

Politics of Decline: Siaka Steven's Patron-Client Government and how it Failed the Sierra Leonean State Structure

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of independence, Sierra Leone was one of the countries that suffered severe political disorder, ethnic fragmentation and civil war. Institutional corruption and income redistribution within members of the bureaucracy became the new normal in the absence of the colonial administration resulting in state weakness, failure and eventual collapse. Several academics (Rodney 1972 and Young 1997) attribute institutional weakness of the postcolonial state to the colonial powers while others like Collier, Hoeffler and Rohner (2009) point to the diamond curse as the driving force behind the failure of the Sierra Leonean state. Nonetheless, there are authors like Richards (1996), who maintain that the Sierra Leone war was the result of excluded intellectuals and economic refugees who resided in Liberia. This essay maintains that the patron-client system of administering presidential authority adopted by Siaka Stevens was oppressive and ill-equipped to handle the challenges of the newly independent state resulting in state failure and eventual civil war.

Clientelist politics is a longstanding and increasingly complex corrupt system of administration, that involves an uneven exchange between the patron and the client. The success of patron-client relationships is dependent on the client's agreement to provide political support to the patron in exchange for patronage. In Stevens' Sierra Leone, patronage took the form of the recruitment of clients into the APC. Solomon Berewa argues that the APC unlike the SLPP did not depend on support of the chiefs. Rather Stevens and his APC cronies "used ruse and political chicanery and extravagant promises to garner the support of especially the unemployed youth around and the illiterate traders" (Berewa 2011, p. 55). Begging the question, why did clientelism emerge and become the form of government in Sierra Leone? The body of Literature on clientelism suggests that patron-client relations thrive in regions where there is abundance of raw material and absence of the rule of law and accountability. Although the civil war in Sierra Leone ended over a decade ago, it is imperative to comprehend its fundamental motivations.

Political Background of Sierra Leone

At independence, political institutions, infrastructural and economic management, internal defense strategies, and all other functions of the state were handed down to the elite nationalist leaders. The transfer of power entailed little conflict between the African elite, the grassroots indigenes and the expatriate officials; relative to the nationalist demands and unrests that had been ignited in other parts of the continent.¹ The exiting imperialists negotiated and transferred some² amount of executive power to the African elite in an attempt to ensure continuity. A cleavage was, however, noticeable after 1961, with the repeated coups that threatened to tear the country apart. Sierra Leone suffered numerous political upheavals from the time it attained autonomous status from the British in 1961 to Siaka Stevens' reign as Prime minister and later President.

The Second World War (WWII) ended with the British making constitutional amendments for a gradual transfer of political power to the urban elite. A vast number of reasons motivated the move toward the preparation for self-rule. One possible reason was the rise of nationalism from the grassroots in the 1940s, when Chief Caulker stated: "We want the government to give us a free hand in our own affairs...if we are not fit for self-government, let the government give us a trial...There is something going on in the protectorate which is not known down here and probably may not [be] known even to the secretary for Protectorate Affairs...I would ask that Your Excellency should make it known to His Majesty's representatives in the person of District

¹ Some African countries fought violently for independent status, South Africa under the African National Congress (ANC) and Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union.

² Complete power was not handed down to the African leaders, as Great Britain remained a salient figure in Sierra Leone's politics. Sierra Leone only became a republic in 1978, until then, it still functioned with a British representative, Governor General within the country.

Commissioners to give due respect to paramount chiefs” (Kilson 1966).³ Another reason was perhaps the absence of representative government for the protectorate groups in the 1924 constitution. This constitution gave greater representation to the Krio descendants, and the indigenous people were not accepting of this constitution, and as such, demanded through Milton Margai that the imperial masters draw up a new constitution, which will give them increased representation.

