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GLOBALIZATION, STATE FAILURE, AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: THE CASE OF SIERRA LEONE

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Abstract

The focus of this article is the interaction of negative globalization, state failure, and collective violence (and collapse). The relationship between these is analyzed in the context of long term, intermediate, and precipitating factors to propose a conceptual framework. Sierra Leone is utilized as a case study.

Introduction

Since the late 1970s, the powerful forces of accelerating globalization have arguably been transforming world politics. The Westphalian state system, as it operates in the poor developing nations, has experienced a reconstitution and transformation regarding the nature of sovereign statehood. For many of the poor developing states, for example, globalization and its reorganization of political space has been a traumatic experience especially for individuals, groups, and entire societies in terms of existential security. Just as globalization appears to have created upheaval in the politico-economic foundations of territorial sovereignty, so also has it diminished the power and stability of many poor states, thereby creating new kinds of loyalties, shattering the legitimacy of incumbent regimes, and eroding the political and economic strength of states that were already weak.

While the international system has often been based on cleavages (East/West, North/South, and so forth), it appears that globalization may be producing a more rigidly bifurcated international system by intensifying global integration and cooperation in developed countries on the one hand, and fragmentation and conflictual situation in poor countries, on the other (Mullard, 2004; Haass and Litan, 1998). In some poor developing countries, with poorly developed statehood and institutions, the socio-economic and political aspects of existence have been particularly jolted to the point of further state weakness, failure, and collective violence (collapse). The objective of this article is to analyze the nexus of issues of negative globalization, state failure, and collective violence.

It is argued that the relationship between state weakness, failure, and collapse can be better analyzed in the context of long-term, short-term, and precipitating factors or causes. To what extent is state collapse and its attendant collective violence related to globalization-induced mass unemployment, increased individual/group, and national insecurity? The effect of economic restructuring served as the catalyst, in countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, for violent uprisings targeted at incumbent regimes blamed for increasing immiseration. Using Sierra Leone as a case study, the analysis will: (1) examine the weaknesses of the Westphalian origins of modern African statehood as a long-term factor in Sierra Leone's state failure and collapse; (2) analyze the short-term causes of state failure; and (3) account for the specific globalization-related developments or impositions that triggered violent political attacks in Sierra Leone.

Conceptual Clarification: Globalization, State Failure, and Collective Violence

Economic globalization as a process, could be defined in one sense as the exercise of transnational hegemonic power. This manifestation, organization, and exercise of power is reflected in the decisions, actions, or "impositions" of International Financial Institutions [World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO)], as well as the advanced industrial nations. The consequence of this neoliberal international economic organization has had a significant negative impact on individuals, groups, or communities within the nations of the developing world. Structurally, the more peripheral the developing state is in relation to the core of global economic power, the more the negative consequences of globalization are felt. In other words, the consequences of globalization are more severe within the periphery of neoliberal capitalism. Integration within globalization networks and processes are stronger within the core of capitalism producing less inimical consequences than at the periphery of capitalism where the consequence is, at times, social disintegration and decay. Globalization has resulted in increasing marginalization of a number of developing countries, and civil strife in some has been the outcome. According to Jacques Gélinas (2003:22) globalization as a system is being superimposed on nation-states, such that in terms of its process:

> At the periphery, Third World economies are being subjected to drastic regimes in order to structurally adjust them to the global market, under the leadership of the IMF and the World Bank. As for the so-called emerging countries, who are struggling to free themselves from the problems of underdevelopment by embarking wholeheartedly on deregulation, they are periodically shaken by unpredictable and uncontrollable financial upheavals which submerge them anew in the murky waters of underdevelopment.

Very weak state structure in some developing societies coupled with drastic economic regimes resulted in civil strife.

