

DR. SYLVIA OLAYINKA BLYDEN: A PATTERN OF SELF-INTEREST OVER NATIONAL INTEREST

By Aiah Pandanteh Thomas

Over two decades of public observation reveal a consistent pattern in Dr. Sylvia Olayinka Blyden's conduct: her actions and narratives are ultimately guided by personal interest, often at the expense of national cohesion, institutional integrity, and collective goals.

Today marks exactly 7 years since Dr Sylvia Olayinka Blyden celebrated the worst social media lunatics in the history of Sierra Leone by proudly featuring two of them on the front page of her popular newspaper; awareness times. At the time, these lunatics spent days, nights, weeks, months and years abusing prominent citizens, including myself, my parents, my wife and children, Pres Julius Maada Bio, First Lady Fatima and several other decent Sierra Leoneans they deemed opposed to apc. Interestingly, these same lunatics that she was singing praises for, eventually started abusing her in the worst possible manner, bitter lessons I'll say. You'll think that when I published these awful records of hers today, she would be humble enough to apologise and reflect on her awful deeds. Instead, she came out with guns blazing and used colourful languages as she notoriously does whenever she is caught out.

Few things that stood out for me and many others in her response was when she embarrassingly noted that she was not in Sierra Leone when those lunatics were boldly featured on the front page of her newspaper. My question therefore remains; does she honestly think that anyone in and outside Sierra Leone believes such pathetic excuses from her? I doubt it. This is the same Dr Blyden who has absolute control over her newspaper, and she uses it to vilify those she disagrees with repeatedly. She did the same thing to Dr Khan when they had a fallout at state house, her deputy minister of social welfare when they engaged into barrage of insurmountable insults and threats of physical aggression. She even did it to the former President Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, when she insulted him relentlessly in her publications. Thus, her flimsy excuse that she was abroad at the time of this horrific publication is a fiction of her imagination.

She further added that the insults, threats and sickening attacks of adebayor were newsworthy hence the reasons she published them. Only Dr Blyden will consider the attacks on the first family, their children, parents, loved ones, both past and present, as newsworthy. There's no amount of insults that adebayor and Gibril Bangura didn't levy at decent people at the time of these publications. Moreover, if this horrific act was newsworthy, why didn't Dr Blyden promote adebayor again when he started insulting her? Or is it only newsworthy when others are on the chopping board?

Dr Blyden has always stood up for her own interest in Sierra Leone, and I want to call her out today and make distinctive justifications to support my claims.

When she was appointed special executive assistance to the then President Koroma, she didn't even last long before she waged war on the then foreign minister Alpha Khan. Both went into war of wards publicly and she lambasted Dr Khan in her newspaper like she always does. Shortly after, Pres Koroma dismissed her and subsequently kicked her out of state house.

She was then appointed as minister of social welfare. Again, she started a public feud with her deputy, Mrs Neneh Turay, who was and still is, an outstanding APCer known for her relentless efforts to advance the core interests of APC. Sadly, Dr Blyden considered her as a target and bullied her repeatedly, a leaked audio of their feud was heard by most citizens with untold insults of the worst kind coming from any minister in the history of Sierra Leone. While at the same ministry, she even threatened to 'deal' with vulnerable young children who protested her poor response to their concerns. She labelled them as ex-combatants and promised to manhandle them. Pres Koroma subsequently dismissed her for gross misconduct and blatant disregard for basic professional norms. Dr Blyden's tenure of office as minister of social welfare was undoubtedly the shortest in the history of all ministerial appointments in Sierra Leone.