Sierra Leone, which has been the foremost of all West African Colonies, is still saddled with an archaic constitution with official majority. The reason for this backwardness is evidently due to the fact that our forefathers, I regret very much to say, had given shelter to a handful of foreigners (i.e., Creoles) who have no will to cooperate with us and imagine themselves to be our superiors because they are aping the Western mode of living, and have never breathed the true spirit of independence...if they would have their way, they will prefer the old constitution to continue indefinitely because they have five men to represent them...We mean to push ahead and we are in no way prepared to allow a handful of foreigners to impede our progress. (Seventh Assembly Proceedings)

These demands amongst others,⁴ were arguably the first stages of the birth of a sense of nationalism among Sierra Leoneans. The British eventually started making preparations to revisit the 1924 constitution, which was finally completed and implemented in November 1951. This constitution was centered on the principles of representative government; and the formation of political parties (Fyle 2006). Krio descendants, however, felt slighted by the 1951 constitutional results, which afforded more seats in the Legislative Council to the protectorate people, and consequently, formed the National Council of Sierra Leone (NCSL), aimed at “pursuing a partisan stance against the new constitution (Fyle 2006). Fyle (2006) further states that it was the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP), formed by Lamina Sankoh that won the November 1951 elections, and formed a new government, headed by Dr. Milton Margai as Chief Minister.⁵

The first indication of future political discrepancies came in 1959 when all political parties in Sierra Leone convened in the Lancaster House in London to deliberate the constitutional agreement. At this meeting, Stevens “denounced the independence agreement” under the pretext that the “Margai government was still British controlled” (Gberie 2005),⁶ rather choosing to return to Freetown and set up the Elections-Before Independence Movement (EBIM) which was later transformed to the All People’s Congress (APC) party. Stevens’ party won about a third of the seats and emerged as the main opposition party in Sierra Leone.⁷

Following Milton Margai’s death in 1964, his brother Albert Margai assumed the position of Prime Minister and attempted to push for a unitary system of government and the implementation of a republican bill. Both amendments suffered major opposition,⁸ and failed to take effect. Following the attempts and failure at institutionalizing the unitary state, Margai suffered major political pressure, which resulted in a slight win for the APC during the March 1967 general elections. Stevens was, however, prevented from exercising his duties as the new Prime Minister by Brigadier David Lansana who issued a warrant for his arrest, placed the Governor General (Lightfoot Boston) under house arrest, and “declared martial law” (Fyle 2006). Lansana’s reasons for initiating the arrests were “to protect the constitution and maintain law and order (Harris 2014). Within 48 hours, a second coup resulted in the removal and replacement of Lansana by Andrew Juxon-Smith. Juxon-Smith was placed in power by the military to lead a military government (under the National Reformation Council (NRC)). Juxon-Smith’s government upon assuming power, suspended the constitution along with all political parties and activities. Meanwhile, during the one-year reign of the NRC, Stevens, Colonel John Bangura (a

³ Legislative Council Debates, No. 1 of Session 1943-44, 76, in Kilson (1966, 147-148). Kilson details the constitutional process that followed the end of the WWII, leading up to the actual decolonization process.

⁴ Other factors included: returning soldiers who fought alongside their imperial masters in the WWII, questioned the reasons for fighting for Europe’s freedom, when they did not have freedom back home. Another factor was prescribed in the 3rd chapter of the Atlantic Charter Declaration of 1941, “respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live, and they will wish to see sovereign rights of self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.”

⁵ Milton Margai was Chief Minister from 1951-1953, Premier from 1953-1958, and Prime Minister from 1958-1964.

⁶ Stevens was concerned about Margai not being radical enough to remove Sierra Leone from under British control. He had this to say about Milton Margai, “he lacked the vital spark with which to light, and keep alight, the people’s torch of freedom as well as the militancy of those African nationalist leaders who succeeded in bulldozing their way to victory through the most formidable of colonialist barriers because they had first secured the full backing of the masses.” (Stevens 1984, 174-175). In later pages (195-202), Stevens (1984) explains that he also had concerns over the defense pact that had already been agreed upon with the British without further deliberations at home.

⁷ In an alliance with the Sierra Leone Progressive Independence Movement (SLPIM), the APC won 22 seats, where it had initially held none (Harris 2014, 48).