State Failure

Globalization is associated with two trends related to collective violence: on the one hand are transnational social movements organized around common transnational interests threatened by globalization, and on the other, is collective violence (especially civil war) within some states linked to state failure triggered by political and economic impositions of globalization. State failure involves a process of rapid, basic transformation of the state-society relationship from one of a provider state to one of a more hands off relationship in terms of delivery of social services (education, health, subsidies, and so forth) and warfare. The consequence is individual, group, and societal increase in misery, and a simultaneous loss of authority, legitimacy, and cohesion within the state. A further consequence could be factionalization of the state into social bonds or cleavages (religion, language, class, clan, and so forth). As the state fails, its key institutions (civil service, police, military, and so forth) become increasingly corrupted and unprofessional (Rotberg, 2002; King and Zeng, 2001). Either gradually or speedily, the point is reached when the state is incapable of guaranteeing even a modicum of social welfare services. State failure can escalate into state collapse if the situation develops into open challenge by rebel forces against the incumbent regime. Multiple sovereignties may ensue when rebels control a segment of the territory. Multiple control of state territory means loss of monopoly over the use of coercion by the state. Such a situation in turn increases individual, group, and national insecurity. In state failure, the elements of statehood (people, territory, government, sovereignty) become more contested. In terms of people, a process of increased factionalization along historic, ethnic, or socio-economic identities for the purpose of enhancing security results (Esty, 1995). These centrifugal subnational forces result in loss of authority or legitimacy for the incumbent government to the point at which the state loses its internal sovereignty. The compounding problems of regime illegitimacy, loss of authority, mounting frustration and immiseration, coupled with some precipitant (e.g., unpopular decision by incumbent regime, withdrawal of foreign support, and so forth), can result in *collective violence*, especially civil war.

The outbreak of civil war is often preceded by protests, riots, or violent demonstrations. The external imposition of economic restructuring within poor nations aggravate class cleavages, widen inequalities which further polarize segments of the population and exacerbate historic and recent grievances (Adepoji, 1993). The result in some vulnerable states with weak structures or distinct structural weakness is violent eruptions that at times encompass the entire country. In other words, economic restructuring both within and outside the nation state in response to globalization requirements tend to produce civil strife in structurally vulnerable states.

Globalization: Overview

The age of intense globalization began in the 1980s with the campaign by transnational corporations to end the state's role to provide for the social welfare needs of many groups in society. The goal of transnationals is to end the welfare as well as the elimination of all legislation associated with the regulation of prices, wages, investments, and the environment. Consequently, in 1990 an extensive neoliberal offensive designed to reshape the world into one single global market was launched. A related objective is to reduce to a minimum the state's role in governing societies around the world.

Globalization is a system as well as a process that is characterized by the transformation of the international political economy from a regulated to a deregulated one in the spheres of trade, markets, finance, investments, and politics (Gélinas, 2003). The end result is the creation of one single global market encompassing health, education, money, work, and culture, among many others. In earlier systems before the 1980s, the world's political economy had been under the regulation of the nation state, but with globalization, the state is playing either a very secondary role, or no role at all in all aspects of the socio-economic, cultural, and political lives of subjects. To many Third World nations, globalization is viewed as an oppressive worldwide transnational process because of the harmful rules and regulations (conditionalities) that are imposed on them as part of the process of integrating them into this ongoing process of constructing one global economy (Wolf, 2001). The consequence for many has been increased misery in the areas of health, education, food, and even political security.

Globalization as a system, a discourse, a process, and even an ideology is made up of several fundamental characteristics, such as: (1) the undisputed dominance and infallibility of the market because it offers freedom of choice for the consumer, and is the arena for free trade, competition, investment, and production, among others; (2) the subordination of the state and public interests to private interests manifested in extensive privatization and the steady disappearance of the social welfare state; (3) intense competition among companies which results not only in mergers and conglomerates, but in corporate downsizing, massive lay-offs of ordinary workers, wage decreases, elimination of social benefits, and even pensions; (4) the commodification of everything from culture, education and information, to air, water, and other common goods, all subject to appropriation by the most efficient companies for better management and increased growth; and (5) the conviction that the planet's resources are infinite and inexhaustible, accordingly, the solution to the problems of unemployment, poverty, hunger, and the like, should be infinite growth. The consequence of these dogmas of neoliberal internationalism is gross inequality and increasing human insecurity in income, food, health, community, and the like.

Neoliberalism is the primary discourse of globalization. Within neoliberalism is the emphasis on a system of ideas, beliefs and values presented as the only credible economic and political system, and therefore the most normal. In addition to the vigorous dissemination and legitimization of neoliberalism, the international financial institutions send officials throughout the world to advise governments on the most efficient methods of implementing liberalism. As a system and a process, globalization is comprised of the market which is viewed as the arena for the perfect exercise of consumer freedom of choice, an arena for freedom to trade based on free competition in areas of production and investment, and even the sale of labor (Friedman, 1962). The market is even considered more democratic than political democracy itself, especially since it ensures the optimal distribution of income, wealth and resources which politics is incapable of doing.

