

Fallout from another rigged election in Cameroon



When violent change becomes Plausible

By Ntemfac Aloysius Nkong Ofege

An Election Day comes and goes in Cameroon. And, as predicted the ugly Cameroonian at his hideous best re-created vote-heisting vaudeville. Feisty fraud and rigging galore. Once more the two times winner of Planet Earth's Most

Corrupt Nation trophy and election fraud Supremo, Mr. Biya of Cameroon was in his element heisting yet another election with triumphalistic arrogance, lawlessness and the total lack of inhibition so common with puppet dictators in Africa's banana republics.

"All is going according to plan," declared Mr. Biya to the National and International press who interviewed him shortly after he voted at the Yaounde Bastos Primary School last October 11.

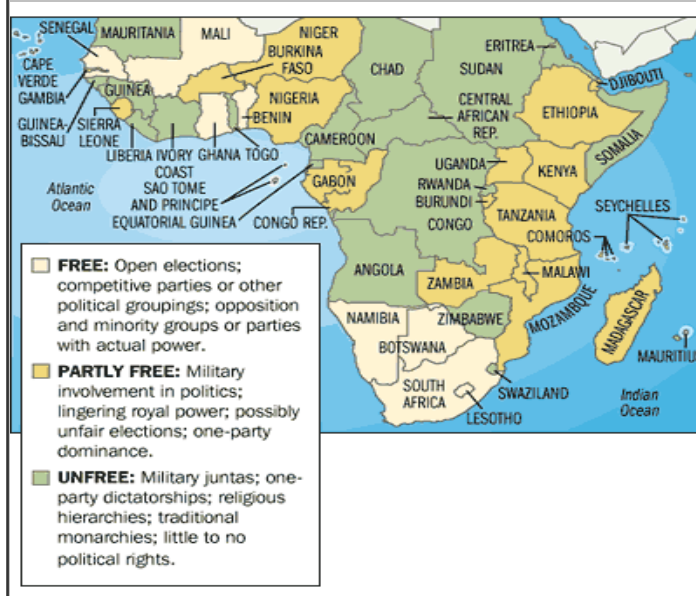
Meaning the election rigging machinery was at warp speed. Beyond the election rigging business as usual so typical of

the Biya reviled camp there will always be some sobering facts about Mr. Biya etched in the cold sands of time and, hopefully, in the man's durable schizophrenic memory .

Now here is a man who since he wandered into Cameroon's civil service in 1962 has stuck like a blistering barnacle onto the ship of the Cameroonian state leeching it on Cameroon and its taxpayers with reckless abandon; until he would not just get lost when several times voted out of office. Rather he would get his hordes to rig the vote and the proclaim himself King Biya, the only son of the soil and king of the birds.

Question: Why would a 71-year old man, who has been in power for 22 years; who is very close to his grave and who, since 1962, has been living off the sweat of his countrymen and the taxpayers, still rig

POLITICAL FREEDOM IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2004:
Freedom House, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, issues its rankings annually. In 1990, only three sub-Saharan countries were considered free; 27 were unfree. This year, 11 are free and 17 are unfree.



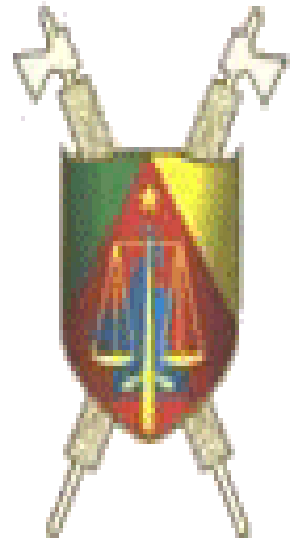
elections just to cling to power like a randy old goat would exert effort upon a menopausal rock? Answer because he is Paul Biya, the man who probably cheated when he was in primary school or stole more than sugar while he was at the Seminary. Question two: Why would some 6000 people: Divisional Officers, Senior Divisional Officers, Governors, Magistrates, Lawyers, top ranking civil servants, ministers, deputy ministers, secretaries general, police- gendarmes- military officials, in short the cream of an entire nation, participate fully and directly in election rigging (broad-daylight theft and joining the car crash) just to keep the randy 71-year old deadbeat and underachiever in place? Answer: because this country is Cameroon twice voted the most corrupt country in the world under Mr. Biya.