⁸ Stevens vehemently opposed the one-party system of government in 1966 but transformed Sierra Leone into a unitary state in 1977. The republican bill will afford the more executive powers to the prime minister than the judiciary.

Sierra Leonean army colonel who had been retired from the military by Albert Margai) along with other prominent members of the APC remained in exile in Guinea.⁹

A year after the institution of the military government, a third coup called “the Sergeant’s Revolt” (Harris 2014) of April 17, 1968, resulted in the overthrow of the NRC. Officer Patrick Conteh and Morlai Kamara formed the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement, and a National Interim Council to oversee the transition of political power to civilian rule. Col. Bangura was recalled from exile to head the government, while Justice Banja Tejan-Sie was named Governor-General. On April 26, 1968, Stevens was invited back to Sierra Leone and officially reinstated as Prime Minister by Tejan-Sie.

Frustrated with the corrupt manner in which the state was functioning, Colonel Bangura attempted to take over political control of the state, on March 23, 1971 in a military coup. He successfully seized control of the government for a few hours, but was overthrown by Stevens’ loyalists in the army, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Sam King. Following this coup, Stevens began treating threats to his rule by over-compensating military leaders, yet barely providing the army with a constant flow of weapons, “the army became widely known as ‘One bullet’ owing to its lack of equipment” (Harris 2014). Consequently, power of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) became extremely weakened and organizing coups d’état was rendered impossible. In times of civil uprisings, Stevens turned to a paramilitary brigade – Special Security Division (SSD)¹⁰ he had helped create in 1973 (Fyle 2006). Due to persistent political opposition to his leadership, Stevens eventually transformed Sierra Leone into a unitary state in 1978.

The military along with the structure of the state had been extremely weakened within a few years of Stevens reign as Prime Minister. The state under APC rule progressively grew weak, as resource appropriation coupled with undemocratic decisions became the defining tools of the APC administration. APC rule had pulled Sierra Leone into an abyss and almost every socio-economic index found itself slipping below the level of a failed state like Somalia (Pham 2006). Indeed, “the term shadow state was specifically coined to refer to the manner in which Stevens displaced political activity and resource distribution out of the formal state and into his informal networks” Harris (2014). Resources were so poorly distributed that “unpaid civil servants desperate to feed their families ransacked their offices stealing furniture, typewriters, and light fixtures to trade (Hirsch 2001). Nevertheless, the height of corruption was reached when unpaid teachers began demanding fees from parents to prepare students for public examinations (Hirsch 2001). These events eventually got worse leaving the state economically immobile, and creating a cleavage that was soon to be exploited by the RUF/SL.

With regards to undemocratic decisions, the patrimonial system of administration made it possible for Stevens to quickly suppress opposition political parties. The creation of the United Democratic Party (UDP) in October 1970 was one of such opposition parties to present a threat to Stevens and his APC. The UDP comprised of Karefa-Smith, former Minister of Finance, Mohamed Sorie Forna, and former Minister of Information – Ibrahim Taqi. All three leaders were of Temne origin (the Temne were the ethnic backbone of the APC) who had served in administrative positions. The party was banned by the state merely 18 days following its formation and some of its leaders fled, while others were imprisoned until July 1973 because they were being perceived as a threat to the survival of the state. By 1991, the corrupt government had alienated the youths, and successfully destroyed relevant state institutions like the parliamentary system, civil service, the military and the police force.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE ORIGINS OF THE POLITICS OF CLIENTELISM IN SIERRA LEONE POLITICS

How did clientelism come to be prevalent in the newly independent Sierra Leone state? There are polarizing arguments in the Social Sciences and Humanities that aim to determine whether clientelist politics in Africa is the product of colonialism or structural opportunism. Colonial explanations of clientelism are relevant to the extent that they can be used to determine the type of leadership that was inherited by the African elite. The British adopted indirect rule and patronage during their administration in Sierra Leone, and essentially transferred that form of government at independence. Similar to the exiting colonial masters, Siaka Stevens governed Sierra Leone along patrimonial lines, while affording various ethnic groups representation in his government. Stevens and his APC created, according to Harris, “a new indirect rule: a highly hierarchical system reliant on ‘traditional’ authority on top of the paternalistic model developed under the British and the Krios” (Harris 2014). Corruption was also evident in this system of government, as Stevens maintains in his autobiography: “He must hand out largesse; educate not only his own children but also those of family