Along with the supremacy of this supposed infallibility of the market is the emphasis on private property as a sacred and inviolable right which according to critics is the justification for hoarding and wealth concentration by individuals and institutions. It follows from this obsession with private property that there is a de-emphasis on public interest and a primacy of private interests. The free and unrestrained expression of private interests, it is argued, will aid in the realization and protection of public interests through a trickle down process.

Intense competition is also a characteristic or fundamental tenet of globalization manifested especially in free competition among companies, resulting in mergers, take-overs, massive lay-offs and wage decreases related to the need to produce more at a better cost. In all of this is fierce competition which takes the form of permanent economic warfare, commodification of culture, education, information, water, air, among other human activities and common goods. There is a strong belief in the neoliberal international ethos of infinite growth, achievable because it is the only way to combat the perennial problems of unemployment, poverty, and underdevelopment.

The most inimical effect of economic liberalization is no doubt its creation of gross inequalities within countries to the point of increasing human insecurity (Mullard, 2004). This effect is part of one of the paradoxes of globalization: the explosion of unprecedented wealth within the core of globalization (the advanced industrial countries) and growing inequalities and existential insecurity or immiseration at the periphery (the developing nations) of globalization. While it is a fact that there has always been inequalities between regions and within countries, it is nonetheless equally a fact that income disparities and other types of inequality have become worse with free global market competition, in which the poor nations do not stand a chance of making any profits. The frustration, anger, and hostility produced by globalization is linked to the fact that close to fifty developing countries are technically bankrupt and considered failed states; the GNP per capita of about 100 developing countries is lower than it was either in the 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s; and close to three billion people exist on less than $2 a day (World Bank, 2004; UNDP, 2004; UNICEF, 2004). The existential insecurity which results from both decremental and aspirational deprivation are associated with collective violence in countries that are the most structurally vulnerable.

In addition, readily available statistics abound about the worsening conditions in the world since the pervasive impact of globalization as an ideology. For example, about 1.3 billion of the abjectly poor in developing countries subsist on less than $1.00 a day. The widening levels of inequality and misery, no doubt, contribute to the rising levels of refugees which in 2000 stood at 25 million. Similarly, the number of economic refugees stands at over 125 million (Refugees International, 2005; UNHCR, 2005). The statistics on people in the world who cannot read or write, have no safe drinking water, no decent housing, or are dying from preventable disease is equally staggering. The culprit for the increase in such numbers is the imposition of the new ideology of globalization. The consequence for developing nations is increasing structural dependence manifested in financial and monetary dependence, indebtedness, unfair trade, food dependence, and technological dependence, among others. This structured dependence is a result of the Third World economy's dependent and subordinate incorporation into the dominant global political economy of globalization. While the structured dependence has been in existence since 1944 with the creation of Bretton Woods system, it has now been intensified, more firmly institutionalized to the extent of producing failed and collapsed states due to bankruptcy, and gross indebtedness. The ultimate consequence in some states is collective political violence or total anarchy.

The developing states that experience state weakness, failure, and even collapse, are part of the inclusion-exclusion paradox of globalization. While many are failed or bankrupt, they are nonetheless considered an integral part of the globalization process because of their importance as a reservoir of raw materials—fuels, metals, and agricultural produce. They are viewed as free trade zones where labor and human rights regulations are non-existent. They are a pool of cheap and at times highly qualified labor, thereby ensuring the huge profits of transnational corporations. Finally, they constitute a huge market for the excess products of the economic hegemons of the neoliberal order. On the other hand, they are excluded from the benefits of globalization because of the existential insecurity, misery and civil strife that pervade their societies as a result of globalization effects (Mullard, 2004). The economically powerful states have been able to benefit from globalization because of increased volumes in global trade and the profits that accrue from their ability to engage in more international sales and investment. The poor developing countries are disadvantaged because of their relationship of unequal exchange, or asymmetrical trade relations with the dominant nations.

