to take over Tolbert's government and was supported by the United States.⁹⁷ Doe was a Krahn and the first indigenous person to take power

⁹⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Liberia: Information on the New Government's Human Rights Record and Information on the Conditions of Members of the Krahn Ethnic Group under the New Government," <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6aae744.html> (accessed August 23, 2022). ; Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 154.

⁹⁵ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 154.

⁹⁶ Rincon, "Ex-Combatants, Returnees, Land," 9.

⁹⁷ Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup," 154.

over Liberia. He executed thirteen of Tolbert's government members publicly after taking office. The execution was televised on April 22nd on a beach in Monrovia.⁹⁸ The Washington Post explained that the people of Liberia believed the coup had "ended a belated effort to reform an archaic system of government that had for too long held on to century-old concepts that only the propertied should rule and have access to power."⁹⁹ This quote from the Washington Post negatively depicting Liberia's past government as archaic is surprising because the archaic government they discuss was the Americo-Liberian government installed by the United States themselves. There is an American bias that shows here that although the government was backed by the U.S. that it was still considered archaic since it was an African government, nonetheless. At this point, American journalists seem to be backing Doe, an indigenous Liberian. At this time, Doe was supported by the U.S. government.

Doe created a new political party and continued to enforce cruelties against rivals. Doe created the People's Redemption Council (PRC) to help govern and rebuild Liberia from the Tolbert regime's destruction. The PRC cabinet was filled with some MOJA and PAL leaders, Armed Forces members, past TWP supporters, other rivals of TWP, and civilians.¹⁰⁰ Liberians hoped the indigenous people would finally acquire equality and justice. Doe's rule gave hope to the indigenous peoples who had long felt buried under the Americo-Liberians' discriminatory crooked rule. However, Doe began executing and exiling any adversaries, even those who were not proven to be actual adversaries of the administration. His administration fired members of

⁹⁸ J. Gus Liebenow, "The Liberian Coup in Perspective," *Current History* 80, no. 464 (1981): 101–134, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45314931>.

⁹⁹ Leon Dash, "Liberian Soldiers Taunt, Shoot 13 Former Leaders," *The Washington Post*, April 23, 1980, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1980/04/23/liberian-soldiers-taunt-shoot-13-former-leaders/426da72b-a4b8-4c76-b958-10da2112321e/>.

¹⁰⁰ Julius Emeka Okolo, "Liberia: The Military Coup and Its Aftermath." *The World Today* 37, no. 4 (1981): 154. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40395282>.

the Armed Forces of Liberia who were of other ethnicities than his own, Krahn.¹⁰¹ Doe emerged as another discriminatory authoritarian leader hungry for power.

Doe practiced what the other Liberian leaders had done before. He may have been under a different party name and discriminated against other people than the previous administrations, but he discriminated against and kept corruption rampant in the country. Doe was no different and no more successful at uniting the country than his predecessors. Doe, however, would not be the last of the corrupt cronies of Liberia. Another rebellion rose now against Doe. Thomas Quiwonkpa, an Armed Forces of Liberia member, and military leader under the Doe administration, commenced a coup to take over President Samuel Doe.¹⁰²

Thomas Quiwonkpa, the Major General under Samuel Doe, decided to overthrow Doe because of his oppressive rule, believing he had the United States' support. Doe was a ruthless leader who played partisan politics while oppressing ethnicities and groups he opposed. Thomas Quiwonkpa initially helped assist Doe in the coup against Tolbert. Later, he asked to become the Secretary-General but failed to get Doe's endorsement. He then left the AFL and went to the U.S., fearing Doe had turned against him. Afterward, Quiwonkpa decided to stage a coup in November of 1985 to overthrow Doe. Quiwonkpa and the other dissidents failed and were all murdered. Since Thomas Quiwonkpa was from Nimba County, Doe retaliated against the Gios and Manos in Nimba County. Doe's army killed around 3,000 Gios and Manos people. Other Gios, Manos, and Grebos people in Grand Gedeh County, where Doe lived, were arrested, and brutally beaten. People in Monrovia who believed Quiwonkpa succeeded in the coup celebrated

¹⁰¹ Leon Dash, "Doe's Harsh Rule Daunts Liberians." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 25 August 25, 1981. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1981/08/25/does-harsh-rule-daunts-liberians/b88e1cf5-1d11-4d8a-ae24-032f4fd20841/> (accessed April 21, 2023). ; Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 63.

¹⁰² Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 63-69.

in the streets until they were kidnapped by Doe's army, thrown on the beach, and massacred. Quiwonkpa had a false sense of security and support from the United States. Babatunde Tolu Afolabi says, "Quiwonkpa had staged the coup believing that he had the support of the USA, but this proved to be untrue as American intelligence, having got wind of the looming attempt, were said to have tipped Doe off."¹⁰³ Once again you see a coup attempt by dissidents who thought they had the United States support to do so. This pattern of outside intervention and support from the United States is prevalent in Liberia's government and political sphere. While Doe was still supported by the US, Quiwonkpa attempted to gain the United States' support to overthrow Doe's regime. In return, the U.S. informed Doe of the attempt so Doe could intercept Quiwonkpa and his followers. This proves the United States' hold over Liberia and its government and its causation to Liberian instability.¹⁰⁴

Doe was able to hold office in Liberia with the help of the United States, despite a rigged election and human rights violations. Doe also saw the Gios and Manos as adversaries because of the presidential election in 1985. He opposed another presidential candidate named Jackson Doe during the election process. Jackson Doe, like Quiwonkpa, was from Nimba County and was from the Gio people. It was primarily believed that the election was fixed, and Jackson Doe had actually won the election. However, Samuel Doe claimed victory. The United States continued to back the Doe administration and did not investigate all the circulating human rights violation rumors. The United States was still focused on the Cold War and wanted to ensure Liberia wouldn't fall into the hands of Communism. So, politicians in Washington conveniently put their blinders on while doing business with Liberia.¹⁰⁵ As long as the United States backed Doe, he

¹⁰³ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 63-67.

¹⁰⁴ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 63-69.

¹⁰⁵ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 67-69.

could sustain power even though he was committing atrocious acts on the general population of Liberia. The instability and barbarity persisted with the help of the United States.

g. The United States' Support of the Doe Regime

Since Quiwonkpa failed to take over the Doe administration and the United States had a disinterest in opposing the Doe administration, repression and injustice continued for most Liberians. America, at this point, had a long relationship with Liberia through colonization and commerce. Since Liberia did not appear to be an issue globally or for American commerce, they turned a blind eye. The United States and Liberia have had a relationship since the 1800s and continue to work with Liberia today. Babatunde states that Liberia and the United States have maintained a relationship by means of American missionaries, business ventures, military and economic assistance, American university programs, food subsidies, and literacy assistance. Liberia allowed the U.S. to build a military base on Liberian land during World War II and Liberia supported the U.S. during the Vietnam War.¹⁰⁶

The United States had significantly supported the Doe administration with aid funds before the first civil war broke out. The United States gave the Doe administration \$500 million from 1980 to 1985 and around \$65 million of this aid was military aid.¹⁰⁷ On December, 2nd 1986, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Peter V. Emerson in the *Los Angeles Times* stated that the Liberian people were begging the United States to stop giving aid to the Doe government.¹⁰⁸ The

¹⁰⁶ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 69. ; William Rosenau et al., "Firestone in Liberia," in *Corporations and Counterinsurgency*, ed. 1 Library of Congress (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009), 17–24. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/op259.10>

¹⁰⁷ New York Times News Service, "Doe Says U.S. Turned Its Back on Liberia," *Chicago Tribune*, August 10, 2021. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1990-06-16-9002190077-story.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁰⁸ Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Peter V. Emerson, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No More U.S. Aid," *Los Angeles Times*, December 2, 1986. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1986-12-02-me-631-story.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

United States' Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs at the time, Chester A. Crocker, visited the capital in April of that year.¹⁰⁹ The Concerned Women of Liberia had over 3,000 signatures to petition and end all U.S. aid to Liberia.¹¹⁰ Even though the country needed aid especially humanitarian aid, the people were willing to fall further into poverty to end the reign of Samuel Doe.¹¹¹ Because of the United States' colonial history, financial support, and investment in multi-national enterprises located in Liberia, the United States wasn't ready to confront the issues that began surfacing.

Samuel Doe did not allow any opposition to his administration and would arrest those who did not support or denounced his administration in any way. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a politician, and later, the first woman president in 2006, was accused of being complicit in the attempted coup of Doe. She was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison because she did not condemn the attempted coup that took place and accused of speaking out against the regime. However, she was released seven months after the sentencing. Interestingly, which is likely not a coincidence, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf used to work as the Minister of Finance for the past president William Tolbert who Doe executed in the coup that overthrew the Tolbert regime.

The *Los Angeles Times* article, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No More U.S. Aid," was written by Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf the following year after being accused of being complicit in the attempted coup. In this article, Sirleaf speaks out for the people being brutalized and wrongfully detained for speaking out against the Doe government and living in poverty during the Doe regime.¹¹² Sirleaf tried to get the news out to the United States and Western countries of the

¹⁰⁹ Johnson-Sirleaf, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No."

¹¹⁰ Johnson-Sirleaf, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No."

¹¹¹ Johnson-Sirleaf, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No."

¹¹² Johnson-Sirleaf, "Liberia's Doe Deserves No."

tyrannical Doe regime and to end the United States' funding and support of the Doe government, even though she used to work for another corrupt government herself.¹¹³

The origin of patrimonial politics in Liberia comes from European imperialism. The European bourgeoisie initially had no interest in the politics or the economics of a country, but with time had to get involved in these issues once they encountered “national limitations to economic expansion”, especially so in the 19th century. The ruling class got involved in political matters and began imperialist exploitation out of capitalist demand. European imperialism of Africa spread in the 19th and early 20th century. Private interest, political patronage, patrimonialism, and cronyism were all central to European republics and monarchies and so disseminated to the African continent.¹¹⁴

These European colonial ideologies were also transmitted to the United States and were often associated with Western ideologies and culture. In Liberia, a pattern of cronyism and patrimonialism came from U.S. colonialism, which has developed into internal colonialism. Ironically, the United States modeled Liberian society originally from the presence of cronyism and patrimonialism, which now comes back to bite the U.S. back. Colonists and later politicians practiced favoritism and prejudice against all ethnicities and rivals other than loyalists and their own.¹¹⁵

Cronyism and patronage politics is a pattern that continues throughout Liberian history

¹¹³ Blaine Harden, “Jail Terms Make Liberian a Folk Hero,” *The Washington Post*, August 5, 1986. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1986/08/05/jail-terms-make-liberian-a-folk-hero/b867aca7-d36e-4688-8dc0-9ec7d1097b0e/> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹¹⁴ Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two,” 95.

¹¹⁵ Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two,” 91-100. ; Clegg, “Inventing Liberia,” 110-111. ; Brandon Mills, “‘The United States of Africa’: Liberian Independence and the Contested Meaning of a Black Republic,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 1 (2014): 79–107, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24486932>.

often times funded by aid money from international donors. A Berkeley study in 1992 observed "that within the first five years of the Doe administration, it had received almost half a billion dollars in aid money, but that about U.S. \$300 million out of this total was stolen for personal use by members of the Doe administration."¹¹⁶ Doe was taking the United States' aid funds and using them for personal use and not for the intended purpose of helping the people and economy of Liberia.

Why did the U.S. aid Liberia with such substantial funding during Doe's regime? The existence of the Cold War and the Soviet Union was still a very present threat to the United States during Samuel Doe's presidential term. With the Cold War looming, Liberia was seen as one of the strategic states to ensure United States loyalty. According to Babatunde Tolu Afolabi, "The USA's generosity to the Doe regime, despite being aware of its poor record of human rights and transparency and accountability, was obviously motivated by strategic national interests as Washington considered Liberia to be strategically essential in the execution of its Cold War strategy in Africa."¹¹⁷ Despite all the aid received, Liberia, under the Doe administration, increased foreign debt, the economy's growth rate fell, and GDP fell.

When Liberia's first civil war broke out, the United States, Liberia's "'Mother Country'" did not run to help aid the country, which showed Liberians the true intentions of the U.S.¹¹⁸ The war broke out in 1989 after the end of the Cold War, and the United States did not see the need to aid Liberia any longer.¹¹⁹ The Doe administration felt as though it had been a pawn of the U.S.' Cold War strategy. However, after the Cold War was over the United States had no need to

¹¹⁶ Colin M. Waugh, *Charles Taylor and Liberia Ambition and Atrocity in Africa's Lone Star State* (London: Zed Books, 2011), 92.

