

Letter to Courier Newspaper, 1996

Join our campaign to for action over injustice in Sierra Leone

As you know, Warwick district has an informal link with the Bo district in Sierra Leone and our membership still has regular contact and news from friends in Bo. It has been quite distressing receiving letters describing the hunger and destitution in the Bo area and elsewhere, which we never dreamed could happen when we started the link in 1981. Over the last four years, we have been watching with dismay and helplessness the events leading up to and happening in this tragic civil war. We have sent money and supplies to Bo, which have reached the people for whom it was destined, but this is mere first aid and cannot address the root problems. We have not known what we could do to try and contribute to ending the war, especially as it has virtually been ignored by the international community and

media. To try and find our more, I attended a conference last Saturday which was organised by Sierra Leoneans living in the UK. It was an extremely informative meeting with very thoughtful and thorough presentations given by a range of speakers from Sierra Leone and Britain including an ex-British High Commissioner.

Desire

At the meeting we were told that Lynda Chalker was actually arriving in Freetown that day. The conclusion which came out of the Saturday conference was that with one-and-a-half million people in the country displaced and three quarters of a million people having fled to neighbouring countries, an election (supported so far by our government) on February 26

would be premature and hardly fair. On the other hand speakers made it quite clear that in Sierra Leone there is an overwhelming desire to have elections now, as they seem to be the only way to get rid of the NPRC government. They now only have control over Freetown and a few isolated centres. It cannot discipline its soldiery and is seen to be as corrupt as its predecessors. I am therefore writing to ask you if your readers would like to join the One World Link in urging Sir Dudley Smith to inform Warwick district people of the British policy towards our partner country and to urge them to allocate resources to Sierra Leone to rebuild the country as soon as a proper government is in place. - Jane Knight. founder member of World Link Gaveston Road, Leamington.