⁹ Stevens and the APC had cultivated strong ties with President Sekou Toure of Guinea and his radical *Parti Democratique de Guinee* who were promoting a more radical leftist regime. They had abolished the chieftaincy in Guinea, which they termed a “feudal institution,” and shortly after proclaimed a socialist regime based on social revolutionary power (Pham 2005).

¹⁰ The SSD was an offshoot of the Internal Security Unit (ISU) (Fayemi 2004).

members...Money slips through his finger like quicksilver and he can never have enough of it to satisfy his dependents. When it can be had so easily, when all that is required of him is influence in tipping the scale..." (Stevens 1984).

While tracing the developmental stages of clientelist politics, René Lemarchand and Keith Legg (1972) argue that "nowhere is the relationship between clientelism and the political system more evident than in the feudal polity" (Lemarchand and Legg 1972, 161). Therefore, clientelism is an unequal exchange that is sustained by a sense of duty typical in feudal communities. However, scholars like Tarrow (1967) and Mousnier (1974) disagree with this stance. For instance, Tarrow (1967) holds that "observers often confuse the clientele relationship with feudalism; in reality it is quite different. In feudal society, social relations were formalized, hierarchical, and legally sanctioned. A logical pyramid of mutual obligations was built up which was congruent with the requirements of the society for defense and solidarity.... *Clientelismo*, however, is shifting and informal, and has no institutional recognition in concrete institutions" (Tarrow 1967, 69). Tarrow (1967) further explains that "notables clientelism" survived into the democratic age and transformed into a new form of clientelism similar with a market exchange. With the new clientelism, clients seek to maximize utility with little sense of duty. This was true of the post-colonial government in Sierra Leone where productivity was low, and poverty served both as a reason and result of the clientelist relationship.

The body of literature on patron-clientelism, holds that the reason patronage takes the form of government employment is because patrons "cannot be sure that the clientelistic deal will be honored, as no legal enforcement mechanisms can be devised" (Piattoni 2001). The ruling politicians often offer political favors and policies to groups or individuals in exchange for political support and influence. According to Robinson and Verdier (2013), this exchange is illegal, because democratic parameters do not allow for subjective politics. Turner and Young (1985), however, maintain that the formation of a patron-client relationship is not solely dependent on a mutual exchange, "but on some principle of affinity which supplies a social logic on the network. Kinship and ethnic affinity are the most frequent bases for network formation." A master of the politics of survival, that defines anti-democratic governments, Siaka Stevens occasionally used force on state opposition (SLPP members) and built up authority and respect by creating an ethnic ruling class. Stevens and the APC created "a new indirect rule: a highly hierarchical system reliant on 'traditional' authority on top of the paternalistic model developed under the British and the Krios" (Harris 2014).

The patron-client relationship "involves reciprocity and voluntarism but also exploitation and domination" (Kitschelt 2000). With clientelism, patrons enforce an obligation for reciprocity that eventually results in cumulative expectation of political support. And clients create a sense of dependence on patrons. "Gift-giving and hospitality are potent means of controlling others, not because of the debts they create, but because of the recipient's dependence on their continuation. A continuous flow of gifts creates needs and fosters dependence and the threat of its being cut off becomes a powerful disciplinary device" (Barth 1959). This cycle of mutual dependency constructed on the patron's patrimonial grip on society is difficult to break even under the worse economic conditions. Even though the state had control of the diamond industry, economic decline of the 1980s made control of the shadow state difficult for Stevens and his cronies.¹¹ Human development was not upheld, yet patron-clientelist politics ensued, even under these dilapidating socio-economic conditions. This was another way in which indiscriminate redistribution of goods and services was failing under patron-client conditions.