Here is a man who can afford to incinerate upwards of 5.000.000.000 (5 billion FCFA) taxpayer's money printing posters, T-Shirts, wrappers, cash handouts and other paraphernalia for his own campaign alone while distributing only 15.000.000FCFA (Fifteen million) each to fifteen other candidates. The circa 5 Billion spent by Biya is even a stand down from circa 22 Billion, borrowed from a Liechtenstein bank (with the assistance of the Pasqua racket that the man blew up for the 1992 presidentials...and still lost! Here is a man so incompetent that in 22 years of his watch as president of Cameroon one has to look very hard to find one development project to name after him. Name just one project in Cameroon today that can be validly named after Biya – beyond election fraud, nepotism, tribalism, corruption, the economic crisis, grabsmania and generalized incompetence and kleptocracy, that is? Here is a man who was so hard put to find one positive achievement in his 22-year old watch (let alone goal to pursue for the next 7 years) that all he burped was: Vote for me! I have great ambitions! for Cameroon," in his acceptance speech on September 15 of a nomination that nobody (not even his own party) offered.

If Mr. Biya has not achieved one grand ambition in 22 years what makes the man think he can do that in 7 more years? This definitely is the mind-boggler.

Yet, here is a man for whom a country's entire unprincipled political class would sink so low as to steal voting cards, invent ghost polling stations, wipe off the so-called indelible ink from their thumbs just to vote again and again, change election tallies, pilfer ballot boxes, bribe and corrupt their own children to vote several times, create ambulant voters, bring out tribal militia to chase away rivals, etc. All in a dastardly attempt to preserve ill-gotten privileges position themselves and pretend to look good in the eyes of the wimpy strongman.

Simon Achidi Achu. A former Prime Minister. A Father. Married to many wives with children. Like the Biblical Richman on the eve of the elections, October 10, this old fellow went about Bamenda collecting a tatterdemalion cast of vagrants, hobos and hellcats. This gung-ho was made to spend the night at Pa's Rock Farm up the vales of Santa where the old man had thoughtfully caused the Divisional Officer for Santa to create some clandestine polling stations. The idea was to get these hobos to vote and thus stuff the ballot boxes in the far-out hope that a good result from Santa could return Achidi Achu to the position of Prime Minister. The hobos were wine and dined for their pains. Many of them collected Pa money and ran away. On the eve of the election some SDF members rough-handled Pa Simon for showing up at the Congress Hall with unknown motives. CPDM Government Delegate for Bamenda, Abel Tadzong Ndeh was also rough-handled.



Gervais Mendo Ze, the other incompetent tyke who has mismanaged Cameroon's circa 300 billion state radio and television to death did his own do. Flouting the law with dastardly impunity, the man awarded over 6 hours of free tv time to his tribesman Mr. Biya and the Biya campaign on October 10th and less than 1 hour to the 13 other candidates. Then, as usual, the tribesmen (Ndongo-Ngono-Belibi-Ndzana-Atangana-Bingono-Nkono-Ndzie-Mve-Amougou, etc.) who wield power on state radio-tv skunk in to announce another moon slide victory for Mr. Biya!

And clearly the corruption feeling was catching. Election Day in Cameroon is when parents, seemingly respectable citizens, old men and women, ministers, top civil servants, seemingly educated citizens and folks who make loud Amens in church, in short seemingly respectable and responsible persons who belong to the reigning Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM, simply transform into ungodly monsters and animals. Cameroonian parents actually shoved their own children into the family car and then drove them from one polling station to the next so that the rig elections by voting many times!

It happened!

The Day of the Jackals

The brunt of election rigging in Cameroon; before during and after the polls, is the handiwork of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation and its staff. In terms of curriculum studiorum (University Degree plus 2 and 3 years) the administrators would constitute an elite class; one capable of rising beyond petty theft and grand larceny. Yet that is exactly what Mr. Biya has transformed these trained administrators into – petty thieves and election riggers; staking their reputation, credibility for a service car, promotion and a handful of CFAs.

Once upon a time, Mr. Biya pilloried his own administration for being “archaic and incompetent.” And the man had the courage of making the pronouncement without resigning!