¹¹⁷ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 70.

¹¹⁸ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 70.

¹¹⁹ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 69-70.

disregard authoritarian regimes, especially, those with severe corruption. The United States found no reason to keep funding Doe's regime, which cultivated an underdeveloped society and impoverished citizens despite the millions in aid. As the U.S. neglected to protect Liberia, Liberia was left with massive debt and a starving economy, so the opportunity for rebels to take over was ripe. Nevertheless, the international community saw an overthrow of Samuel Doe as a positive outcome for this increasingly corrupt government.¹²⁰

h. First Liberian Civil War

Friction grew amongst the indigenous ethnic tribes and the Americo-Liberian settlers. Babatunde Tolu Afolabi exclaims that the hostilities were fueled by "the dualistic land tenure and marriage laws systems, underscored by a history in which local people had been governed by customary laws while the settlers were governed by 'Liberian law.'"¹²¹ He goes on to say that the segregation between the communities "appeared to have caught up with the country and would lead to dire consequences for the people of Liberia in particular and West Africa in general."¹²² Charles Taylor bolstered the war from 1989 to 1997 from the animosity between the ethnicities and worked them to his advantage.

On December 24, 1989, Warlord Charles Taylor and his political party, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), fought to overthrow the residing President, Samuel K. Doe. Unfortunately, Charles Taylor was just as corrupt and debatably more violent than Samuel Doe. Charles Taylor threw Liberia into a full-fledged civil war. The civil war created different factions of forces fighting for control. These rival factions even drafted child soldiers into the conflict.

¹²⁰ Seva Gunitsky, "Introduction: A Century of Shocks and Waves," in *Aftershocks: Great Powers and Domestic Reforms in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 19, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1q1xskn.5>.

¹²¹ Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 73.

¹²² Afolabi, *Liberia's Evolution*, 73.

Brutal atrocities occurred between these factions and were committed against the public. Masses of displaced people and an estimated accumulation of around 200,000 deaths occurred during the war. In 1990, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, also known as ECOMOG, intervened in an attempt to convince Samuel Doe to resign. Doe refused to surrender. Another armed faction, the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), led by rebel and politician Prince Johnson, murdered Doe by torturing and dismembering him on September 9, 1990. Prince Johnson's and Charles Taylor's factions fought for control over Liberia. Multiple peace negotiations happened during the conflict with the help of ECOMOG and the United Nations, yet the war continued until 1997. The United States provided a great deal of humanitarian relief during the war. Finally, a peace negotiation led to a ceasefire and the election of Charles Taylor as the President of Liberia on July 19, 1997. However, shortly after the election, it was revealed that it would not be the end of corruption and violent enforcement on citizens.¹²³

The foreign newspapers, primarily U.K. based, represent Charles Taylor and Prince Johnson as criminals and warlords and question the United States' actions in Liberia and the civil war. They don't go as far as to blame the United States but question why the U.S. had, at that point, gotten minimally involved in the war and had yet to put boots on the ground. The Guardian states that the United States should be responsible for helping Liberia since the United States founded the country all those years ago. Foreign newspapers are more apt to blame the

¹²³ Lansana Gberie, Review of *ECOMOG: The Story of an Heroic Failure*, by Adekeye Adebajo, John L. Hirsch, and Abass Bundu, *African Affairs* 102, no. 406 (2003): 147–154. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3518403>. ; Sarah Left, “War in Liberia,” *The Guardian*, August 4, 2003. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/aug/04/westafrica.qanda> (accessed April 21, 2023). ; United Nations, “Closure of UNMIL – Background,” UNMIL: United Nations Mission in Liberia, <https://unmil.unmissions.org/background> (accessed April 21, 2023).

United States for the conflict in Liberia.

Ethnic tensions were also central to the Liberian Civil War. Charles Taylor's supporters were mostly of Gio and Mano ethnicity. While, the two prominent rebel rival groups to the Taylor regime were also made up of specific ethnicities. LURD was made up of mostly the Mandingo people and MODEL mostly of the Krahn.¹²⁴

The Liberian war has been characterized by extraordinary acts of violence. Cannibalism and torture were common acts committed by the often very young National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebels. The young uneducated destitute rebels were recruited from the deprivation of the Doe regime. The war did not transpire from political ideologies, but by the desire to steal Liberia's natural resources, mostly, diamonds, for personal wealth and power over the state. Charles Taylor was not a politician but a warlord and this warlord was not done wreaking havoc on Liberia.¹²⁵

i. Second Liberian Civil War

The international community started to take action against Taylor and conflict diamonds. Rumors of human rights violations, assassinations, and silencing of people in opposition to Charles Taylor's government began to raise eyebrows internationally. Once it was confirmed that these atrocities were still ongoing and no improvement in democratic governance was achieved, Liberia faced global scrutiny. Furthermore, in 1999, the United States found out that Taylor was funding rebels in Sierra Leone in exchange for diamonds.¹²⁶ Taylor was helping the

¹²⁴ Rincon, "Ex-Combatants, Returnees, Land," 7.

¹²⁵ William Reno, "The Business of War in Liberia," *Current History* 95, no. 601 (1996): 211, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45317580>.

¹²⁶ Andy McSmith, "'Merchant of Death' who armed tyrants fights extradition to US," *The Independent*, December 23, 2008. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/merchant-of-death-who-armed-tyrants-fights-extradition-to-us-1208489.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group militarily fight to overthrow the Sierra Leonean government and control the state. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution to sanction Charles Taylor's government and the sale of conflict diamonds.¹²⁷ The U.N. Security Council had passed numerous resolutions revolving around the illicit trade in diamonds and supported the Kimberley Process that was created by African countries who produce and sell diamonds. The Kimberley Process aimed at conflict prevention through a set of regulations to hinder and prevent the circulation of conflict diamonds. The regulations included tamper-proof containers on imports and exports of diamonds and forgery-resistant certificates on all shipments of diamonds. Other points of interest were effective national legislation, tracking and national controls on shipments of diamonds, and prohibition of imports and exports from countries that do not agree to the Kimberley Process.¹²⁸ Hostility in Liberia grew against Taylor due to the government's brutality and corruption. These developments caused the Second Liberian Civil War to begin.¹²⁹

Two rebel groups emerged during the Second Liberian Civil War: the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). LURD was formed in 1999, and MODEL developed in 2003 before the end of the civil war. LURD's and MODEL's intentions were to overthrow Charles Taylor. The Sierra Leonean rebel group, RUF, joined Taylor's NPFL to fight against LURD and MODEL in Liberia. LURD was backed by the Guinea government, while the RUF was a rebel group in Sierra Leone that was also fighting the Sierra Leonean government at the time with the help of

¹²⁷ Michael Fleshman, “Conflict Diamonds’ Evade UN Sanctions,” *United Nations Africa Renewal*, December 2001. <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2001/conflict-diamonds-evade-un-sanctions> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹²⁸ Fleshman, “Conflict Diamonds’ Evade UN.”

¹²⁹ Fleshman, “Conflict Diamonds’ Evade UN.”

Charles Taylor. Due to RUF receiving support in their war, they helped fight against LURD and MODEL for Taylor's government.¹³⁰ Charles Taylor not only was responsible for the First and Second Liberian War in Liberia but had his hand directly in the civil war in Sierra Leone.

The international community stepped up to sanction and create a ceasefire. The United Nations Security Council and the United States again got involved and set more sanctions. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also intervened to end the war. The United Nations entered Liberia to peace keep at the end of the war in 2003. On August 18, 2003, the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed.¹³¹ The United Nations Security Council put together the peace agreement and applied various articles to be agreed upon for the ceasefire between LURD, MODEL, and the Government of Liberia (GOL).¹³² Along with the truce between all parties the agreement was to remove Charles Taylor as President of the Liberian government and temporarily place the Vice-President Moses Zeh Blah as head of the government for up to two months after the agreement was signed and create a transitional government that would take over after the two months had passed.¹³³ The agreement detailed that there would be an internationally supervised presidential election two years after the installation of the transitional government in October of 2005 and an inauguration of a new democratically elected president in January of 2006.¹³⁴ The National Transitional Government comprised three

¹³⁰ George Klay Kieh Jr., "The Roots of The Second Liberian Civil War," *International Journal on World Peace* 26, no. 1 (2009): 7–30, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20752871>.

¹³¹ "United Nations Security Council Peace Agreement between the Government of Liberia, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), the Movement of Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and the Political Parties," United Nations Peacemaker, 2003, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/LR_030818_Peace%20Agreement%20between%20GovLiberia%20LURD%20MODEL%20and%20the%20Political%20Parties.pdf.

¹³² "United Nations Security Council," 28.

¹³³ "United Nations Security Council," 16.

¹³⁴ "United Nations Security Council," 16.

branches the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA), the Executive branch and the Judiciary branch.¹³⁵ The NTLA was to seat 12 GOL, 12 LURD, 12 MODEL, 18 from other political parties, 7 seats for civil society and special interest groups, and all 15 county seat members.¹³⁶ The role of the international community was to ensure the best effort and integrity were put forth in implementing the peace agreement to all parties in the contract.¹³⁷ The international community responsible for upholding the implementation according to the peace agreement were ECOWAS, the U.N., the African Union (A.U.), and the International Group on Liberia (ICGL).¹³⁸

The international community went on to help exile and indict Charles Taylor and elect the new head of state. ECOWAS helped the United States capture Taylor and exile him to Nigeria in November 2003.¹³⁹ The United Nations backed a new government to take over with Charles Gyude Bryant as President of Liberia.¹⁴⁰ Taylor went to trial in Hague for his war crimes in 2007. He was accused of ownership of illegal weapons, mutilation, rape, sexual violence and enslavement of women and young girls, promotion of child soldiers, and attacks on civilians.¹⁴¹ Taylor was indicted on 11 counts of war crimes. Five counts for “crimes against humanity, those specific crimes being murder, rape, sexual slavery, enslavement for forced labour, and inhumane

¹³⁵ “United Nations Security Council,” 17.

¹³⁶ “United Nations Security Council,” 35.

¹³⁷ “United Nations Security Council,” 23.

¹³⁸ “United Nations Security Council,” 23.

¹³⁹ Herbert Howe, “Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping,” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996): 145–176, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539276>.

¹⁴⁰ “Secretary-General’s Message on the Inauguration of the National Transitional Government of Liberia [Delivered by Jacques Paul Klein, SRSG for Liberia],” United Nations Secretary-General, October 14, 2003, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2003-10-14/secretary-generals-message-inauguration-national-transitional>.

¹⁴¹ The Prosecutor of the Special Court Sierra Leone v. Charles Ghankay Taylor, “Taylor Trial Transcript,” June 4, 2007, 269, <http://www.rscsl.org/Documents/Transcripts/Taylor/4June2007.pdf>.

acts against the civilian population of Sierra Leone.”¹⁴² Five counts for “war crimes under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocol, those being terrorism against the civilian population of Sierra Leone, killing, other physical violence, in particular cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity and pillage, the looting of civilian property.”¹⁴³ The last of the 11 war crimes for “a war crime, of other serious violations of international humanitarian law, being the conscription or enlisting of children under the age of 15 into armed forces or groups for their use to participate actively in hostilities.”¹⁴⁴ In 2012, he was finally sentenced to 50 years in prison.¹⁴⁵

The Guardian compared Taylor to Syria's Bashar al-Assad and Sudan's Omar Hassan al-Bashir and stated that Taylor is the first former leader since Hitler's successor to be convicted of war crimes.¹⁴⁶ Though Omar Hassan al-Bashir no longer resides as President of Sudan, both Bashar al-Assad and Omar are widely considered to be corrupt and ruthless leaders of their countries. The newspaper also discussed the widespread belief that Charles Taylor deserved harsher sentencing than he received.¹⁴⁷

Since the issues that started the First Liberian Civil War were not resolved, not only was it easy for a power-hungry warlord to take over but for rebels to stoke war and begin the second civil war. The United Nations and world superpowers failed to truly resolve Liberia's first civil

¹⁴² The Prosecutor of the, 272.