Globalization, because of its harmful effects on many developing nations can be referred to as the New International Economic Order (NIEO) of the dominant nations, in reference to the call for a NIEO by the Third World nations in the mid 1970s. Those demands by the Third World failed miserably because the rich nations were not willing to give in to the radical demands of the poor nations. Some of the NIEO demands were so radical that implementing them would have resulted in a revamping of the international trading and financial system, perhaps resulting in a lowering of economic standards in the dominant nations. Instead of acceding to the many extreme demands of the developing nations, the rich countries continued instead to uphold and protect the quasi-state sovereignty of the developing state through foreign aid or arms transfers, and diplomatic recognition (Jackson, 1990). However, with the emergence of pervasive globalization, the quasi-statehood of many of these poor states was jolted to the point of further weakness, failure, and even collapse. Economic liberalization in particular has made it increasingly difficult for these states to control economic activities within and across their frontiers especially in terms of international trade and finance. Politically, the global demands for political liberalization (democratization) by the dominant nations and the international financial institutions have equally undermined the ability of local elite to control segments of their local society as indigenous populations take advantage of the call for multiparty elections and human rights observance to press for political reforms.

A Conceptual Framework of State Failure and Collective Violence

Longterm Historical Factors ?	Intermediate ? Factors	Weak/Failed State ?	Precipitating Factors ?	State Collapse
?	?		?	?
Westphalian Artificial State ? Undemocratic Colonial State	Limited Sovereignty Exogenous/Endogenous Effects ? Weak State Institutions		External impositions ? Inept Leadership Unexpected adverse Economic Development	Rebellion Civil Strife

The framework is comprised of the combined effects of long term historical, intermediate, and precipitating factors to produce state collapse or outright civil war. The intervening development between intermediate endogenous and exogenous factors and collapse is state weakness/failure characterized by a number of adverse and escalating developments such as the state’s inability to deliver health and education services, and subsidies on various items. The root causes of the undemocratic and artificial colonial state with its institutionalized authoritarianisms is reproduced and exacerbated in the post-colonial state in the form of neopatrimonial politics, corruption, political grievances, and external economic and political support. The sudden changed situation brought on by globalization and its political and economic impositions resulted in withdrawal of economic support for the quasi weak state resulting in failure and in some cases collapse where the change is too sudden and jolting, or where conflict spills over from a neighboring territory. The structural weakness of certain weak or failed states made them susceptible to collective violence.

A failed state is thus comprised of individuals, groups, and communities angered over the steady loss of what they once possessed during the era of immediate independence. They are entities frustrated and angry at the inability to realize their expectations (wants) largely because of economic dislocation. In particular, frustration, anger, and rebellion erupt when there is a sudden loss of capabilities, jobs, and existential security with the imposition of globalization dogmas with adverse effects.

Longterm Historical Factors of State Failure

The current state of African political economy is essentially the result of the combined effect of the legacy of precolonial structures, the impact of colonial rule, and the pressures of contemporary global political and economic expectations and the responses at each historical juncture of internal African social forces. These experiences have bequeathed to Africa different and varied realities that are unique when examined in the light of many globalizing processes. The past and current legacies of African states accordingly present challenges to traditional conceptions of international relations.

African states in general constitute a glaring exception to traditional conceptions of the state and the international system in international relations theory. For example, neorealist and neoliberal dichotomies of order/disorder, domestic/international, centralized/decentralized, or anarchy/hierarchy are largely inappropriate when applied to Africa's experiences and realities (Buzan, Jones, and Little, 1993). State-building as it applies to political and economic factors has, in many cases, been heavily influenced by external variables. Domestic developments in Africa are often the consequence of external imperatives. International relations theorists often ignore the historical evolution of the state system, particularly the construction and assimilation of developing states. African states played no key role in the construction of the international state system. Rather, they were incorporated into the global capitalist system as specialized producers within a global division of labor constructed according to the needs of European powers (Wallerstein, 1979). The peripheral incorporation into the global capitalist system has most often been sustained by the hegemony and interventionist proclivity of the IMF and the World Bank. In reality the current state system has always been and remains hierarchically ordered.

The Westphalian legal political order and its institutional expressions have a significant impact on the political-economic impositions/transitions in the African continent, and are manifested in structural-institutional constraints that severely restrict political elites' room for autonomous decision-making. State structures and institutional constraints coupled with continuous external impositions undermine freedom of, as well as elites' perceptions of, possibilities. Reduced state capacity and inept rule are often the result of the inherent incompatibilities between informal (precolonial) and formal institutional (colonial and postcolonial globalization) values that manifest themselves in patronage, corruption, tribute taking, coercive extraction, and external impositions.