However the issues about the October 11 elections – like all others in the past – went beyond light-fingers, anachronism and ineptitude, incompetence and stupidity. High crimes and misdemeanors in broad daylight were herein involved. For which some administrators out to be sitting tight in Kondengui.

Under the direct supervision of the Minister of State in charge of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation (MINATD) Cameroon's 338 Divisional Officers (DOs) and 58 Senior Divisional Officers (the essential local government), – every one of them – simply transformed into the prime architects of election rigging.

Bana-Bafang: The CPDM business magnate Kadji Defosso brought in some 40 Coaster buses with voters ferried in from Douala. These voters, workers of his UCB Brewery, were to vote in Bana and areas of Bafang so as to guarantee a Biya victory. The police were at hand to escort these chartered buses. However, in Babouantou, the SDF Parliamentarian Pierre Kwemo brought out his vigilantes to keep the ambulant voters at bay.

Ebolowa: *Le Messager* newspaper (No 1731 of 13th October) reports that until October 15th the administrators (Dos and SDOs) were busy fabricating result sheets to reflect the 100% score that CPDM militants had promised candidate Biya.

Maroua: On October 15 members of Ndam Njoya's party in Maroua suddenly discovered thousands of voting cards, some of them torn picked up at the Lycee Technique area. If these cards were abandoned how then did their owners give Mr. Biya the 90% that Marafa is announcing?

Bamenda Congress Hall: On Election Day, CPDM militants were offering as much as 5000FCFA for every Biya Card.

Jakiri: Christopher Nsahlai, Biya's former minister of transport practically confiscated an entire polling station so that he could rig in peace. His militia punched the SDF parliamentarian for the area a certain Nsanyuy Audu who came to supervise the centre.

Douala: The curse of Douala was that many opposition hands never found their names on the electoral list.

Yaounde: Ambulant voters went from polling stations to the next voting many times. In the remote and peripheral villages opposition observers were chased away from the polling stations. The police looked the other way while the ambulant voters went from polling station to polling station.

Andze Tsoungui rigged elections in the past, he handed the baton to Koungou Edima Ferdinand, and MINATD is today headed by Marafa Hamidou Yaya a US trained courtesan who, it is said, is nursing plans of one day becoming president.

In fragrant violation of the Electoral Law, a few hours after the elections and when counting had not even started political novice Marafa Yaya played Kontchou Kouomegni by fibbing on the government-controlled radio that Candidate Biya was leading the count in 9 out of 10 provinces. By so doing Marafa simply validated the hard fact that the actual vote count did not matter. Since independence, Cameroon's administration has always released election results months ahead of the actual election. "We have never had any free and fair election in Cameroon since Independence," said Cameroon's Prelate Christian Cardinal Tumi talking to the BBC. Cardinal Tumi went further to lament the fact that on Election Day he was the living witness of hundreds of electors in Douala search in vain for their names on the voter's registers.

"We call on opposition leaders to accept these results in the spirit of democracy," Marafa told a press conference on October 13th. "They should take their case to court if they feel that there was any rigging," the man added. Absolute hokum! The courts in Cameroon are another CPDM Sub-Section with Mr. Biya as Supreme Commander-in-chief of the Magistracy! Accept fabricated and fraudulent results? And as for the Administrative Bench of Cameroon's Supreme Court which in principle hears matters regarding administrative goofs, the unit remains another Sub-Section of the CPDM.

Gross incompetence is not the issue here. Marafa Hamidou Yaya, US-trained, a member of Cameroon's political class is just one of them – another unprincipled election rigger in fact, the Fraud Organizer. It can be said that Cameroon's administration starts rigging elections at registration, during the election proper and during the counting and proclamation of results.

Elections in Cameroon are governed by Law No 91/020 of 16th December 1991 as amended by Law No 97/013 of 12th March 1997. Paragraph 28 of the Electoral Law states: "Registers of electors shall be established by the administrative authority, in close collaboration with representatives of legally authorized political parties operating within the jurisdiction."

MINATD and not the window-dressing National Observatory therefore registers voters, provides their cards and conducts the elections. When Mr. Biya lost the 1992 presidentials he decided to scrap the old voters register and create a new one. Since then (and despite the fact that the Electoral Law says voter registration is all year round) the administration has systematically disenfranchise voters by removing

the names of known opposition hands from the registers. Some **4,234,379** people were registered in 1992; the number dropped to **3,717,774** in 1997. Mr. Marafa claims that there were **4,529,000** registered in 2004. ONEL-NEO says that there were less than **3.500.000** voters registered!