¹⁴³ The Prosecutor of the, 272.

¹⁴⁴ The Prosecutor of the, 272.

¹⁴⁵The Prosecutor of the Special Court Sierra Leone v. Charles Ghankay Taylor, “Taylor Sentencing,” May 30, 2012, 18,

<http://www.rscsl.org/Documents/Transcripts/Taylor/30May2012.pdf>. ; Owen Bowcott, “Charles Taylor sentenced to 50 years in prison for war crimes,” *The Guardian*, May 30, 2012.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/may/30/charles-taylor-sentenced-50-years-war-crimes> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁴⁶ Bowcott, “Charles Taylor sentenced to.”

¹⁴⁷ Bowcott, “Charles Taylor sentenced to.”

war, to start with, and failed again to act promptly to end the second civil war. Instead, the United States funded Samuel Doe's tyranny in the billions helping Doe reign for a decade over Liberia and tanking its economy and citizens along with it. However, there is great debate on when or if the United Nations should enter a war torn country to peacekeep. The United States and international organizations are in no way at fault for the Liberian Civil War. Nevertheless, the United States history of colonialism and recent millions in funding does give to question what responsibility the U.S. has to Liberia. While world superpowers stayed quite to Liberia's corruption a far more ruthless warlord overthrew the corrupt Liberian government and waged unrelenting barbarities amongst civilians.

j. Aftermath of the First and Second Liberian Wars: Lasting Instability

There seems to be no end to the perpetuity of the exploitation of Liberia. Liberia continues to have mass corruption. A pattern of corrupt leaders that choose only to benefit select people, groups, and ethnicities has plagued Liberia. This has led to a pattern of discriminated groups leading rebellions only to have a new rebel leader take charge and discriminate against another set of people. This situation then leads to another revolt that uses the same tactics as the previous leaders. Though there has been democratic progress with the most recent presidents, however, corruption still is prevalent. High levels of cronyism and neopatrimonialism have decreased along with outright discrimination, but corruption is seen at every level of the government.

Although Liberia experienced the first peaceful transfer of power from democratically elected leaders since 1944, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to President George Manneh Weah,

Liberia still has a high level of corruption.¹⁴⁸ According to Transparency International, "Allegations of patronage, nepotism, and cronyism plague politics, petty corruption is rife, and judicial independence is weak."¹⁴⁹ Liberia's current president may have won in a fair election, but that does not erase the fact that Liberia is still teeming with corruption. Liberia's score on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index fell from 37 to 32 out of 100 once President George Weah took office in 2018.¹⁵⁰ Transparency International says the "2018 Global Corruption Barometer date [stated that] almost half of Liberians reported that the level of corruption in the country increased over the year."¹⁵¹

The problems that loomed around the First Liberian Civil War seem all too present. Did the issues that caused the First Liberian Civil War ever get resolved? Or are these issues continually covered up with band-aid quick fixes with the hopes that corruption will end, and democracy will be upheld? The last civil war was 20 years ago and Liberia does have a democratically elected president. There has been progress toward fighting corruption though it is not enough. The current leader is arguably more democratic and nonviolent, but have the systemic issues rooted in the governmental institutions been addressed? A democratically elected president is a great step in the right direction for peace and sustainability for Liberia. Nevertheless, another uprising and war are not far-fetched if the same problems are sustained within institutions.

Weah promised to have a transparent government to fight corruption and help the masses

¹⁴⁸ "George Weah Sworn in as Liberia's President," *BBC News*, January 22, 2018.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42773165> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁴⁹ Krista Lee-Jones et al., "Liberia: Overview of Corruption and Anti-Corruption," (2019): 1, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep20503>.

¹⁵⁰ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 3.

¹⁵¹ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 3.

in poverty, but the realization of those promises is weak. Unfortunately, these promises are not new to the Liberian people and seem to be more empty promises. Naymote Partners for Democratic Development created the President Meter Project to track the Liberian President's progress on development. The report is from January 2018 to January 2020, the first two years of Weah's presidency. The report found that President Weah accomplished 7 of the 92 promises he made.¹⁵² In his first two years of office, out of the accomplished initiatives, he has accomplished no progress on anti-corruption and accountability.¹⁵³ A country of impoverished people who are not reaping any benefits from a presidential leader because of a defunct system that reinforces crony government is a recipe for rebellion.

Controversy dominates the Weah regime with high inflation and the loss of printed money. Mass protests have begun in Liberia against the Weah administration. In 2018, \$100 million newly printed money that was printed for Liberia's central bank was lost.¹⁵⁴ The Weah administration claimed they were not informed of the transfer of funds that was initiated under the previous president, Sirleaf, and was lost while traveling in March from the ports.¹⁵⁵ On June 7th, 2019, 10,000 Liberians protested in Monrovia over continued corruption and the high inflation in the country at 30%.¹⁵⁶ Many Liberians claimed to not receive salary payments from

¹⁵² Joshua D. Cleon, "President George Weah Two Years Performance Report," Naymote Partners for Democratic Development, Naymote Liberia, January 20, 2020, <https://naymote.com/2020/01/20/naymote-releases-president-weahs-performance-against-promises-made-in-two-years/>.

¹⁵³ Joshua D. Cleon, "President George Weah Two."

¹⁵⁴ "Liberia Investigating Disappearance of \$100m in Bank Notes," *Al Jazeera*, September 19, 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/9/19/liberia-investigating-disappearance-of-100m-in-bank-notes> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁵⁵ "Liberia Investigating Disappearance of."

¹⁵⁶ "Liberians Protest Price Hikes and Corruption," *Al Jazeera*, June 7, 2019. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/6/7/liberia-thousands-protest-price-hikes-and-corruption> (accessed April 21, 2023).

employers for months.¹⁵⁷ On January 6th, 2020, another protest took place in the streets. It was met with police and tear gas.¹⁵⁸ Protesters were seen marching with banners calling Weah a traitor.¹⁵⁹ Will protests lead Weah's government to take action and get to the deep-rooted corruption, or will protest lead to a revolution and or a third civil war for Liberia? Liberia may very well be nearing a tipping point toward rebellion.

The Liberian government is corrupt and unlawful throughout every sector. The sectors perceived as most corrupt were the police, the National Electoral Commission, and the National Assembly.¹⁶⁰ How can a country run efficiently when the lawmakers and law enforcement are predominantly unlawful and don't do the job they have been hired to do, which is to enforce the law and protect the communities. Transparency International says, "that the country's attempts to counter corruption experienced a sharp decline under former president Johnson Sirleaf, after failing to address impunity and prosecute her family members and cronies, despite establishing key anti-graft institutions and passing anti-corruption laws and policies."¹⁶¹ Under President Weah, Liberia has achieved minimal to no progress in fixing corruption in the country. Liberian history has shown that the persistence of widespread corruption and suppression precedes insurgency and war. Liberians continue to have governments that preach democracy and fairness but do not touch the underpinning of malfeasance.

The system is broken with civilians' distrust so high that they do not report illegality to the police or other regulatory forces. The Human Rights Watch found that corruption and bribery

¹⁵⁷ "Liberians Protest Price Hikes."

¹⁵⁸ Lucinda Rouse, "Liberians Grow Wary of George Weah as Economic Woes Deepen," *Al Jazeera*, January 28, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/1/28/liberians-grow-wary-of-george-weah-as-economic-woes-deepen> (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁵⁹ Rouse, "Liberians Grow Wary of."

¹⁶⁰ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 4.

¹⁶¹ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 4.

were done at every level by the police. Transparency International says that it confirmed, "that wealth, not guilt, determines the outcome of a criminal case."¹⁶² The Human Rights Watch found several cases where police officers patrolled some of the most impoverished regions of the state at night to target citizens with the intention to extort.¹⁶³ According to Human Rights Watch, "many other victims of police abuses said that they were either too afraid to report the violation, or, because of negative past experiences with pursuing police accountability, would no longer report cases to Liberia National Police personnel."¹⁶⁴ Even if victims report incidents, there isn't an adequate governing body to take care of these reports. Citizens aren't going to come forward with the crimes they have been victimized by when the local law enforcement is committing the same crimes they have been victimized of. Who are the civilians supposed to tell and ask for help from? At the same time, the police struggle with completing everyday duties due to the absence of basic necessities to carry out their jobs and are massively overworked. It was often found that police didn't have pencils or pens to carry out paperwork or gas to fill up their police cars.¹⁶⁵

Discrimination, nepotism, and bribery also permeate the public and judicial sectors. According to Transparency International, "Civil service continues to be heavily influenced by politics and nepotism, with 42% of respondents to one survey believing that their colleagues have political connections."¹⁶⁶ In addition, judges fall into bribery and politics, which is "a major obstacle to fair and transparent trials."¹⁶⁷ Bureaucracy is essentially nonexistent due to the incompetence and unlawfulness of the ones in control. A state cannot operate when its entire

¹⁶² Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 6.

¹⁶³ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 6.

¹⁶⁴ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 7.

¹⁶⁵ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 7.

¹⁶⁶ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 6.

¹⁶⁷ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 7.

government is negligent. It has been proven repeatedly that states cannot run without a solid lawful bureaucracy and when under these circumstances, states eventually fall into violence and war. Every sector of the government needs to be held accountable. The current administration must conceptualize a system of accountability before it is too late. It is also essential to identify why corruption runs rampant in the sectors.

Low income around the country is one of Liberia's primary motivations for corruption. Citizens try to find other ways of income besides their meager wages to help support their families. Corruption is also not often contested, encouraging people to continue any corrupt activities that give them access to more money. There is limited accountability in all sectors of the government. Why would citizens obey the law not obeyed by their own government?

President Weah established a law reform to combat low salaries in the state to create less corruption and help those living in poverty, but it did not help those most in need. Transparency International says it is the "salary harmonizing process," which is supposed to create equitable pay for people with equal qualifications and experience.¹⁶⁸ According to Transparency International, in 2019, it had "increased the salary of 14,000 individuals, [but] 10,000 civil servants have received a significant salary deduction."¹⁶⁹ Unfortunately, this reform mostly helped people with higher-ranking positions, and by doing this, it lowered lower-ranking civilians' salaries. As a result, people are stuck in poverty with little if no way out unless they commit fraudulent and criminal activities.¹⁷⁰ The minimal initiatives that Weah has accomplished will help the communities little if corruption continues to run rampant. President Weah must address corruption head-on and show transparency for Liberia to rise out of poverty

¹⁶⁸ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 5.

¹⁶⁹ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 5.

¹⁷⁰ Lee-Jones, "Liberia: Overview of Corruption," 1-7.

and become stable. The people of Liberia will not accept widespread corruption for much longer. This pervasive discontentment and growing resentment will result in another uprising and revolution. President Weah needs to address the low salaries of the impoverished, not just those with high rankings. The masses are not seeing these improvements and are struggling to live day by day.

k. Concluding Thoughts

The exploitation and control of Liberia have always been in the hands of foreign entities. These entities are responsible for the prevalence of instability and corruption in Liberia. The United States laid a platform for corruption and cronyism. Once Liberia was independent, it was given this corrupt blueprint to work from. The exploiters constructed a society that relies on exploitation. Exploiting the people, land, and resources was taught. The independent governments thereafter used the blueprint that was given to them. These toxic traits that have long been systemic to the Liberian government must be unlearned. The abundance of funding and foreign investment from the U.S. and Europe considerably preserves Western domination over the country. The sustained exploitation of Liberia benefits the United States and the Western world. The United States and Western powers continue to support and finance corrupt leaders without actually ensuring stability and development is pursued. This unsustainable corrupt blueprint that the Liberian government works from must be reconstructed. Big powers such as the United States and United Nations may not be the operators of rebuilding the government processes and sectors. Alternatively, local Civil Society Organizations (CSO) should be at the forefront of these issues. Local CSOs have the country's and communities' best interest and being local themselves know which issues need to be addressed. Aid and funds could be better used and placed through CSO channels rather than governments directly administering

funds to areas of personal interest or of international interest.