Notwithstanding that, following the embarrassing defeat of APC in the 2018 elections. The party formed a team to identify the course of their defeat. She was part of the 9-man committee and acted as the secretary. At the crucial time when the team was about to publish their reports. Dr Blyden broke away from the team, declaring that she would publish her own report independent of the committee before departing to London. The dividing factor was that Dr Blyden sided with EBK and the old folks while the other 8 members wanted internal democratisation of APC; which was at odds with the interests

of the old folks. And that was the beginning of the collapse of the 9-man committee. Her collision with EBK and cabals gave birth to the national reformation movement of APC, which further metamorphosed into Chairman Alfred Peter Conteh's legal actions against the APC party. Dr Blyden always takes sides that benefit her regardless of the dare consequences, and she has repeatedly done so.

She was on good terms with EBK and cabals until SLPP arrested her for her untold bullying and unwarranted attacks on the president. Bear in mind that she was working in close collaboration with wayward adebayor at this stage. So, when she was released on bail, she went on a rampage again to attack the president, so she was arrested again and incarcerated repeatedly. Upon her final release, she blamed EBK for not putting his neck on the line for her, stating that EBK didn't defend her when she was arrested and molested. Therefore, she turned on EBK and the rest is history. There's no amount of insults that she didn't levy on EBK in all her publications. She spent years attacking EBK and belittling him.

To ensure her safety and security, Dr Blyden fostered an overnight relationship with First Lady Fatima Jabbe Maada Bio upon her release from prison. She would go on spending days and nights writing all sorts of great things about Fatima, blowing her trumpet louder than the ears can hear. But the moment Fatima wished someone else happy birthday publicly without wishing Dr Blyden happy birthday publicly. We saw countless publications by Dr Blyden, essentially complaining about how hurtful she felt that Fatima didn't wish her happy birthday publicly; so childish.

When Fatima sent best wishes to mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr on her declaration to contest for APC flagbearership, Dr Blyden lost it completely. Audio from her outburst with the spokesman for Fatima revealed how angry she was with Fatima for wishing her archrival the best in her campaign. It was embarrassing to say the least; and she still hasn't started yet.

Why am I drawing your attention to all these times when she failed to work with all those teams. The answer is simple; she prioritises her personal interests over the collective goals of any team. In her mind, she's the best and brightest who's more deserving of all the good things in life than anyone else or any nation. That is why she's incompatible with any group or person who focuses on collective interests as supposed to her personal interests.

Moreover, Dr Blyden has long held issues with all outstanding figures from creole descendants in Sierra Leone. She wants to be the only centrepiece from creole background in Sierra Leone politics. Several examples can be cited, including her unwarranted attacks on the former auditor general Lara, opposition leader madam Cole, and more recently Andy Macaulay when she realised that he was gaining momentum in his campaign for flagbearership. In her books, she must be the only outstanding creole figure in Sierra Leone politics. Any other will become a target overnight. By extension of her unwarranted attacks, she targets prominent female figures in the country, such as the lousy Zainab sheriff and others, Fatima is probably the only prominent female politician Dr Blyden didn't continually attack and vilify publicly. But even with Fatima, she recently labelled her decision as a 'stupid decision for wishing mayor Yvonne well in her campaign so Fatima is not an exception.

This very same Dr Blyden was relentlessly castigated EBK and cabals, labelled the current APC national executives as 'de facto executives' is now shamelessly trying to change the narrative overnight. In her recent appearance at Truth morning devotion, she referred to former president Koroma (EBK) as her brother. And went on falsely claiming that PPRC had the mandate to extend the tenure of the current but soon to be expired APC national executive. It's clear that she is desperately trying to win EBK and cabals over but most APCers can see right through her.

I can go on and on about my big sister Dr Blyden and her selfish deeds, but I don't want to belabour my readers.

The conclusion is inescapable. Dr. Blyden's career is a series of episodes where personal grievance, ambition, or vendetta supersedes partnership, national interest, or party solidarity. She is structurally incompatible with any team or cause that requires subsuming self-interest for a collective goal.

This is not merely criticism; it is a necessary clarification for all who engage with her. To collaborate with Dr. Sylvia Blyden without recognizing this foundational trait is to ignore a consistent historical record. One does so at their own peril.

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