The problems with Stevens' politics peaked when he consolidated power in the APC. There was no political space for democratic participation, thus no limitations on presidential power. The absence of a modernizing élite further worsened the socio-political condition of the state. Given that Sierra Leone's élite was identical with the state, corruption ultimately became the expression of a conception of sovereignty. After Stevens eliminated multiparty politics, all that remained was monolithic élite politics. Thus, the absence of checks and balances. This policy made the country resistant to reform, yet vulnerable to civil war. Clientelist politics during Stevens' regime did not permit for impartial selection of the élite. Élite appointment was based on a personalized system of appointments by Stevens and power flowed in a top-down structure, resulting in extreme power centralization at the top. Power emanated from the state and was dominated by Stevens. This system prevented civil society formation as society lost interest in the political process and hope of democracy dwindled.

Given the sluggish political climate of Steven's regime, civil society formation was not picking up legitimate momentum. Civil society is used to refer to a collection of non-governmental organizations with a presence in society. Politicizing civil society should not be taken to mean complete political transformation, like the formation of the Pan-African Union (PANAFU),¹² which functioned more as a political society than a civil

¹¹ "...you can therefore understand why we cannot give you immediate promises to reduce school fees. You can therefore understand why we cannot improve health facilities and build more roads" (Stevens 1984).

¹² In 1982, a group of student activists and lecturers from the Fourah Bay College founded the Pan-African Union (PANAFU) and sought political ideology from the *Green Book*.

society organization. PANAFU organized study groups through which students were introduced to Pan-Africanist thought and organization, opposed to being taught methods for renegotiating the intersection between state and society and providing civic education. Because, the social actors of PANAFU were not tasked with the burden of leading Sierra Leone through a transition by promoting democratic interests and values, they sort inspiration from radical, pan-Africanist ideologies such as Qaddafi's *Green Book* and the tenets of direct democracy. Consequently, several motivated young activists of the group (Sankoh, Kanu, and Mansaray) traveled to the World Revolutionary Headquarters in Libya for guerilla warfare training and later formed the RUF/SL. Hence, PANAFU had failed to generate a moral order befitting for society, but its ideals appealed to millennials who sort political reform.

While civil society requires the space that only a democratic political regime can provide to fully develop, the emergence of civil society has historically preceded the advent of stable democratic regimes and is therefore to a certain extent independent of the existence of a democratic political regime (Oxhorn 1995a and 1995b). However, the oppressive apparatus of the state rendered the formation of a functional politicized civil society (one that was strong and independent of state influence) unattainable. Arbitrary arrest of several SLPP members and chiefs from the Southern and Eastern provinces in 1968, in what was termed "state of emergency", sparked fear nationwide as social actors disseminated (Lavalie 1985).

Furthermore, clientelism resulted in institutional fragility. The ruling élite approached problem-solving from a traditional perspective, by use of extraction, redistribution and force. These pre-modern élite were accountable for systematic marginalization of society, thus unable to secure compliance from the impoverished majority. As a result, state legitimization depended on the strength of the state's use of coercion, opposed to the consolidation of popular representative structures. All that was left in the absence of legitimacy and democratic institutions was political and economic disorganization. The unchanging state system of the APC, embellished with a pre-modern élite, sustained Stevens' patron-client system of administration.

The state preferred consuming the products of western modernity, opposed to utilizing a modern elite group for the proper functioning of the country. Stevens' government was short of knowledgeable administrators, hence incapable of creating a modern nation-state. In exploring the role of civil society in the socio-political construction of citizens' rights, it becomes evident that the limitation of civil society was a result of Sierra Leone's status as an oppressive patron-client state. The proper functioning of the state lies, partly, in the relationship between state and society, because community is the core of democracy and development. However, because citizen participation in the political process was low, Stevens and his cronies were able to continue functioning along patron-client lines without facing repercussions.