The Liberian government needs to be repaired with local, regional, and international communities in appliance. Even though the past two presidents have won their elections fairly, they have not fixed the bureaucratic disarray that is the Liberian government and MNE overreach. The Liberian government needs to overhaul the structure of each political sector and create and enact legislation that supports Liberia and its people and fights corruption. Liberia needs to create more regulations and restrictions on MNEs in the country so the Liberian's can take back their manufacturing and business sectors. Post-conflict reconstruction has come a long way since the two civil wars, but there needs to be a series of comprehensive reconstruction plans to engender Liberian owned and operated profit-making enterprise and anti-corruption efforts. If Liberians are given the chance to become more fiscally independent from international governments and corporations then corruption will be less desirable. CSOs are more likely to hold the government accountable if they are the ones holding the funding and in charge of who will receive the funding. It will be complicated and take years, but arduous work is vital to the stability and democracy of Liberia. Once Liberians reclaim their industries and manufacturing they can create needed infrastructure, ensure everyone's basic necessities are met, and fight corruption.

III. SIERRA LEONE

a. Introduction

Like Liberia, exploitation continues to wreak havoc on Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone's diamond industry is generally unchecked, and the systems in place to verify the diamond process are often manipulated, and diamonds are sold and smuggled illegally. Politicians and government officials run the government in favor of themselves and the international interests who profit them. Manufacturing largely benefits foreign countries and entities outside of the country. Similar to Liberia's legacy, government systems, policies, institutions, land laws, manufacturing laws, export, and imports, just about all aspects of the economy favor international and imperialist ventures and not that of Sierra Leone. Neocolonial schemes continue to flourish as the country's economy is intertwined in foreign interest and the dependence on foreign funds. With the dependency on other wealthier powerful countries, Sierra Leone is forced to maintain the needs of those countries while putting aside their own needs. Corruption and patronage politics govern the country. In return, contention and conflicts arise against those who do not benefit from the system, which is the general public, and with those who reign. Sierra Leone's instability stems from these corrupt practices and government and unregulated industries.

Sierra Leone needs to take back its manufacturing and governing in order to save its people from poverty. A massive restructuring of institutions is needed. Mining, land laws, and other manufacturing regulations and contracts with multi-national corporations need to be re-examined. The systems that benefit foreign enterprises also breed suitable conditions for corruption to take place in the government and business run in the country. Sierra Leone must retreat from neo-patrimonial politics and enterprise and find appropriate solutions to fixing the

economy and corruption. Since the 1800s, Sierra Leone's institutions were intentionally designed for imperialist profit, and these systems have been interwoven ever since.

This chapter will begin with Sierra Leone's colonial history with Britain and the country's introduction into the diamond mining industry. Next, the chapter will cover corrupt leaders and their policies that led to the civil war in 1991. The following section will delve further into the underlying conditions that led up to the civil war. Then the details of the Sierra Leonean war that broke out in 1991 and ended in 2002. The chapter will end with the issues that are present today. The focus of this chapter is to discuss the history of instability in Sierra Leone and where it stems from, including the current issues.

b. Colonial History

Britain colonialized Sierra Leone and repatriated formerly enslaved people to Sierra Leone mainly for British manufacturing. The Sierra Leone Company knew that most white people would not work in the tropical climate and saw Sierra Leone as a colony filled with Black laborers. The British saw "the value of acquiring 'free black colonists, acquainted with the English language, and accustomed to labour in hot climates'"¹⁷¹.

The repatriation of slaves created a melting pot of multiple ethnic groups with various cultures, customs, and values. Many of these ethnic groups were from other parts of the world before being transported to Sierra Leone. The first wave of colonists to Sierra Leone were free Black people from London and poor whites totaling 439. Many of the Black people from the thirteen colonies were Black Loyalists, those who were loyal to Britain during the American

¹⁷¹ Ruma Chopra, "Leaving Nova Scotia: Sierra Leone and the Free Black People, 1792–1800," in *Reappraisals of British Colonisation in Atlantic Canada, 1700-1930*, ed. S. Karly Kehoe and Michael E. Vance (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 45, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctv136c4rf.10>.

Revolutionary War, of which many were poor freed black former slaves and Jamaican Maroons. There were 3,000 Black Loyalists that were former slaves of the southern colonies or from New York and New England. Many of these former slaves joined the British Military before being permitted to settle in British Sierra Leone in the late 1700s. In 1792, the Black Loyalists were allowed to migrate to British Sierra Leone. Britain's growing pessimistic attitudes toward slavery helped grant the Black Loyalists their wish to occupy Sierra Leone.

However, not all migrated to Sierra Leone willingly. Unlike the Black Loyalists, the 549 Jamaican Maroons were forced to the British colony. The Maroons were free Jamaicans who were deported because they rebelled against Britain's colonial rule. The Maroons were first forcefully moved to Nova Scotia in 1796 and later, in 1800, moved to Sierra Leone.

Britain saw Sierra Leone as an opportunity for monetary gain after losing the American colonies. Sierra Leone was a manufacturing paradise for Britain because of the vast resources Sierra Leone possessed. Britain planned on manufacturing "palm oil, ivory, gold, wood including mahogany, cocoa and tulip, spices such as nutmeg, clove, cinnamon, black pepper and cardamom, and staples such as rice, cotton, indigo and sugar"¹⁷². Once Britain colonized Sierra Leone, it was built to benefit Britain. From the ground up, the society was structured with Britain in mind. All economic ventures and institutions were to assist in British expansion and prosperity. "For the next half-century and more, a steady stream of liberated Africans, recaptives rescued by the British navy from slave ships taking them across the Atlantic, were brought in and settled in what had become the Colony of Sierra Leone"¹⁷³.

¹⁷² Chopra, "Leaving Nova Scotia," 45.

¹⁷³ Christopher Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987: Reflections on a Sierra Leone Bicentenary," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 57, no. 4 (1987): 411, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1159891>.

Sierra Leoneans had to assimilate into British customs and culture to create a pro-British society. The British wanted to “civilize” the indigenous people by integrating the indigenous and settlers in such a way that cultivated British ideals and culture. The British also sent African chiefs’ children to England to learn the ways of the British and receive westernized education. The children would also “be taught the ‘actual practice of cultivating land, making bricks, building houses’, and trades such as blacksmithing”.¹⁷⁴ For Britain’s imperialist ventures to succeed, Sierra Leone had to be structured around Western institutions that would accumulate British profit for decades.

The Black Loyalists saw Sierra Leone as an opportunity for them to grow and have more freedom, and with this, they found supremacy over the indigenous peoples. The Black Loyalists were promised freedom and land to start their new lives in Sierra Leone. 1,196 Black Loyalists settled in Sierra Leone. They felt that continuing to be loyal to the British could help them curate affluent lives for themselves and their families. Their loyalties made them superior to the indigenous peoples of Sierra Leone. The British and American Black Loyalists supervised the indigenous peoples while the White servants watched over the Black servants.

However, the tables turned when the Black Loyalists realized they were not receiving everything they were promised. Around the time the Maroons began settling in Sierra Leone, the Black Loyalists began revolting against the British government.¹⁷⁵ The Maroons, who were seen as lower class than the loyalist, saw this as an opportunity to show their allegiance to the British by halting the Black Loyalist rebellion. The Black Loyalists wanted what they were promised,

¹⁷⁴ Chopra, “Leaving Nova Scotia,” 45.

¹⁷⁵ Cassandra Pybus, “From Epic Journeys of Freedom Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty,” *Callaloo* 29, no. 1 (2006): 114–130, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3805698>.

which was more rights, independence from the British government, and land rights. Since the Maroons showed their loyalty, it helped advance their status in the colony.¹⁷⁶ Despite the revolts and animosity between the Maroons and Black Loyalists, they began working together. Over time, the Maroons and the Black Loyalists united.

The other eventual settlers or recaptive people came from all over Africa and integrated with the Maroons and Black Loyalists to form the Krio people. The other settlers were the Temne, Mende, and Vai, people who were from neighboring countries around Sierra Leone. The Bambara and Wolof were from North Africa. The biggest group, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, were from modern Nigeria. Modern Zaire and Angola peoples had also been relocated to Sierra Leone and others from East Africa. Though there were people of all different cultures and languages, the government stayed British. The Krio were made up of different ethnicities but created a common language and culture.¹⁷⁷

Different classes of people emerged, and with those classes came different jobs in society. The Krio people mostly became import and export traders. Their lives were in alignment with the European middle class. Their children could attend college and get university degrees at Fourah Bay College. After receiving degrees, their children could enter professional occupations such as teachers, lawyers, and doctors. Though Christian missionaries implemented churches and religious practices, there were not just Christian places of worship but Muslim places of worship as well. Some communities had traditional Western doctors; others supported doctors using natural methods and remedies. There was not one religion or medical practice the people had to assimilate to. Orthodox Muslims and Christians in these communities disliked the lack of

¹⁷⁶ Chopra, "Leaving Nova Scotia," 45.

¹⁷⁷ Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 411-412.

cohesion and believed each other should assimilate to their religion and practices. However, besides the orthodox practicing people, everyone happily lived without completely assimilating.

Nevertheless, there were different classes and statuses even within the same communities of people, and these class differences between the rich and poor began creating animosity. The Krio people had an upper and a lower class even though they were of the same community.¹⁷⁸ The rich Krio people required the Krio people to follow a certain set of rules and lifestyle to be considered a Krio but much of these rules only the rich could follow. Some of the requirements of the Krio were to give money weekly to the church and were required to wear dresses and dress pants when attending church. The lower class struggled to meet these requirements.¹⁷⁹

Contentions grew between the poor and the rich in all of the communities. The same issues started appearing in the capital where the other recaptive Africans lived. They were getting paid very little for their trade jobs in fishing and farming. The poorest of the groups were living in poverty. These issues were magnified when Racial Rule came to be in Sierra Leone in 1887. This meant that the higher-class blacks who held superior job positions in the community were now shifted to the lower-class positions and jobs while the whites took over the superior government positions and had authority over the blacks. "In Sierra Leone, as throughout British West Africa, authority was to be grounded on a simple racial principle--- white gives orders, black obeys"¹⁸⁰. Trade unions were created in the 1880s, and by 1892 lower-class workers went on a labor strike.

¹⁷⁸ Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 412-413.

¹⁷⁹ Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 414.

¹⁸⁰ Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 414.

Now there wasn't just animosity between the rich and poor in Sierra Leone but of Black and white. The other black communities mocked the Krio people for adopting British and European norms, dress, and traditions. This further nourished the divide and hate between the different Black communities and the rich and poor classes.

The white rulers took advantage of the bitterness amongst the communities. In 1896, Sierra Leone became a Protectorate of Britain.¹⁸¹ According to Historian Christopher Fyfe, "The strategy of colonial rule was to keep the country divided"¹⁸². The white people gained a privileged status and controlled the government. The Krio's loyalty to Britain was meaningless and one-sided. The British controlled the churches and the banks and disallowed bank credit to the Krio. The government fashioned society into two separate social groups: the Protectorate and the Colony. Though the Protectorate people were foreigners not under the British, they were able to vote in the state and own land. Their children born in the state were under the British and could also vote. However, the Colony people could not vote, participate in the government, or own land.¹⁸³ The Protectorate was located in the hinterlands. Those who lived in the Protectorate had more freedoms and their society was fashioned similar to British society. There was a separation between Blacks and whites and Colony and Protectorate. "Eventually the way opened for a British 'transfer of power' to an African government (Hargreaves, 1979: 49-69). But no government could ever really represent these fragmented peoples in more than name. The divisive colonial legacy had ruled out the possibility of transfer to a government of national

¹⁸¹ Richard A. Corby, "Educating Africans for Inferiority under British Rule: Bo School in Sierra Leone," *Comparative Education Review* 34, no. 3 (1990): 315, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1187988>.

¹⁸² Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 416.

¹⁸³ Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 411-21.

unity.”¹⁸⁴ This prejudice and discrimination of people continued throughout the late 1800s and did not change until independence.¹⁸⁵

Sierra Leone under British rule created ethnic division while creating a government system that worked for Britain. This colonial history explains where the divisions and conflicts began and how patronage politics and the government have been fashioned to help the elites rather than the people. The history of division, discrimination, and government patronage directly influenced the civil war that broke out in the 1990s and today’s current instability.

c. Diamond Mining

Diamonds, one of Sierra Leone’s most valuable natural resources was found in 1930. “In 1934, the Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST) was granted a ninety-nine-year monopoly on the country’s diamonds”.¹⁸⁶ SLST was a subsidiary of Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST) which was British owned.¹⁸⁷ “Diamond exploitation was economical beneficial to CGOSL [the colonial government of Sierra Leone] as it accounted for 56% of the country’s export by 1936 and transformed state’s budget from a deficit to surplus up to World War II”.¹⁸⁸ By 1937, De Beers, a diamond mining and trading corporation, was allowed exclusive mining rights in the country¹⁸⁹. “In 1960, the company paid £1.139 million as taxation to the government and also made indirect contribution to the national economy by spending about £720,000 on salaries and

¹⁸⁴ Fyfe, “1787-1887-1987”, 417.