Stated differently, the Westphalian state system that was imposed on Africa is artificial in character. This artificiality means that Africa has since independence lacked effective leaders and governments capable of establishing viable economies necessary to sustain independent states. The problem has always been lack of effective control over territory and efficient extraction and redistribution of resources necessary to maintain legitimacy or popular support. The phenomenon of state failure and/or collapse was not a reality until after three decades of independence because during the Cold War years the superpowers in their preoccupation with establishing client states propped up the very corrupt leaders of these African states (Herbst, 1996). In the process, the artificiality and fragility of African states were strengthened and prolonged. With the retrenchment of the superpowers in the 1990s, the tenuous stability escalated into state failure and violence, especially for countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, among others.

Within African states, perhaps more than any other group of states, territory and authority have become increasingly separated such that the state has very little authority, or capacity to perform functions normally expected from a state. According to James Caporaso (2000:2):

> While heavily influenced and penetrated by 'foreign" capital, which rears its head "internally" as part of the comprador domestic bourgeoisie, peripheral countries are presumed to be frustrated political, economic, and cultural communities struggling to realize their distinctive potential. This potential is defined in terms of an autonomous state, nationally unified, and in control of its own economic policy. Here the Westphalian model serves as an ideal from which dependent countries have departed in the face of global economic pressures.

Caporaso (2000:13) further adds that:

> A state that is penetrated from outside, that is subject to every push and pull of the global political economy, may not even be able to form its own goals. Such is the sorry state of affairs painted by dependency theory: A weak "domestic" economy, where the label scarcely applies; widespread presence of "external" actors such as MNCs and the comprador classes whose internal presence also cannot be denied; and fragmentation of the nominal domestic economy, which is not strongly linked by Leontieff input-output processes or connected via the movement of aggregate economic functions (savings, investment, production, consumption).

The African state has often been weak and even failing in the role of support for mercantilism and protection of national interests/security, in providing the rule of law for market operation, and in promoting free trade and managing domestic as well external politico-economic impositions. The often acquiescent role of the African state vis-à-vis globalization pressures could be viewed as a state working for the ruling class to expand capitalism at the expense of the working class. The fragility and outright weakness of the African state has been manifested in the collapse of some African countries whose states have been unable to protect their national survival, or enhance those economic activities conducive to the primary goal of building a strong state, as mercantilists argue (Gilpin, 1987). Economic globalization, has thus revealed the vulnerability of the African state.

Although the growing literature on Sierra Leone's civil conflict mainly underscores internal causes for full scale violence, some authors attempt a link between the colonial era and the post-independence environment. For example, Christopher Clapham states that, "While much criticism has been heaped on Sierra Leone's rulers. . . this is not a case where state collapse can easily be ascribed to a simple failure of leadership" (Clapham, 2003:8). He further observed that historical circumstances, such as colonialism is a contributing causal factor in Sierra Leon's deterioration from state weakness to full-scale civil war. Other authors (Reno, 1995; Cox, 1976) have emphasized the fact that Sierra Leone as an independent sovereign state is a mere replica of the British colonial administration in terms of elite accommodation as a strategy to consolidate power and ensure legitimacy. The consequence of this obsession with power consolidation through elite accommodation is a failure to develop both the infrastructure and human capital of the country. One strategy of the British colonial government in Sierra Leone was to enforce policies of fiscal austerity as a way of minimizing the cost of ruling the country. In the process, the ensuing expenditure costs enriched the British. This process of maximizing profits resulted in unrest within Sierra Leone during the colonial period. An example of this unrest was the 1898 Hut Tax War directed against the colonial administrators. Tax collection was a form of revenue collection used to accommodate the chiefs who were given a portion of the revenue collected. The only problem was that tax collection placed a great economic burden on the majority who were forced to pay the taxes.

Immediate or Short Term Factors

By the end of the 1970s in Sierra Leone, the euphoria and revolution of rising expectations that marked the beginning of the independence era had transformed into disenchantment for most and a general crisis of discontent and legitimacy. These outcomes are a result of misrule during the independence era. In other words, post-colonial Sierra Leone regimes, when confronted with the constraints of social heterogeneity, and neopartimonialism, have often resorted to combined use of coercion and neopatrimonialsim. Clientelism, nepotism, ethnicity, and corruption are all subsumed under neopatrimonialism, and are all constitutive elements of the post-colonial state in Africa. In Sierra Leone they constitute the proximate factors to state failure and collapse.

