



## REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Office Of The Speaker

February 15, 2007

The Honorable Members of the House of Representative  
The 52<sup>nd</sup> National Legislature  
Republic of Liberia

Honorable Members:

I wish to recall that on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January 2007, Her Honor, Madam Justice Gladys K. Johnson issued the Alternative Writ of Prohibition, based on my Petition for the Writ of Prohibition, ordering that your attempt to oust me from the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives should be temporarily enjoined and that I remain the Speaker of the House of Representative pending your filing of Returns to my Petition and a full hearing. You were also temporarily prohibited and enjoined from disturbing the status quo of the National Legislature at the time that its agricultural break was taken pending the disposition of the Prohibition proceedings.

Because of the constitutional issues raised in the Petition and your Returns, the Prohibition proceeding was venued before the Supreme Court *en banc*, before whom arguments were subsequently entertained. On the 29<sup>th</sup> day of January 2007 the Supreme Court unanimously rendered its Opinion and Final Judgment granting the Peremptory Writ of Prohibition, which declared your attempt to oust me from the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives unconstitutional, null and void *ab initio*. In its Opinion, the Supreme Court specifically addressed the issue of venue for the seating of the House of Representatives and the entire National Legislature, which issue was squarely raised in my Petition for the Writ of Prohibition and argued extensively by counsel for both sides. And on this issue of venue, after having referred several times in the Opinion to the Unity Conference Center being situated in the Township of Virginia, the Supreme Court referred the parties to *Article 40* of the *Constitution* and emphasized that the House of Representatives and the entire National Legislature shall always sit in the city. Moreover, Volume IV of the Liberian Codes Revised Chapter 1 Section 3 of the Legislative Law Revised 1999 provides that the Legislature shall meet and do legislative business in the Capitol City of Monrovia, the Seat of Government.

Your initial response to the Supreme Court's Opinion and Judgment was to ignore and defy it; but apparently on second thought, you decided to honor only that portion regarding your unconstitutional and illegal attempt to oust me from the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives. Your response was to "reinstate" me to the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives, not even realizing that the effect of the Supreme Court's Opinion and Judgment is that I was never removed from that office. And since I was never removed from office, you could not "reinstate me". That is, I have always been the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Legislature and remain so, in the eyes of the law and the *Constitution*, as at the writing of this letter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'E. J.' or similar initials.

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As to the portion of the Supreme Court's Opinion regarding the venue for proceedings of the House of Representatives and the entire National Legislature, you have flagrantly ignored and defied the Supreme Court – the highest court of our land. You have continued to meet and deliberate at the Unity Conference Center within the Township of Virginia even though the Supreme Court clearly confirmed *Article 40* of the *Constitution* that the House of Representatives and the entire National Legislature shall meet in the same city.

I have endeavored to have you see reason to subscribe to the Rule of Law, to honor and respect the Opinion and Judgment of our Supreme Court but to no avail. On one occasion I even considered the possibility of joining you at the Unity Conference Center to prevail upon you to return to Monrovia, which is, by law, the seat of Government of the Republic of Liberia, to conduct the affairs of the House of Representatives; but it dawned upon me later, from agitations from my constituents, that my joining you would have been both in violation of *Article 40* of the *Constitution* and an affront to the Honorable Supreme Court and its Opinion and Judgment of the 29<sup>th</sup> day of January 2007. So I did not join you at the Unity Conference Center to plea with you to return legislative deliberations to the legal seat of Government; and since then, my renewed attempts to have you comply with the Opinion and Judgment of the Supreme Court have been rebuffed.

It is clear to me that I will not succeed in convincing you to comply and subscribe to the Rule of Law and to honor and respect the Opinion and Judgment of the Supreme Court in all its ramifications. On the other hand, I am unprepared to violate any provision of the *Constitution*, which I took the oath to uphold and defend when I was sworn into office as Speaker of the House of Representatives; and I am equally unprepared to disobey, disrespect and ridicule the Supreme Court and its Opinion and Judgment as you are doing by your continuous seating at the Unity Conference Center in the Township of Virginia.

I sincerely believe that Liberia, as a country, should be our principal interest as public servants; political grandstanding and intellectual arrogance should never ever cause any public servant to lose sight of the greater interest of the Liberian people; and certainly, personal aggrandizement, personal ambitions or motivations should not cause us to sidestep the “good” that our beloved country deserves after so many years of civil conflict.

So as I will not capitulate to illegality and unconstitutionality, and as you are determined to continue your utter disregard and contempt for the Supreme Court's Opinion and Judgment, and considering that you together constitute the majority of the House of Representatives, I am constrained to submit my resignation from the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives. And I hereby submit this letter as my official resignation.



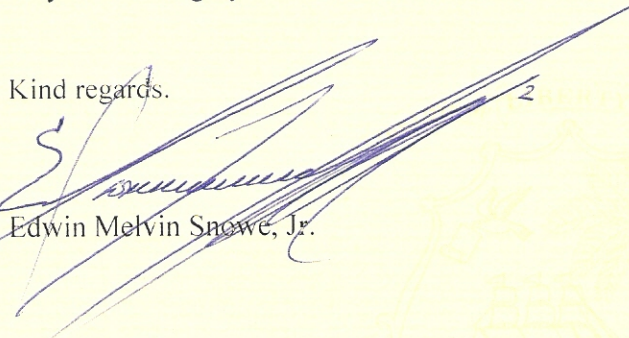
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I pray to the Almighty God that within a reasonable period, the wisdom will be bestowed upon you to realize that it is only through adherence to the Rule of Law and honoring the judgments of the courts of our land that we can truly restore peace to our beloved Patrimony, unite our people, and bring development and prosperity to everyone, irrespective of ethnicity, social background or connection, religion or creed.

I urge you to have the General Services Agency and other relevant Government agency (ies) take an inventory of all properties of the Liberian Government assigned to me as Speaker of the House of Representatives and to take delivery of same at its earliest convenience.

May God Almighty continue to bless our country and guide us.

Kind regards.

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Edwin Melvin Snowe, Jr.