¹⁸⁵ Fyfe, “1787-1887-1987”, 414-417.

¹⁸⁶ Alethia H. Cook, and Marie Olson Lounsbury, “Resources and Conflict: Sierra Leone,” in *Conflict Dynamics: Civil Wars, Armed Actors, and Their Tactics* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2017), 31, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1g2kkx6.8>.

¹⁸⁷ Sigismund Ayodele Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in Sierra Leone 1930 to 2010: A Resource Curse?,” *GeoJournal* 78, no. 6 (2013): 1000, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24432639>.

¹⁸⁸ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1000.

¹⁸⁹ William R. Stanley, “Background to the Liberia and Sierra Leone Implosions,” *GeoJournal* 61, no. 1 (2004): 73, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41147915>.

wages and £670,000 on local purchases.”¹⁹⁰ Diamond revenue was helping support the country and was economically prosperous. Local and national levels were benefiting from the diamond industry. The mining communities had a large number of local employees, there were development in infrastructure, building of schools, scholarships offered to students, and social services to the communities including health care.¹⁹¹

Diamond mining became an issue for Sierra Leone when illicit mining began to dominate in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁹² Illicit mining activities did not get much attention until it began undermining national and local wealth and development programs.¹⁹³ The Lebanese and people from other West African countries began working in the illicit diamond business, and more and more foreigners were welcomed in by profit-seeking chiefs who benefited from the diamond trade.¹⁹⁴ Schemes and administrations were created to stop the illicit activities and help generate the wealth of local communities.¹⁹⁵ Unfortunately, chiefs and other officials embezzled these funds for electoral and political support.¹⁹⁶ These officials also held the diamond licenses and mining plots and were able to determine who could receive them and were often given to those who gave bribes.¹⁹⁷ The lack of regulation and protections on the mining industry ultimately worked against the country and people of Sierra Leone.

One of the main reasons Sierra Leone has such an issue with illicit diamond mining and smuggling is because of the type of diamonds and where they are found. Alluvial diamonds are

¹⁹⁰ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1000.

¹⁹¹ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹² Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹³ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹⁴ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹⁵ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹⁶ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

¹⁹⁷ Wilson, “Diamond Exploitation in,” 1001.

the common diamonds found in Sierra Leone. Alluvial diamonds are not mined but found in bodies of water such as rivers and oceans.¹⁹⁸ Since alluvial diamonds are found in bodies of water and don't have to be excavated, they are easily ravaged. For a country that hoards most of the revenue for the government and the wealthy, it makes sense why ordinary people are enticed and often have no other choice but to get into illegal activities such as illegal diamond mining, trade, and smuggling. Studies that have been conducted on the civil war and lootable wealth say that "alluvial diamonds have been identified as an especially strong risk factor in predicting civil war."¹⁹⁹

d. Independent Sierra Leone Politics and Conflicts

After Sierra Leone gained independence in 1961, the structure of Sierra Leone's society from British rule remained in place. Most laws, politics, and communities stayed the same. The Krio language, created from a mix of languages, remained the national language due to its widespread use. When the British transferred power to the people of Sierra Leone, the people of the Protectorate stayed in Sierra Leone and formed a new independent government. Upon independence in 1961, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) came to power and was represented by the Protectorate people.²⁰⁰

The first two Prime Ministers of Sierra Leone following independence were the Margai brothers under the SLPP. Sir Milton Margai reigned from 1961 until 1964, and his brother Sir

¹⁹⁸ "Alluvial Diamond Mining Fact Sheet," World Diamond Council, https://www.diamondfacts.org/pdfs/media/media_resources/fact_sheets/Alluvial_Mining_Background.pdf (accessed April 21, 2023).

¹⁹⁹Richard Snyder and Ravi Bhavnani, "Diamonds, Blood, and Taxes: A Revenue-Centered Framework for Explaining Political Order," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 4 (2005): 563-564, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30045131>.

²⁰⁰ "1961: Sierra Leone Wins Independence," *BBC News*, April 27, 1961. http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/27/newsid_2502000/2502411.stm (accessed April 21, 2023). ; Fyfe, "1787-1887-1987," 417.

Albert Margai from 1964 to 1967. Sierra Leone during this time “had a Westminster type of parliamentary system with an official opposition party, the All Peoples Congress (APC), led by Siaka Stevens.”²⁰¹

The SLPP’s main opposition party, the APC, was made up of lower-class working people and families.²⁰² They were from the North part of Sierra Leone, and none of the members had any education past secondary school.²⁰³ Unlike, the SLPP who came from upper-class families with “status in either traditional society or in the money economy, and frequently in both.”²⁰⁴ The SLPP typically had university degrees, a Western education, and many were in their 50s compared to the 30-year-old APC members.²⁰⁵

Other smaller political groups often formed around ethnicities. Ethnic identity was at the forefront of the formation of political parties in Sierra Leone, and each party didn’t have significant central ideas besides mutual ethnicities and patronage.²⁰⁶

Political disorder and controversy became commonplace once the second Prime Minister, Albert Margai, took over. His brother Milton became ill and passed away in 1964, and Albert took over for him shortly after.²⁰⁷ Albert favored the upper class, became more authoritarian, and wanted Sierra Leone to be a one-party system. The SLPP became increasingly corrupt and fueled all opposition. The SLPP majority of development funds went to the South of Sierra Leone,

²⁰¹ Amadu Sesay, “Conflict and Collaboration: Sierra Leone and Her West African Neighbours, 1961-1980,” *Africa Spectrum* 15, no. 2 (1980): 165, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40173994>.

²⁰² John R. Cartwright, “The 1962 Election,” in *Politics in Sierra Leone 1947-1967* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 131, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctt1h1hspj.13>.

²⁰³ Cartwright, “The 1962 Election,” 131.

²⁰⁴ Cartwright, “The 1962 Election,” 132.

²⁰⁵ Cartwright, “The 1962 Election,” 132, 148.

²⁰⁶ Jimmy D. Kandeh, “Politicization of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone,” *African Studies Review* 35, no. 1 (1992): 81–82, <https://doi.org/10.2307/524446>.

²⁰⁷ Kandeh, “Politicization of Ethnic Identities,” 93.

leaving out many Sierra Leoneans. Many farmers were poverty-stricken, and produce prices went up. With political patronage and ethnic superiorities, unemployment soared, and cost of living increased. Albert Margai increased his authority over the SLPP and decreased opposition representation especially that of the APC. Albert Margai's administration claimed the APC tried to overthrow the government in an attempted coup plot, but these allegations were unfounded. All of these actions created more support for the APC.²⁰⁸

Chaos ensued at the 1967 election with an attempted rigged election and two separate coups. The SLPP attempted to rig the March 17, 1967 election. The APC won the most seats; however, the SLPP controlled the radio and claimed the SLPP won. The military stepped in as fighting ensued over which party had won. Though it was evident Siaka Stevens and the APC had won the election. A Force Commander Brigadier, David Lansana, declared martial law and was part of a coup to keep Margai in power. However, other military leaders did not want Margai to stay in power and detained Lansana and Margai on March 23rd. Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Genda led the new coup against the original coup constructed by Lansana and Margai.

A military dictatorship ruled over Sierra Leone for a brief time before Siaka Stevens was reinstated as the leader of Sierra Leone. Genda and his military followers formed the National Reformation Council (NRC). Genda contended that this was not for a military dictatorship to take over but so a conference could be held between the parties to allow for a discussion to fairly elect the people and party to govern Sierra Leone. However, on March 28th Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Juxon-Smith arrived from Britain and had other plans and took over as chairman. This authoritarian military rule was short-lived and corrupt. They banned all other parties, detained

²⁰⁸ Christopher Allen, "Sierra Leone Politics since Independence," *African Affairs* 67, no. 269 (1968): 311–316, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/721000>.

other party members without legitimate charges, and censored the press. On April 17th, 1968, the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM) moved in also for a short time to create a republic. A National Interim Council was created to overthrow the NRC and ACRM and to place Siaka Stevens and the APC as Prime Minister. On April, 26th 1968, Siaka Stevens was reappointed as Prime Minister after the initial elections.²⁰⁹

Stevens fueled ethnic tensions and unfair immigration policies. After coming into office, Stevens immediately took a stand against many of Margai's policies. One major contention was the lax immigration laws in Sierra Leone. Stevens exclaimed that foreigners were allowed to come into the country and take away the rights of the indigenous people.²¹⁰ The administration claimed foreign immigration was to blame for the violence, especially in the diamond mining towns. Siaka retorted inclusivity and wholeness, saying that no one ethnicity or tribe ruled Sierra Leone. However, those in opposition to the administration were silenced, intimidated, and even executed. Those in opposition asserted that Stevens claimed to be helping the diamond mining areas such as Kono. Instead Stevens and his cronies were benefiting and profiting from the instability in the diamond mining regions. Stevens's administration deported and arrested thousands of immigrants even those who claimed to be there legally or were naturalized citizens. Many of these immigrants were of Fula ethnicity and were often the targets of violence and mass deportation.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Allen, "Sierra Leone Politics Since," 320-329. ; Alusine Jalloh, "The Siaka P. Stevens Years, 1968–85," in *Muslim Fula Business Elites and Politics in Sierra Leone*, NED-New edition., ed. Toyin Falola (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2018), 106-107, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvc16fbj.10>.

²¹⁰ Jalloh, "The Siaka P. Stevens," 108.

²¹¹ Jalloh, "The Siaka P. Stevens," 110-130.

Right after Sierra Leone's independence and long before Siaka Stevens was in office, he was already undermining the diamond industry. One of the ways President Stevens was elected and stayed in power was through his strategy of recruiting supporters by promising vulnerable people benefits. "Stevens garnered support for his party before the 1967 elections by promising illicit miners that he would not interfere with their activities if they helped him get elected."²¹² The diamond industry became central to the country's problems at a national level with the help of greedy politicians upon independence. Siaka Stevens, and a Lebanese diamond dealer, Mohammad Jamil, took over the Sierra Leone Selection Trust in 1961 when the country became independent.²¹³ According to Lansana Gberie, 60 percent of the country's export revenue came from diamonds²¹⁴. Siaka Stevens nationalized the Sierra Leone Selection Trust, which became the National Diamond Mining Company.²¹⁵ The government owned 51 percent. Stevens himself had 12 percent of that 51 percent, and the Sierra Leone Selection Trust had 49 percent share.²¹⁶ "While official channels were being weakened and improvised, Stevens surrounded himself with cronies who controlled both the government and the diamonds."²¹⁷ Stevens' cronyism and the

²¹² James Dobbins et al., "Sierra Leone," in *Overcoming Obstacles to Peace: Local Factors in Nation-Building* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), 157, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt3fgzrv.15>.

²¹³ Cook, "Resources and Conflict," 31.

²¹⁴ Cook, "Resources and Conflict," 31.

²¹⁵ Ian Smillie, "Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds, And Human Security," *Social Justice* 27, no. 4 (82) (2000): 24–31, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768032>.

²¹⁶ Cook, "Resources and Conflict," 31.

²¹⁷ Cook, "Resources and Conflict," 32.

bad economy that he helped weaken crippled the education system and the future generations' prosperity.²¹⁸

Sierra Leone became more corrupt with extreme repression and a weakened economy under Siaka Stevens. Stevens' administration became inflamed with "increasing government expenditures, tax evasion, profiteering, hoarding of essential commodities like rice, soaring imports, declining exports, foreign exchange shortages, the high cost of living, corruption, high unemployment, large foreign debts, and foreign exploitation and domination of the economy."²¹⁹ Unfortunately, in 1978 Sierra Leone became a one-party state under Stevens, which was initially feared under Margai.²²⁰ Stevens outlawed the SLPP, and all other opposition and any of their supporters were threatened.²²¹

Under Stevens' rule, adult and young people suffered from a weakened education system and widespread poverty. In the 19th century and the 20th century until shortly after independence in 1961, Sierra Leone had an exemplary higher education system and had a large population of educated people. Sierra Leone was nicknamed "the Athens of West Africa."²²² There was the rise of an educated Black elite, but in Siaka Stevens' administration, Sierra Leone's education system plummeted. Stevens cut education funds by half in a decade. This resulted in a largely

²¹⁸ Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press), 29-50. ; Richard Snyder and Ravi Bhavnani, "Diamonds, Blood, and Taxes: A Revenue-Centered Framework for Explaining Political Order," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 4 (2005): 563–597, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30045131>. ; Cook, "Resources and Conflict," 31-32.