Under all regimes since independence, clientelism is a relationship of reciprocity between elite and political supporters. It is in existence in practically all political interactions, in the form of patron-client relationships and political patronage (Medard, 1982). Political patronage, the distribution of public jobs or specific favors by party politicians in exchange for electoral support, was a significant factor of state weakness, failure, and eventual full scale political violence in independent Sierra Leone.

In Sierra Leone, the politics of distribution gradually strengthened around the party, and not so much around a political-bureaucratic elite. During the Stevens' regime which lasted for 17 years, one could argue that patronage was first presidential, then partisan, and in the third place bureaucratic. However, the dependent and underdeveloped character of the Sierra Leone economy meant that Sierra Leoneans and their leaders would perenially have to rely on the industrialized countries for most of the material satisfactions to which they aspired. This dependent situation has profound implications for the maintenance of patronage relations. The patrimonial rewards that are necessary to cement the ties between political leaders and their supporters would have to be continuously available, failing which the regime would experience a serious loss of support.

The burden of patronage is no doubt also reflected in the persistent balance-of-payments problems and the austerity measures demanded by the IMF since 1979. The conditionalities of public expenditure cuts, tighter financial discipline, reduction of imbalances on external accounts, and devaluation of the currency have been a regular feature of the Sierra Leone political economy. Some of these conditionalities were considered by the Stevens regime as detrimental to patron-client relations and therefore to the survival of the regime. The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) that were negotiated prior to Stevens' retirement were therefore ignored by the regime. The conditions related to exchange rates, low returns to agricultural producers, and subsidies for specific commodities (including rice, and petroleum products, among others) were unacceptable to the regime. The attitude of the Stevens regime towards the constraints and potential political upheaval inherent in IMF austerity measures prompted this statement from President Stevens:

> These are dangerous areas. What they (the IMF) want us is to do is raise price of these essential items at one fell swoop, now that people are experiencing difficulties from rising prices. If you do that now, you will be in difficulties. They are asking us to commit political suicide (*West Africa*, 1984:2781).

The fact that Sierra Leone has been experiencing economic dislocations since the independence era of the 1960s has, in large part, to do with the fact that political independence in 1961 came, as in most of Africa, with the inheritance of a highly unintegrated society, a very weak and limited industrial base, economic imbalance, rural neglect, weak state structures, an unproductive power elite, foreign domination, and extreme vulnerability to the dependence on the international system. Moreover, the post-colonial governments and power elite of Sierra Leone further aggravated and perpetuated existing conditions of poverty, marginalization of civil society, inequalities, dependence, and overall underdevelopment. Since the early 1970s, these conditions have worsened with the recurring adverse conditions in the world economy, the patrimonial and power-consolidation expenditures of the Siaka Stevens regime followed by President Momoh, and the failure of various development policies to address fundamental dimensions of the country's underdevelopment (Conteh-Morgan and Dixon-Fyle, 1999). The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the rapid decline in the efficacy of political and economic relations in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone's problems revolved around political instability and repression during the All Peoples Congress (APC) regime, blatant misuse of political power for individual enrichment, gradual decline of total output, neglect of agriculture, increase in unemployment, deterioration and neglect of education, increase in food imports, mounting foreign debts, increasing inability to finance recurrent expenditure, and neglect of infrastructural development.

The Impact of External Impositions

The intermediate (short-term) causes of state collapse in Sierra Leone lay in the drastic cuts in social services and state employment as key components in consolidating armed opposition. The World Bank negotiations recommended reducing state employment by one third. The country was already reeling under the severe effects of de facto layoffs related to the near collapse of state services. This situation resulted in more frequent protests by students and teachers in particular. As the economic decline in agricultural and diamond revenues continued, the World Bank/IMF policies adopted by the Momoh regime after retirement of Siaka Stevens tended to make conditions not only harsh but increasingly miserable. President Momoh had to implement austerity measures that had adverse impacts upon the people, measures that included an 84.6% reduction in spending for subsidies, the primary one being rice. In addition, virtually all expenditures on socially oriented subsidies were cut. Such austerity measures in 1989/1990 caused petrol to rise 300% and the price of rice (the staple diet of the country) to rise by 180% (Magbaily-Fyle, 1993; Reno, 1995). Moreover, soldiers were dissatisfied because often government officials would embezzle monies that were to be used for soldiers' salaries. This deprived many soldiers of their monthly wages.