Siaka Stevens' Economic Policies

There is no one paradigm or theory that can explain the sudden failure of the Sierra Leone state structure. During the APC era (1968-92), state machinery resources were redistributed to benefit a rather small number of people and not the general citizenry. It is customary for undemocratic regimes to depend on discriminatory and partial neo-patrimonial tenets to enforce authority. "Ironically, while patrimonialism is said to cement social bonds in small-scale situations through a reliance on trust, reciprocity, and material exchanges, it is believed to distort power, corrupt authority, and fuel personal aggrandizement when it permeates larger political institutions such as bureaucracies and states" Pitcher, Moran, and Johnston (2009:130).

The patron-client system of authority adopted by Siaka Stevens was oppressive and ill-equipped to handle the challenges of the newly independent state. According to Kpundeh (2004), a system of patronage thrived under the ruling party because it was used as a tool to recruit and retain party members. Membership and party support became an acceptable qualification for public office opposed to actual credentials and capabilities. In a way, the state dominated the job market, rendering public service in exchange for party loyalty. State domination of the public service job market resulted in a monopolistic state. This system derailed overall economic growth, modernity and democratization as public officers became accountable to top party leaders and not the citizens of the country they were meant to serve. The absence of political accountability made for gross misuse of public office and resources for personal enrichment. Hence, a system was created that enabled institutional corruption and resource redistribution for members of the ruling class and top civil servants. This corrupt system was perpetuated by Siaka Stevens and his close party cronies.

Despite having experienced an average annual growth of 7% between 1950 and 1972, Sierra Leone soon began facing an economic crisis by the mid 1970s. And as was common with several developing economies, Stevens turned to the International Monetary Fund in 1979 for a loan that aimed to reorient the economy and balance the short-term financial problems. External factors such as the increase in OPEC oil prices in 1973 partially accounted for the downturn of the Sierra Leone economy as export prices on diamond, palm kernel and cocoa plummeted. Zack-Williams (1993) notes that the plunge in export prices resulted in the Sierra Leone Development Company (Delco) stopping iron production in Marampa in 1975. Economic activities in mining, agriculture and forestry progressively deteriorated resulting in shortfalls in economic performance. The downward trend in economic activities meant reduced government revenue, however, Stevens' internal

economic policies were geared towards elite accommodation instead of nation building, meaning government expenditure was not downsized in spite of the economic downturn. This was bad for fiscal policy. Reno (1995) notes that, not even the revenue from the diamond industry was sufficient to accommodate Stevens' clientelist policies. As such, economic regression was guaranteed given how the government had failed to redirect spending away from elite largesse towards export-oriented commerce. This system did not utilize its budding human capital for productive purposes.

The politics of decline that defined Sierra Leone was laden with contradictions. The government's refusal to provide basic public goods and services, but further exploit societal poverty and reliance of constituents, slowed economic growth and advancement. By releasing the full force of the corrupt state system on civilian society via the imposition of compulsory savings on the underprivileged and subsistent farmers (via the state-controlled Sierra Leone Marketing Board), the APC damaged society's enterprise and the will to be governed. This resulted in the peasantry's withdrawal from the domestic market and gradual emigration of the educated and bourgeoisie class overseas (Zack-Williams 1999). Sierra Leoneans turned to survival strategies to either adapt to the economic despair while others escaped the general dissatisfaction, the silent despair of absent political, economic and social opportunities by seeking out better socio-economic conditions in foreign countries.

III. CONCLUSION

Authors like Kpundeh (1993), Smith (1997) and Berewa (2011) have extensively discussed the corrupt and partial politics of the APC party. Stevens' reign revealed that the relationship with political leaders as patrons and civil servants as clients facilitated abuse and exploitation. Stevens' system of administration unraveled as democratic elections soon resulted in undemocratic governments. In a sense, the strength of the state was not a given, because state machinery was not modern; there were no legal limits on state officials. While Stevens' government was powerful, it was neither rule bound nor accountable, rendering political stability and economic prosperity unsustainable. The political climate of Sierra Leone between 1968-1985 was fostered by bad leadership and poor resource distribution. As demonstrated, the repressive default of Sierra Leone statehood throughout the Stevens' régime constituted an absence of politics and any organized articulation of grievances was made impossible by the repressive machinery of the state. The process of state building that had commenced with Milton Margai faded in the absence of a democratic government to guarantee freedom of press, accountability, the rule of law, separation of power and freedom of assembly. Berewa (2011) maintains that promises and glimpses of political stability, and economic prudence gained fruition and died with Milton Margai in 1964.