²¹⁹ Jalloh, "The Siaka P. Stevens," 138.

²²⁰ "Siaka Stevens, Former Prime Minister and President of Sierra Leone, Dies," *The Washington Post*, May 31, 1988. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1988/05/31/siaka-stevens-former-prime-minister-and-president-of-sierra-leone-dies/93f7150d-288e-4422-8863-89460b350249/> (accessed April 22, 2023).

²²¹ "Siaka Stevens, Former Prime."

²²² Dobbins, "Sierra Leone," 155.

uneducated, unemployed youth. “In 1985, Sierra Leone had the lowest adult literacy rate out of the 160 countries listed in the [United Nations Development Programme] UNDP’s... Human Development Report... [at] 13.3 percent.”²²³ Since there were masses of unemployed and uneducated young people, they were easy targets for recruitment into rival parties and later child soldiers for war. ²²⁴

After much controversy surrounding the Siaka Stevens’ administration, at 80 years old, he decided to step down in 1985. Stevens stepped down for his military general, Joseph Momoh, to take power. In October, Joseph Momoh won the elections and was inaugurated in January 1986.²²⁵

Once President Momoh took office, Sierra Leone was already drowning in bankruptcy and corruption. The past president Siaka Stevens had already created deep-seated corruption and misuse of state funds for almost two decades by putting “into place an elaborate patronage system funded by large-scale looting of state revenue.”²²⁶ “Stevens mastered the art of siphoning public resources for his private use and hence was an able tactician of patrimonial politics.”²²⁷ Momoh inherited a state that was so far in despair that failure was eminent. Nevertheless, Momoh was another corrupt politician using state funds for personal use and for his fellow cronies. Momoh illegally used government funds to keep his regime alive at the expense of the

²²³ Dobbins, “Sierra Leone,” 155.

²²⁴ Fyfe, “1787-1887-1987,” 411-419.

²²⁵ Jalloh, “The Siaka P. Stevens,” 174. ; Alusine Jalloh, “The Joseph S. Momoh Presidency, 1985–92,” in *Muslim Fula Business Elites and Politics in Sierra Leone*, NED-New edition., ed. Toyin Falola (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2018), 177, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvc16fbj.11>.

²²⁶ Dobbins, “Sierra Leone,” 159.

²²⁷ Gerald H. Smith, “The Dichotomy of Politics and Corruption in a Neopatrimonial State: Evidence from Sierra Leone, 1968-1993,” *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 25, no. 1 (1997): 60, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1166251>.

impoverished people of Sierra Leone. However, patrimonial politics was so ingrained in the state at this point that there would have had to been a complete reconstruction of the corrupt government and institutions, which would have taken decades and would continue to create state failure and war before any type of resolutions were realized. Sierra Leonean institutions were ineffective, which allowed corruption and weakened the economy. Since independence, “Sierra Leone’s rulers weakened government bureaucracies and manipulated access to resources to undercut potential challengers.”²²⁸ Rulers believed that state institutions could be a hindrance to their power and that competitors could use state institutions against them.²²⁹

The impoverished citizens of Sierra Leone were often no longer receiving a salary anymore and had to survive by stealing and working in illicit activities. One of “the main economic challenges included smuggling, particularly diamonds, gold, produce, petrol, cattle, cigarettes, and rice.”²³⁰ However, the government also had its hand in smuggling in the country. “Unpaid civil servants looted government property and offices, while the capital experienced shortages of fuel, electricity, and water.”²³¹ Opposition to the APC, especially to Momoh’s administration, came easier than ever.

To combat smuggling issues in the country, Momoh commanded the military to assert its power over the mines. Unfortunately, these actions “resulted in an estimated 25,000 miners losing their livelihoods without any sustainable alternative”²³². Unemployment and inflation

²²⁸ William Reno, “Privatizing War in Sierra Leone,” *Current History* 96, no. 610 (1997): 227, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45317701>.

²²⁹ Reno, “Privatizing War in,” 227.

²³⁰ Jalloh, “The Joseph S. Momoh,” 194.

²³¹ Dobbins, “Sierra Leone,” 159.

²³² Dobbins, “Sierra Leone,” 157-158.

were at a high, and the mass majority of Sierra Leoneans who didn't benefit from patronage networks were fed up.

With the downfall of Joseph Momoh's regime and of APC power also came with people fleeing to support other parties. Many left the APC to join the original opposition SLPP, including Momoh's two Vice Presidents. Opposition grew to the point that seven new political parties were formed and registered by 1991.²³³

APC soon had a much stronger and more violent opposition group form, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which resulted in complete state failure. The RUF was a terrorist group filled with disgruntled Sierra Leoneans. One of the biggest advantages for the RUF was the ability for them to recruit child soldiers due to the masses of uneducated poor. "The RUF promised them food and money but also, in some cases, scholarships to study abroad"²³⁴. Of what later turned into much more than an uprising but a civil war had masses of children committing violent crimes. "Almost 7,000 of the combatants demobilized by the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) were child soldiers."²³⁵

Another contributing factor to conflict breaking out was the Liberian Civil War. Due to Liberia and Sierra Leone bordering one another, Liberia's civil war issues often trickled over the border. Liberian's civil war began a few years before Sierra Leone's civil war broke out. Charles Taylor and his NPFL had become friends with the RUF. Charles Taylor exchanged military power and influence for Sierra Leone's diamonds with the RUF.²³⁶ The RUF was mostly made up of Sierra Leonean dissidents led by a former Sierra Leone military leader, Foday Sankoh.

²³³ A. Zack-Williams, and Stephen Riley, "Sierra Leone: The Coup and Its Consequences," *Review of African Political Economy*, no. 56 (1993): 93, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006128>.

²³⁴ Dobbins, "Sierra Leone," 156.

²³⁵ Dobbins, "Sierra Leone," 156.

²³⁶ Dobbins, "Sierra Leone," 152-154.

Wealthy nations and creditors who gave millions in aid funds throughout the years since independence told Sierra Leone to cut government spending and deregulated commerce to try and generate the economy and return the loans borrowed.²³⁷ However, since the aid funds were used for personal government payrolls people were left without jobs. This included the military and armed forces. The military budget was cut severely. Many of the unpaid or significantly less paid military personnel began working with rebel factions and conspired with the RUF. The Sierra Leonean government was left without a military and had to hire South African armed forces instead. The lack of military personnel made it that much easier for rebels to overthrow the government. The police had the same issues and were “unskilled and underpaid”²³⁸. The Sierra Leone police were also severely under-equipped with weaponry. All of these factors contributed to the civil war.²³⁹

Instability continued to plague Sierra Leone after independence from Britain while corruption deepened, poverty worsened, and the economy plunged. The Sierra Leone government, no matter the political party, kept a patrimonial system that failed the people while racking up debt to other wealthier nations. This created massive unrest, abject poverty, and an unemployed society, breeding violence.

²³⁷ Reno, “Privatizing War in,” 227.

²³⁸ Dobbins, “Sierra Leone,” 159.

²³⁹ Reno, “Privatizing War in,” 227-228.

e. Sierra Leone Civil War

The Sierra Leone Civil War began on March 23, 1991.²⁴⁰ Similar to Liberia, the war broke out due to corruption, patrimonial politics, lack of regulated natural resources, and economic collapse. The RUF and its leader Foday Sankoh were inspired by Charles Taylor's apparent success in overthrowing Liberia in the First Liberian Civil War, though the First Liberian Civil War was still ongoing. Liberia's Charles Taylor supported and armed the RUF in an attempt to overthrow the Sierra Leone president, Joseph Momoh.²⁴¹ Fighting began between RUF rebels and the little military left in the Momoh administration. After the RUF raid, Momoh expanded the military to 14,000 from 3,000.²⁴² However, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank cut off the Sierra Leone government from loans until it began lessening its budget deficits.²⁴³ So Momoh's military though increased to 14,000, could not be financed.

The Sierra Leone Army (SLA) decided to take advantage of the RUF rebellion and also fight the Momoh administration and defeat the APC. On April 29, 1992, a 27 year old Military officer, Valentine Strasser, and other officers under the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) overthrew Joseph Momoh.²⁴⁴ Strasser asserted that they would only be in charge

²⁴⁰ "Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report," Sierra Leone Web, (2004), <http://www.sierra-leone.org/TRCDocuments.html>.

²⁴¹ Howard W. French, "Bandit Rebels Ravage Sierra Leone," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1995. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/africa/021795sierra-leone-rebels.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁴² Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228.

²⁴³ Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228.

²⁴⁴ "Blurry Picture of Sierra Leone," *The Washington Post*, October 29, 1994. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1994/10/29/blurry-picture-of-sierra-leone/dfa7ca2b-6925-4f5c-9ed8-4ef1e1ed371e/> (accessed April 21, 2023). ; Magbaily C. Fyle, "The Military and Civil Society in Sierra Leone: The 1992 Military Coup d'Etat," *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement* 19, no. 2 (1994): 133, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43658339>. ; Joseph A. Opala, "'Ecstatic Renovation!': Street Art Celebrating Sierra Leone's 1992 Revolution," *African Affairs* 93, no. 371 (1994): 195, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/723840>.

temporarily and planned on holding democratic elections once the country's situation was stable.²⁴⁵

Strasser struggled to fight off the RUF to no avail for four years. Though Foday Sankoh and the RUF claimed their rebellion was to defeat Momoh, they continued to inflict violence in Sierra Leone after Momoh was overthrown. By 1995, "battling the rebels consumed 75 percent of government spending."²⁴⁶ Two mines, the Sierra Rutile, a titanium oxide mine, and SIERMOCO, a bauxite mine owned by the Swiss, were both attacked by the RUF. These attacks shut down the mines and shut off Strasser's regime from one of its greatest points of revenue in the country. The mines "had accounted for 15 percent of GNP and in 1994 supplied 57 percent of the country's official export earnings."²⁴⁷ Government revenues in 1994 and 1995 were \$60 million, however, the RUF and other rebels had \$200 million from agriculture trade and diamond trade.²⁴⁸ In April 1995, Strasser had South Africa's Executive Outcomes (EO), a private military company, take out rebels in Freetown and the diamond mines. EO forced the rebels to leave the mines by August 1995. The EO was given access to diamonds in return for their help with the rebels. The rebels had left the important mining areas but did not leave the country.²⁴⁹

The RUF was still not defeated, and by 1996 it was clear that Strasser and the NPRC could not end the war, and another military captain decided to step in. In January 1996, Julius

²⁴⁵ French, "Bandit Rebels Ravage." ; David J. Francis, "Torturous Path to Peace: The Lomé Accord and Postwar Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone," *Security Dialogue* 31, no. 3 (2000): 358, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26296661>.

²⁴⁶ Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228.

²⁴⁷ Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228.

²⁴⁸ Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228.

²⁴⁹ Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: The Case of Executive Outcomes," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 36, no. 2 (1998): 307–331, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/161407>. ; Reno, "Privatizing War in," 228. ; French, "Bandit Rebels Ravage."