John Weeks (1993), in his 1993 analysis of the Sierra Leone situation argued that external shocks and impositions experienced by the Sierra Leone economy were the primary causes of the country's balance of payments problems and eventual economic collapse. The variability of the world market and the 1970s oil shocks had severe adverse effects, coupled with, according to Weeks (1993), the misdiagnosis by the World Bank and IMF of Sierra Leone's economic problems. Since adverse external developments were beyond Sierra Leone's control, IMF austerity measures tended to aggravate rather than alleviate the country's economic problems.

Human security in the areas of health, education, and employment were further adversely affected by IMF structural adjustment measures. With austerity measures came drastic cuts in expenditure on education, health, and the delivery of other services. The combined effect of oil shocks which produced adverse terms of trade, and IMF adjustment policies, reduced the number of hospitals from 90 in the 1970s to 58 by the 1980s. In 1991, Sierra Leone was labeled one of the countries with the worst quality of life. The death rate was 24 per 1000, infant mortality rate was 160 per 1000 live births, and life expectancy was only 40 years for both sexes (UNDP, 1994; Magbaily-Fyle, 1993). With the adoption of austerity measures people could not afford to pay for drugs and hospital care. Prior to the implementation of cost recovery programs, medical services and drugs were provided almost free of charge.

In 1987, the expenditure allocation to education was reduced by 50%. Without educational subsidies it became impossible for many to attend school. Teachers began leaving the profession at an unprecedented rate due to low salaries as well as layoffs, or non-payment of salaries. Thus, the number of children and youth not engaged in active learning swelled all over the country. In the urban areas, non-attendance and loss of jobs were strongly related to violent protests. Some (Mpoyo, 2002; *ILO Magazine*, 2000) have argued that the loss of employment opportunities in urban areas was strongly linked to the civil war between 1991 and 2000. According to Fouke Mpoyo (2002), many Sierra Leoneans believe that unemployment caused many hardships that later produced rebellion. For example, a chief in Koinadugu district, interviewed by Fouke Mpoyo (2002) commented that “There was no food and massive unemployment, even the educated had no jobs. Their best job was to go into armed robbery. They were easily conscripted into armed movements.” Similarly, The *International Labour Organization (ILO) Magazine* (2000) in its February 2000 issue noted that poverty and unemployment were important reasons for the eruption of civil war. It further notes that with 70% unemployed and closure of the majority of industries, in addition to thousands of workers laid off, it is not difficult to understand why the civil war occurred.

Precipitating Factors of Sierra Leone State Collapse

The insistence by the IMF and World Bank in particular on policies of fiscal austerity and the manner of their implementation served as one of the catalysts (precipitating factors) for the escalation of the Sierra Leone political economy from state failure to state collapse, or eruption into full scale civil war. The IMF not only withdrew its assistance from Sierra Leone in 1987, but it also called for “regularization” in the diamond industry as a key condition for the Sierra Leone government’s future access to IMF and World Bank loans, as well as bilateral aid for budget support. Regularization which involved reasserting state control over economic transfer activities resulted in the Sierra Leone government’s attempt to designate a single private investor to manage the country’s diamond mining industry. A single private company, it was argued, would be more effective in preventing smuggling and monitoring other clandestine mining activities. Upon the request of an interested foreign investor, President Momoh authorized the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) to remove an estimated 30,000 illicit miners and traders from mining areas (Foreign Systems Research Center, 1998). In "Operation Clean Sweep" and "Operation Clear All" in 1990 the first catalyst was set in motion for the civil conflict in Sierra Leone.

The two operations, in particular, disrupted the clandestine diamond economy and laid the foundation for civil war because the young miners who were displaced from the clandestine economy now suffered severe economic deprivation which galvanized some of them into action against the government and the SLA. In the perception of many of these miners, the government's decision to clear the mines was a calculated effort to deny ordinary people access to resources for the benefit of outsiders and the power elite which resided in the capital. Some of the young miners later collaborated with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in its war against the Sierra Leone government. In particular, the diamond mining industry represents the country's main source of economic activity. Thus, the frustration and anger engendered by the removal of young miners from this economic activity, contributed to armed rebellion especially when coupled with the second precipitant in Sierra Leone's descent into full scale civil war: the spillover of the Liberian conflict into the country.