This essay aimed to demonstrate that Stevens did not have an effective economic and political structure in place for Sierra Leone. The motivation of African political leaders as portrayed by Stevens was (and for the most part continues to be) grounded in the need to provide economic satisfaction for themselves and their dependents. This simplistic motivation prevailed, due to the absence of sufficient structural and cultural restraints built into the political systems. The result of the absence of effective state institutions "is that it is considerably easier for a leader in Africa than for a leader elsewhere to pursue personal satisfactions free from any restraints other than his own conscience, while it remains comparatively difficult for him to pursue goals that will make significant changes in his country" (Cartwright 1978). In this vein, Sierra Leone exemplified that the problems faced by weak states are daunting, but effective efforts at democracy could possibly ameliorate the problem of wealth appropriation and reduce episodes of grievance-driven rebel movements. There is a vast amount of Literature that makes the argument that poor countries are more likely to be clientelist (Stokes 2005, Keefer 2007 and Remmer 2007), however, this does not mean that change is impossible. Clientelism is not genetically engineered into the veins of the leaders of poor countries.

The "distribution of state resources on a nonmeritocratic basis for political gain" (Mainwaring 1999) renders economic prosperity in "third" states unlikely. The focus on clientelist politics in Sierra Leone obscures a basic observation: the incapacity of the state to deliver basic economic services. As outlined earlier, the success of the shadow state created by Stevens depended on the state's accessibility to revenue that was sufficient to pacify clients. The argument that clientelism converts late modernity nations "to postmodern conditions" (Roniger 2004) was true of the Sierra Leone state under APC rule.

Siaka Stevens' reasons for maintaining the defective clientelist system which resulted in an untenable rent-financed political economy are unknown. However, most Political Science Literature maintains that democratic governance is the only possible institution that will permanently bring an end to clientelism and redistributive politics in third states. The political history of Sierra Leone results in the realization that socio-economic development and political advancement are central for the survival of the democratic state. Socio-economic development is not dependent on the type of government, but on the degree of government. "The differences between democracy and dictatorship are less than the differences between those countries whose politics embodies consensus, community, legitimacy, organization, effectiveness, stability, and those countries

whose politics is deficient in these qualities” (Huntington 1968). Almost a decade after the war officially came to an end, Sierra Leone appears to be on the path of building effective state structures with functioning administrative and bureaucratic institutions.

Appendix

Differences between Patron Client Administration and Democratic Governance

Patron-Client	Democratic Governance
Authority is personal, resides with individuals	Authority is institutional, resides with official roles
Personal enrichment and aggrandizement are core values	Rule of law, fair elections and majority rule are core values
Leaders tend to monopolize power and are unaccountable for their actions	Leaders share power with others and are accountable for actions
Leaders' relationship to supporters is opaque and may be unreliable	Leaders' relationship to supporters is transparent and is predictable
No regular procedures exist regarding leaders' replacement	Regular procedures exist regarding leaders' replacement
Leaders hold onto power by providing personal favors that secure loyalty of key followers	Leaders hold onto power by providing collective benefits that earn support of large segments of society
Policy decisions are taken in secret without public discussion or involvement	Policy decisions are taken in the open after public discussion and review
Political parties are organized around personalities	Political parties are organized around stated programs
Civil society is fragmented and characterized by vertical links	Civil society is deep and characterized by horizontal links
Decision making standards are tacit and procedures are impossible to follow from outside	Decision making standards are explicit and procedures are transparent
Supporters' interests guide decisions	Public interest guides decisions
Extensive scope exists for patronage appointments	Limited exists scope for patronage appointments

Source: Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith. 2002. "Clientelism, Patrimonialism and Democratic Governance: An Overview and Framework for Assessment and Programming." Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates Inc.

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