Maada Bio, a military captain promoted as the Deputy Chairman of Strasser's regime, overthrew Strasser. By March 1996, elections were held, and Ahmed Tejan Kabbah became president of Sierra Leone. Kabbah studied law in Britain and joined the United Nations Development Program in 1970 and worked for the United Nations for 22 years before becoming President of Sierra Leone by a national council.²⁵⁰ In November 1996, Kabbah and the RUF signed the Abidjan Peace Accord. Nevertheless, the RUF violated the agreement often. RUF's leader Sankoh was imprisoned for arms possession in Nigeria in 1997 but later released in 1999 for peace negotiations.²⁵¹ Anti-Sankoh faction members of RUF and the Sierra Leone Ambassador to Guinea were kidnapped by RUF members loyal to Sankoh. The kidnapping was an attempt to negotiate the release of Sankoh. Kabbah used the military and the Kamajor people for security.²⁵² By May 1997, Kabbah was overthrown by the regular army SLA because they felt they were treated inferior to the Kamajor people by Kabbah's regime. Major Johnny Paul Koromah took over Kabbah's regime. Koromah's solution to the conflict was to have the RUF join the country's military forces. In spite of Koromah taking over Kabbah's position, Kabbah obtained support from British executives, Nigerian forces, and ECOMOG. So in March 1998, Kabbah was reinstalled into power in Sierra Leone.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Agence France-Presse, "Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, Who Guided Sierra Leone to Peace, Dies at 82," *The New York Times*, March 14, 2014.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/14/world/africa/ahmad-tejan-kabbah-who-guided-sierra-leone-to-peace-dies-at-82.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁵¹ Douglas Farah, "Foday Sankoh Dies," *The Washington Post*, July 31, 2003.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2003/07/31/foday-sankoh-dies/6e4d2d41-d756-412e-92f3-f802f9b6a91a/> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁵² Danny Hoffman, "The Meaning of a Militia: Understanding the Civil Defence Forces of Sierra Leone," *African Affairs* 106, no. 425 (2007): 642, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4496486>.

²⁵³ William Reno, "No Peace for Sierra Leone," *Review of African Political Economy* 27, no. 84 (2000): 325, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006604>.

Leaders of the RUF were finally taken to trial for their acts of violence and human rights violations. Foday Sankoh was sentenced to death but instead was liberated from his sentence. However, 24 other affiliates were sentenced to death. Nonetheless, the government's use of trials and capital punishment increased the RUF's outrage. With the fear of more violence, the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) entered Sierra Leone in June 1998.²⁵⁴ In January 1999, Kabbah briefly had to become exiled again with the growing hostilities from the RUF. With the reality that the Nigerian military forces could not stay in Sierra Leone indefinitely and the continuation of Liberia supporting the RUF, the government knew they had to negotiate with the RUF.²⁵⁵

Negotiations were held in July 1999 and ended with the United Nations backed Lomé Agreement. The Lomé Agreement gave Sankoh the title of Vice President and commissioner of the diamond resources. Three other RUF members were also given cabinet positions.²⁵⁶ Unsurprisingly, the RUF continued to infringe on the agreement. The RUF continued to stay armed and disallowed United Nations peacekeeping members from entering parts of the RUF territory as was stated in the agreement. January 10th, 2000, the RUF confiscated ammunition, vehicles, and automatic weaponry from a Guinea troop working with the UN forces. Kenyan forces, also working with the UN, were also cornered by the RUF and forced to give up their weaponry. While Sankoh was on a travel ban instated from the United Nations Security Council, he traveled to South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire on February 14th, 2000. It was believed that

²⁵⁴ "United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone," Sierra Leone UNAMSIL, 2005, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unamsil/background.html>.

²⁵⁵ Reno, "No Peace for," 325-326.

²⁵⁶ Reno, "No Peace for," 326.

Sankoh traveled to sell diamonds. The RUF desisted the ceasefire agreement with the government.²⁵⁷

In April of 2000, the RUF held 500 UN peacekeepers hostage and took their weapons. Another kidnapping happened on May 1st when 222 Indian peacekeepers were kidnapped. The 500 peacekeepers were freed in June after negotiations took place with Liberian President Charles Taylor, who supports the RUF. However, the 222 Indian peacekeepers were still held, hostage. For about a month, the RUF allowed the UN to send food and supplies to the Indian hostages. However, after the first month, they no longer permitted food and supplies to be sent. The RUF felt like they were not given anything for the release of the 500 peacekeepers and wanted to bargain with the 222 peacekeepers still held hostage. The kidnapping intensified once Sankoh and 20 RUF commanders were arrested on May 18th, 2000, for all the human rights abuses they committed.²⁵⁸ On July 5th, the UN placed sanctions on diamond imports in an attempt to coerce the RUF to release the hostages and abide by the ceasefire.²⁵⁹ Finally, on July 16th The United Nations had 1,000 UN military troops rescue the last kidnapped.²⁶⁰

The war was not over, and on August 25th, 2000, 11 British soldiers and one Sierra Leonean officer were captured who were a part of a group of 200 British soldiers training the SLA to combat rebels. These rebels called themselves the West Side Boys. This ended in

²⁵⁷ Reno, "No Peace for," 326. ; Douglas Farah, "U.N. Rescues Hostages in Sierra Leone," *The Washington Post*, July 16, 2000.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/07/16/un-rescues-hostages-in-sierra-leone/e17f58e7-ec24-4222-8acc-bb78faddcee3/> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁵⁸ Norimitsu Onishi, "Neighbors Grab Fugitive Rebel in Sierra Leone," *The New York Times*, May 18, 2000. <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/05/18/world/neighbors-grab-fugitive-rebel-in-sierra-leone.html> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁵⁹ "Security Council Decides to Impose Prohibition on Imports of Rough Diamonds from Sierra Leone," United Nations, July 5, 2000, <https://press.un.org/en/2000/20000705.sc6886.doc.html>.

²⁶⁰ Farah, "U.N. Rescues Hostages." ; Reno, "No Peace for," 326.

bloodshed, and six of the 11 soldiers were rescued and the Sierra Leonean officer on September 11th, 2000. This proved that much more manpower was needed to end the Civil War and many rebel groups that inhabited Sierra Leone.²⁶¹

UN troops continued to fight and assist the Sierra Leone Army against rebels and slowly getting control of Sierra Leone. After years of conflict and bloodshed January 2002, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) “disarmed and demobilized more than 75,000 ex-fighters, including child soldiers.”²⁶² Once the country was stable enough, the UN helped Sierra Leone hold “free and fair presidential parliamentary elections.”²⁶³

The Sierra Leone Civil War ended on January 18, 2002, mostly credited to the help of the British. Foday Sankoh was indicted for war crimes by a United Nations special court. Top RUF and all rebel factions were tried on war crimes and human rights abuses in the special court. However, Sankoh died in prison in 2003 before his trial was over. Since it was confirmed that Charles Taylor directed the RUF in the conflict over Sierra Leone and was very much intertwined in the conflict, he was also indicted for war crimes in 2006 and later convicted in the Hague in 2012.²⁶⁴

It was determined that the RUF funded their soldiers with weapons from the diamond sales, notably from Liberia’s Charles Taylor’s purchases. The RUF was also known to use child soldiers and brutally torture citizens. The RUF committed heinous crimes against the general

²⁶¹ Douglas Farah, and T.R. Reid, “Hostages Rescued in Sierra Leone,” *The Washington Post*, September 11, 2000. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/09/11/hostages-rescued-in-sierra-leone/6f6df7a8-5fae-4862-8eea-0f2ebef503a9/> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁶² “United Nations Mission in.”

²⁶³ “United Nations Mission in.”

²⁶⁴ “Sierra Leone Profile - Timeline,” *BBC News*, April 5, 2018.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094419> (accessed April 21, 2023). ; “Special Court For Sierra Leone,” U.S. Department of State Archive, January 20, 2009, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/s/wci/sierraleone/index.htm>.

population. They had no vision for the country but to wreak havoc.²⁶⁵ The RUF were known to burn down villages, kidnap young boys and children to recruit as soldiers, kill innocent civilians, and even kill livestock for the fun of it.²⁶⁶ By 2000, the RUF's military activities and campaign of terror had resulted in about 2.5 million internally displaced persons and refugees; approximately 30,000-50,000 people had been killed, 10,000-20,000 people (some as young as 18 months) have had their legs, arms, and ears hacked off; and thousands of homes had been destroyed.²⁶⁷ “The war was characterized by widespread atrocities, including the abduction of children and systematic rape.”²⁶⁸ The economy collapsed once again due to corruption and poor governance. Sierra Leoneans faced starvation and oppression by the RUF. In the end, there were “70,000 casualties and 2.6 million displaced people.”²⁶⁹

The defective leadership of leaders leaving their citizens starving and moneyless propagated warlord type of behaviors and brutality. Unfortunately, innocent civilians had to suffer from unethical crooks’ embezzlement and deliberate failing of basic institutions, administrations, and infrastructure. After decades of failed leadership Sierra Leone inevitably became a failed state. Though the war effectively ended and the main culprits of the war were sentenced, Sierra Leone continues to face an upward battle and needs decades of successful implementation of infrastructure, intuitions, and policies. Instability is still very present and has decades of post-conflict procedures ahead of them for Sierra Leone to become significantly stable on all fronts.

²⁶⁵ French, “Bandit Rebels Ravage.”

²⁶⁶ French, “Bandit Rebels Ravage.”

²⁶⁷ Francis, “Torturous Path to Peace,” 358.

²⁶⁸ Mary Kaldor and James Vincent, “Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries Human Security,” United Nations Development Programme Evaluation Office, 2006, <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/SierraLeone.pdf>.

²⁶⁹ Kaldor, “Evaluation of UNDP Assistance.”

f. Aftermath of the Sierra Leone Civil War and Current Instability

Poverty, hunger, corruption, and unemployment persist in Sierra Leone. Though there have been post-conflict reforms, Sierra Leone is “one of the poorest countries in the world.”²⁷⁰ With the masses in poverty, hunger is a huge issue for many Sierra Leoneans. Sierra Leone is one of the lowest ranking on the Global Hunger Index.²⁷¹ “According to the World Food Programme (2022), about 73% of Sierra Leoneans are food-insecure”.²⁷² “As its civil war revealed, Sierra Leone’s postcolonial tenure has been plagued by financial mismanagement, embezzlement, nepotism, graft, and similar failings that set the stage for the decade-long armed conflict” and is ever-present today.²⁷³

Access to land and natural resources has been found to be a central element in “socioeconomic growth, food security, peace, and prosperity.”²⁷⁴ Yet, Sierra Leone’s land tenure laws are disoriented and inaccessible to the majority of the population besides the government and corporations access. Foreign land investors commonly buy large plots of land without regulation or laws preventing the destruction of land and harboring land from civilians.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ Mary Kaldor and James Vincent, “Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries Human Security,” United Nations Development Programme Evaluation Office, 2006, 4, <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/SierraLeone.pdf>.

²⁷¹ “Food Systems Transformation and Local Governance, Global Hunger Index 2022: Sierra Leone,” Global Hunger Index, 2023, <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/>.

²⁷² “The World Bank in Sierra Leone,” The World Bank, 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/sierraleone/overview>.

²⁷³ Tamba E. M’bayo, “Ebola, Poverty, Economic Inequity and Social Injustice in Sierra Leone,” *Journal of West African History* 4, no. 1 (2018): 109, <https://doi.org/10.14321/jwestafrihist.4.1.0099>.

²⁷⁴ Nicholas K. Tagliarino, “Towards Land Ownership Transparency in Sierra Leone: A Desk Review of Laws, Policies and Secondary Sources,” Transparency International, (2018): 7, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep20592>.

²⁷⁵ Tagliarino, “Towards Land Ownership Transparency,” 7.

Disease also greatly affects Sierra Leone from the lack of infrastructure and levels of poverty. An Ebola outbreak in 2014 created more disaster in a country already struggling with instability. Sierra Leone lacked even the most basic necessities for most of its people. They did not have access to clean water or toilets. This made it almost impossible for sanitation while Ebola was running rampant throughout the country. Most Sierra Leoneans lived in immense poverty and had little chance of fighting the Ebola virus.²⁷⁶

Mineral mining corruption continues and still robs the Sierra Leone economy's potential prosperity. Sierra Leone was once prosperous for the export of its precious minerals. However, it still has yet been able to recover or have transparency reforms that allow the industry to begin profiting Sierra Leone and not just the corrupt people of Sierra Leone.²⁷⁷

Unfortunately, Sierra Leone relies on foreign investment, and since the civil war, it has been a slow climb to win back financiers and investors in Sierra Leone's natural resources and industries. "Reliance on foreign multi-national companies in the mining sector had exposed the fragility of the economy as both capital and business people fled during the civil war."²⁷⁸ Since Sierra Leone continues to have issues with stability, there isn't a surplus of investors in these key revenue-making industries. Some of the impediments to foreign financing and investment "include a severe shortage of skilled workers and managers, rampant corruption, minimal infrastructure, cumbersome customs procedures, a weak judiciary, the absence of an effective

²⁷⁶ M'bayo, "Ebola, Poverty, Economic Inequity," 101-102. ; Tagliarino, "Towards Land Ownership Transparency," 7.