The spillover of the Liberian conflict into Sierra Leone in 1991 lay in the primary motive for Liberian Warlord, Charles Taylor's incursion into the country, which was to punish the Momoh regime for its support of the 1990 ECOMOG (ECOWAS ceasefire Monitoring Group) intervention in Liberia that prevented the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) from taking Monrovia. An equally important factor related to the incursion became Taylor's need to obtain diamond resources to finance his insurgency and pay off his supporters against Liberian President, Samuel Doe (Magyar and Conteh-Morgan, 1998; Pham, 2005). The mining of Sierra Leone's diamonds is more susceptible to violent conflict because it is based on the alluvial method as opposed to kimberlite. Alluvial diamonds do not require heavy machinery to mine because they are closer to the surface. The result is often a huge number of illicit miners from both within and without, including Taylor's boys during the war, and his proxies, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which challenged the Momoh regime.

Related to the disruptions in the diamond economy and spillover of Liberia's conflict is the further strategic marginalization of states like Liberia and Sierra Leone with the end of the Cold War and the pervasive effect of globalization. By the late 1980s, and with the apparent end of the Cold War and the gradual pervasive effect of globalization, the relative insignificance of conflict in marginal parts of Africa, such as Sierra Leone, was a crucial component of the escalation from state failure to the success of the RUF in defying central state authority in Sierra Leone. Specifically, the "new wars" or eruption of old conflicts was due to the unwillingness of powerful states to intervene against insurgents decision to mobilize outside resources and wage war against failed states. In the wake of the

US' loss of 26 soldiers and expenditure of $36 billion in Somalia in 1991-93, perceived American domestic tolerance for intervention in "failing states" was quite low. European states showed a similar reluctance to intervene in conflicts in the Balkans. This stood in contrast to the greater willingness shown by superpowers to intervene on behalf of client regimes during the Cold War, or of middle powers (France, Israel, East Germany) to seek diplomatic or commercial influence through aid to friendly regimes. Most Cold War era insurgencies carefully presented themselves as reformist alternatives to corrupt regimes, partly as a means of obtaining an external patron. This became more difficult in the absence of superpower competition. Thus, the relative balance of outside support for regimes and insurgents has shifted away from foreign aid to regimes that might have suffered similar warlord insurgencies prior to the 1990s, if not for this outside support.

Finally, the deployment of soldiers in the diamond areas created an opportunity for armed but unpaid soldiers to directly exploit diamond resources for their own benefit. The soldiers deprived of this access to diamonds struck in 1992 in a coup d'etat against the Momoh regime; because in the midst of a scarcity of state revenues, soldiers were exposed to the dangers of war with the RUF but were not provided their regular payment. The coup d'etat was viewed by many as a backlash of soldiers against the Momoh regime and its corrupt patron-rich senior officers and civilians basking in the safety of the capital, Freetown.

Conclusion

Sierra Leone's escalation from state weakness, state failure, to outright civil war (state collapse), is a succession of stages, and could be attributed to both remote, intermediate, and immediate (precipitating) factors related to external economic impositions and the spillover of the Liberian conflict into the country. The interacting effects between the artificiality of the colonial state and the post-colonial state sowed the seeds of societal decay. By the mid 1980s things had gone too far to arrest the downward slide into anarchy. The undemocratic nature of the colonial administration with its use of elite accommodation constitute the longterm causes of state failure, the consequences of misrule during the independence era constitute the short term factors, and the spillover of the Liberian conflict, coupled with the severe suffering caused by IMF and World Bank economic policies, as well as the further marginalization of poor developing countries constitute the precipitating factors. The RUF was able to recruit from disaffected segments of the population and launch an attack from the Eastern part of the country. Soldiers of the Sierra Leone Army joined in the looting and banditry, with some even defecting to the rebels because the government was no longer able to deliver salaries and other services. In the end, the country was polarized into rebel factions, civil defence forces protecting the various regions, and an unreliable government army unable to protect the country and citizens from attack by elements of the RUF. The government in short was politically and economically paralyzed, illegitimate, and lacking in all authority. The outcome was the division of the country into multiple sovereignties between the RUF, the army, and the Civil Defence Forces attempting to protect citizens in their various regions.

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