Paragraph 55 of the Electoral Law states that the register of electors is a public document that be in the custody of the Council and the Sub-Divisional office and can be consulted by any person at any time.

This is never the case. This was never the case!

The Law (paragraph 39) provides for the creation of a Divisional Supervisory Commissions to draw up the final register of electors, examine claims regarding voters' cards, check and distribute cards and check returns. This structure does not exist and whenever it exists government refuses to fund its operations.

The Electoral Law bans polling stations in palaces, private homes, private farms, etc. The Fons (auxiliaries of the administration who receive government salaries) of Balikumbat, Bali Nyongha, and all the "Chefs" in Francophone Cameroon flouted this law by having their private and personal ballot boxes in the bedrooms where they could rig in peace.

Next the law calls on the administration to state the exact number of polling stations and their exact location in every election. Mr. Marafa told the BBC that there were "about" **21.000** polling stations (up the **16,010** in 1996) from the suggestive of the fact that the State Minister had no idea how many polling stations he was running. Again it was absurd that some 6000 additional polling stations had been added by Marafa whereas the number of voters had actually dropped to **3.500.000** according to ONEL-NEO! Ghost polling stations are a parameter of election fraud because regime hands can quietly says every polling station can have only 500 voters. 500 voters multiplied by 5000 ghost polling stations means Mr. Marafa has the will and the potential of **2.500.000** ghost voters to tilt the balance!

Tallies from Ghost polling stations have been used before. In 1997, the then Vice Prime Minister in charge of Territorial Administration said there were **3,719,779** registered voters (see **Cameroon Tribune** No 2634 of May 9th 1997) But when the National Vote Counting Commission was working on the final total of the joint Parliamentary-Municipal elections it discovered that **3,964,415** voters actually voted. A cool **246,641** voters had been added to the register to the benefit of the CPDM.

Diana Acha Morfaw, the vice president of the fake ONEL-NEO thought she was doing the world a favour when she announced on the morning of the election that ONEL-NEO had found over 500.000 fake registered voters on the National Voters Registers and consequently the participation in the just ended farce of an election had reduced from the **4.529.000** pompously announced by State Minister for Territorial Administration and Decentralisation Marafa Hamidou Yaya to...less than **3.500.000**! Now this is out of a total population of **17,344,413** with some **9.000.000** of these folks being owners of their National Identity Cards. What this means concretely is that some **6.000.000** people voted against Mr. Biya with their feet. And hence Biya lost again. Lincolnian democracy is the government o the people by the people for the people. Mr. Biya disenfranchises Cameroonians and prevents them from voting because he knows that they would vote against him.

In Buea, Kumba, Garoua, Douala and Yaounde, especially, in gross violation of paragraphs 12-13 of the Electoral Law which allows citizens to become electors, the administrators removed hundreds of names from the voters registers; the refused to deliver voting cards to some citizens; the refused to paste the names of the electors outside every polling stations and then they transferred the names of some electors to the wrong polling stations. When that did not suffice the administrators simply stuffed the ballot boxes or proclaimed fake tallies.

At to keep watch over the heist Police boss Minlo Medjo recruits some hobos and street urchins from Francophone Cameroon who are rapidly trained at the Police Academy in Mutegene and then deployed to Bamenda to “keep the peace.”

A curious contraption called the National Election Observatory (ONEL-NEO) did what it was created to do. ONEL-NEO observed as the rigging took place. The Francophonie under a certain Nelson Ratsirak put out a report saying that they went to 7 provinces and never saw any massive rigging hence the elections were “transparent.” The ever-myopic Francophonie said that the elections were in total conformity of Cameroonian law. Absolute hokum and total myopia! The Francophonie definitely has no idea what the Cameroonian Electoral Law actually says. Another gung-ho of so-called American Congressmen also said they saw no rigging. In 1992 Jesse Jackson surface to monitor the elections in Cameroon. He was wined and dined by Paul Biya and despite the fact that the US Democratic Party’s NDI said the 1992 elections were “seriously-flawed” Jesse Jackson had become so mellow that he saw no fraud. Mr. Biya is not beyond bribing and corrupting foreign observer missions to sing new songs. And as a matter of hilarious causality, because Marafa concocted some results the SDF also produced its own results. The SDF results signed by a certain Atekwana and undated were as follows:

| No | Province | SDF | CPDM | CDU | Others |
|-----|--------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | Admawa | 35% | 50% | 10% | 5% |
| 2. | Centre | 40% | 50% | 5% | 5% |
| 3. | East | 20% | 70% | 10% | - |
| 4. | Far North | 20% | 65% | 15% | - |
| 5. | Littoral | 60% | 30% | 10% | - |
| 6 | North | 22% | 38% | 20% | 20% |
| 7. | North West | 80% | 15% | 3% | 5% |
| 8. | South | 25% | 75% | - | - |
| 9. | South West | 80% | 15% | 3% | 2% |
| 10. | West | 75% | 20% | 5% | - |
| | TOTAL | 45% | 43% | 8.3% | 3.7% |

SDF Figures signed by Atekwana

Mr. Biya’s Last Dance

As one half of a nation hang around polling stations with one thing in their minds – how to rig elections another one half (those belonging to Cameroon’s opposition collective) hang around polling stations with murder in their hearts and hatred in their eyes. The battle lines have always been clear. While those in the corrupt bastion of neocolonialism called the CPDM are defending their ill-gotten positions of privileges, power and wealth within the patrimonial state tooth and nail, those in the opposition have stood by for forty long years and watched them steal, eat and grow fat and pompous, at their expense. “Election rigging is a sign of despair,” reads a text from SDF Chieftain Mr. John of Ntarinkon in an SDF anti-election document. “It is a desperate tool used by one who has been rejected by his people, but is

bent on clinging to power because he lacks the courage to accept defeat and the honesty to respect the wishes of the electorate. When rigging is allowed to triumph, elections lose their real purpose because the decision of the people is barred by fraud.”

Attempts at peaceful regime change via the ballot box have met with an insidious violence called election fraud. Or those who claim to lead the change have been pretenders or sly collaborators with the regime. The time for complete split (LA RUPTURE) has come. The time for authentic nationalists; those who truly have the interest of Cameroon at heart has come. Remember that we are not talking about replacing baboons with chimpanzees but we are talking about sweeping revolutionary change from authentic nationalists. We are talking about an authentic gathering of a genuine Revolutionary Front for the Reconciliation and Reconstruction of Cameroon. Could it just be that the October 11 rigged elections may just been the break point in a silent conflict that has happened in Cameroon these past forty years between those who are eating and those who want to eat? Clearly Mr. Biya and his cohorts who have pilfered from the masses for so long made have made their last mistake. YESSSSSS!!!!!! The time has come!!!!!! *Mami Coco don ripe!!!* Believe it or not, today, Cameroonians in their vast majority may have come to the start realization that: Enough is just enough! Mr. Biya and Co. should either leave or they will be made to leave!

Now Cameroonians, in their vast majority, know that corruption, electoral fraud, unequal sharing of the national cake, all hallmarks of the Biya clique, are just not Cameroonian. There are still a few good men in the CPDM who know that thievery, trickery and stealing from the masses are not the values that Cameroon stands for. So Question three: How can this country ever break from the Biya mess of abject corruption, moral bankruptcy and the failure of its ruler ship and leadership class? Answer: By decently tying its elite class (the Aujoulat Class) to the stakes and decently shooting them – every one of them. Or, by publicly executing enough of them to set an example. The time may just be now for another *Mouvement J’OSE*. Especially now that Cameroonians are agreed that everything said in the April 6th 1984 *Mouvement J’OSE* Speech has come to pass just as it was prophetically ordained.

It is a well established political science concept that when peaceful change (by the ballot box) becomes impossible, violent change becomes a plausible option. Cameroon’s different generation (my generation) should from this very minute start getting ready for the lofty and exalting task of getting rid of the Biya-Ahidjo thieves and then setting a new course and standards for Cameroon. Should that option demand violence so be it. The French say you cannot make an omelet without breaking some eggs. We are witnessing the foundation stone of the Cameroonian revolution in its awesome glory. One way or another, the Biya clique has to go.