²⁷⁷ Hany Gamil Besada, "Sierra Leone: From Blood Minerals to Development Minerals?," in *Governance, Conflict, and Natural Resources in Africa: Understanding the Role of Foreign Investment Actors* (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021), 126–128, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1m0khjj.11>.

²⁷⁸ M'bayo, "Ebola, Poverty, Economic Inequity," 111.

land titles system, and an underdeveloped banking system, not to mention a nationwide lack of electricity and telecommunications infrastructure, and a poor national water supply.”²⁷⁹

The wealthy elite has abused the system and taken everything they can to stay in power and affluent, while the everyday people struggle to find employment and live in mass poverty.²⁸⁰ “Greater transparency and accountability by those in positions of power in public offices stimulates proper management of resources for the common good of a country’s citizenry”²⁸¹. Unfortunately, Sierra Leone has yet to reach a basic level of accountability and transparency. Corruption is still widespread in Sierra Leone despite programs put into place to deter corruption at all levels of society. There is not only limited transparency from the government but also from the corporations that inhabit and do business with Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone has a mass abundance of natural resources, diamonds, and minerals. Nonetheless, the state does not profit from these revenue streams as it should.²⁸²

g. Concluding Thoughts

Sierra Leone has been exploited by the rich and powerful for decades, contributing considerably to its instability. The exploitation and government corruption caused the Sierra Leone Civil War, and these causes prevail today. They have wrecked not only their infrastructure at every societal level but destroyed their economies. There is not enough transparency being upheld by the government or the corporations and multi-national enterprises that do business with them. As a result, the patronage system allows the rich and their cronies to get richer and the poor to sit in absolute poverty. Their natural resources, in diamonds and minerals, are being

²⁷⁹ Besada, “Sierra Leone: From Blood,” 129.

²⁸⁰ M’bayo, “Ebola, Poverty, Economic Inequity,” 111.

²⁸¹ M’bayo, “Ebola, Poverty, Economic Inequity,” 111-112.

²⁸² Besada, “Sierra Leone: From Blood,” 123-129.

extracted without serious regulations, reforms, or transparent channels enacted to ensure the industries are being protected for the country's people. The Sierra Leone government must commit to transparency to fight corruption and restore the desolate economy. If the government does not step up, Sierra Leone will continue to lose out on foreign investment and support and will likely incite conflict, violence, and unrest once again.

IV. CONCLUSION

a. Discussion

Instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone originated from colonialism and imperialism. It has been sustained through corruption, underdevelopment, exploitation, and lack of regulation of their natural resources and land tenure. The instability in these countries does not originate from one simple issue, nor will creating stability be a simple solution. There has been a long history of colonialism, imperialism, exploitation, and corruption in both countries. Though they are not currently experiencing civil wars, the many reasons conflicts have erupted in the past are still prevalent. Wealthy nations and elites have and continue to give aid funds and post-war reconstruction efforts to these two countries. However, they still struggle to create economic stability and basic infrastructure. Locals fear corruption at the local level of law enforcement to the national government. Land laws are ambiguous and often in favor of the government and corporations. Government and non-government organizations grapple with where to place aid funds and through what channels, while many organizations and local people try to stay afloat with basic necessities.

Liberia and Sierra Leone have suffered from similar problems that limit stability and economic prosperity. Colonial and imperialist ventures may have started rivalries between ethnicities and communities in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but dirty politicians, lack of regulation, and unclear land tenure laws continue to foster instability and distrust.

In the case of Liberia, bad governance and exploitation of its natural resources in timber, diamonds, rubber, and iron ore are to blame for much of its instability. These reasons led to Liberia's two brutal civil wars, and these issues remain present today. Politicians have relied on natural resource revenue for profit rather than for the country's people. Past imperialist ventures

continue through industries and multi-national enterprises, taking profits outside the country and to elites.

For Sierra Leone, unregulated diamond mining and government corruption ignited its civil war and persist today. British colonialism also created a culture of rivalry between ethnicities and classes. The government, mining corporations, and international actors exploit Sierra Leone's natural resources for foreign profit. The diamond mining industry continues to be considerably unregulated, which helps promote government corruption. Like Liberia, imperialism has been regenerated in the form of multi-national enterprise. Politicians support their international donors and cronies over the needs of the people of Sierra Leone. Exploitation is not the only factor to blame for a tanking economy but the bloody ten-year civil war that plagued the country and corrupt politicians' ever-evolving presence.

b. Recommendations for Policy

In this final section, I will provide some suggestions for how to avoid future instability in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Neocolonialism is integrated into Sierra Leone's and Liberia's governments, industrial, economic, and commercial dominions.²⁸³ The integration is so far ingrained that both countries depend on foreign revenue and support.²⁸⁴ Though policies have been enacted in the past decade to prevent corruption and exploitation of natural resources, they

²⁸³ Raphael Frankfurter et al., "Indirect Rule Redux: The Political Economy of Diamond Mining and Its Relation to the Ebola Outbreak in Kono District, Sierra Leone," *Review of African Political Economy* 45 (158): 522–540, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2018.1547188>. ; "Liberia: The 'Dictatorship of the Multinational Corporations,'" *Front Page Africa*, August 26, 2018. <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/opinion/liberia-the-dictatorship-of-the-multinational-corporations/> (accessed April 21,2023).

²⁸⁴ Martin Duffy, "Chaos and Corruption in West Africa: Lessons from Sierra Leone," *E-International Relations*, January 3, 2022, <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/01/03/chaos-and-corruption-in-west-africa-lessons-from-sierra-leone/>. ; "U.S. Foreign Assistance By Country - Liberia," *ForeignAssistance.gov*, March 3, 2023, <https://www.foreignassistance.gov/cd/liberia/current/obligations/1>.

still aren't adequately regulated.²⁸⁵ There needs to be a system of accountability formed in the government and industrial sectors.

Further regulation of both countries' natural resources cannot be made hastily or without the cooperation of local people. Locals distrust and often fear government and international intervention because of a history of disinformation, manipulation, and overstated expectations.²⁸⁶ Therefore, collaboration and communication are essential to successful regulation. At the same time, other aspects of revenue need to be evaluated, including their agricultural sectors.

The local people of these countries must be involved in reforms and reconstruction frameworks. Though this statement seems obvious, it is common that locals are not asked to be a part of reforms and financing plans; instead, these conversations are held only at the government level. Many people in these countries lack basic necessities and infrastructure, so governmental and international actors cannot address regulation reforms without addressing the basic needs of

²⁸⁵ Peter Yeung, "Coated in Hope and Penury: The Story of Sierra Leone's Artisan Miners," *Al Jazeera*, April 19, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/4/19/the-story-sierra-leone-artisan-miners> (accessed April 21, 2023). ; Varney Kamara, "In Liberia, a Gold Boom Leads to Unregulated Mining and Ailing Rivers," *Mongabay Environmental News*, December 19, 2022. <https://news.mongabay.com/2022/12/in-liberia-a-gold-boom-leads-to-unregulated-mining-and-ailing-rivers/> (accessed April 21, 2023).

²⁸⁶ Josephine Appiah-Nyamekye Sanny, "Fear of Political Violence Soars in Sierra Leone," *Afrobarometer*, February 24, 2020, https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ab_r7_dispatchno345_fear_of_political_violence_soars_in_sierraleone_2.pdf. ; "Global Corruption Barometer, Africa, Sierra Leone," Transparency International the Global Coalition Against Corruption, 2019, <https://www.transparency.org/en/gcb/africa/africa-2019/results/sle>. ; "Global Corruption Barometer, Africa, Liberia," Transparency International the Global Coalition Against Corruption, 2019), <https://www.transparency.org/en/gcb/africa/africa-2019/results/lbr>. ; "Press Releases: Treasury Sanctions Senior Liberian Government Officials for Public Corruption," U.S. Department of the Treasury, August 15, 2022, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy0921>. ; Michael D. Beevers, "Governing Natural Resources for Peace: Lessons from Liberia and Sierra Leone," *Global Governance* 21, no. 2 (2015): 238–239, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24526163>.

the people, including such things as clean water and electricity.²⁸⁷ In order to avoid generating more distrust in the communities, there needs to be communication and cooperation among locals, government officials, and all international actors and organizations.

It is crucial to formulate a comprehensive plan that creates regulation that generates revenue for the countries' people. Regulation of natural resources and reforming land tenure laws and rights could be vital in helping the countries produce revenue and local income.²⁸⁸ Helping local revenue and the countries' economies also help a gamete of problems revolving around poverty. Formulating secure funding channels is imperative for international actors and organizations to help provide funding for the continued post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia and Sierra Leone.²⁸⁹ It is also pertinent to fund the right sectors and institutions according to the needs of the people rather than which areas are of international interest. Regulation will also attract more finance to the people and industries in need because of the higher security around these investments.²⁹⁰ Regulation will create more economic wealth and stability for these countries if implemented right and with the people in mind and not at the hands of the elite.

Liberia and Sierra Leone's instability ironically stems from their wealth of natural resources. Their natural resources initially attracted foreigners for imperialist and colonialist

²⁸⁷ Yeung, "Coated in Hope and."; Kamara, "In Liberia, a Gold." ; "Access to Electricity (% of Population) - Liberia, Sierra Leone," The World Bank, 2020, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=LR-SL>.

²⁸⁸ Beever, "Governing Natural Resources for," 227–246. ; "Press Releases: Liberia: Put People Before Profit and Ensure Responsible Business Environment, UN Experts Urge," United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, November 11, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/11/liberia-put-people-profit-and-ensure-responsible-business-environment-un>.

²⁸⁹ Besada, "Sierra Leone: From Blood," 129–130. ; Lucy Page, and Rohini Pande, "Ending Global Poverty: Why Money Isn't Enough," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 32, no. 4 (2018): 177, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26513501>.

²⁹⁰ Goel, "The Role of NGOs," 769–793.

endeavors. The absence of regulation on their natural resources also helped create the occurrence of corrupt politicians and warlords. Corrupt politicians' bad policies and embezzlement of the countries' revenues produced conflicts, distrust, and failed economies. International interventions often create temporary fixes without getting to the real issues in the countries, repairing global revenue streams while not realizing the people's needs.²⁹¹ Any further international intervention must cooperate with local people and create security and regulation in all industries and government channels. Liberia and Sierra Leone can take back their industries for the good of the people and economy and create stability. Instability does not have to be synonymous with these two countries forever, and with fundamental reforms and regulations with the local people at the forefront, there can be systemic change.

Liberia and Sierra Leone need national economic stimulation in order to achieve stability. They both need to regulate MNEs and support domestic business'. This will give power to the people of the country and end dependency on MNE and international support. The governments will not need to rely on MNEs bribes and could propagate their economies without political patronage. Ending the dependency of foreign actors also will help decrease corruption in both of the states. Fixing the economy will create higher wages and raise unemployment, which are also factors that contribute to less corruption. Regulation of their natural resources will help Liberia and Sierra Leone take back their industries and fight against corruption. Regulation of natural resources could also help any ambiguousness surrounding the industry that causes conflicts such

²⁹¹ Sesay, "*Post-War Regimes and State.*" ; Claire Klobucista and Danielle Renwick, "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa," Council on Foreign Relations, October 5, 2021, <https://www.cfr.org/background/role-peacekeeping-africa>.

as mineral rights issues and who owns what. Land management of land tenure and law laws need to be reformed in favor of indigenous peoples and local farmers rather than government and corporations. There needs to be a national registry of land to unuddle the ambiguous land tenure. Land reform should start at regulating government and corporations land grab of indigenous peoples and farmers land. It is essential that local voices and solutions are at the forefront of this conversation rather than international governments and MNEs. Local Civil Society Organizations should be in charge of working with the people of these countries to find acceptable solutions. Local Civil Society Organizations can help with land tenure, secure funding channels, and make locals feel safe when distrusting the government. Since they are also local, they can address the prominent issues. Liberia and Sierra Leone can become economically independent and prosperous with real practical solutions. Regulation of natural resources and MNEs, reformation of institutions and land tenure, and stimulation of domestic enterprise can create healthy economies and stability and end the neocolonial dominance of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

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