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His Excellency Charles A. Minor
Ambassador of the Republic of Liberia
The Embassy of Liberia
5201 16th. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

Case 2:05-cr-00180-LRS Document 415-5 Filed 12/07/2007

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Andrew Silski, a State Department official in the Office of West African Affairs in Washington. My usual role as a professor at the University of Illinois involves teaching and research in elementary particle physics. But I also work on matters concerning safeguarding the integrity of the international system of higher education, collaborating with officials in the United States, Sweden, and Australia, and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands.

During the last two years I've become knowledgeable about a group of fake universities that falsely claim to have received official recognition from the Republic of Liberia. Many of these are associated with a small group of Americans based in Washington State. In a sense this is an American problem—its origin certainly is American—and it should be the responsibility of the American authorities to address, and resolve the issue.

Saint Regis appears to be the oldest of their "Liberian universities." Based on its presence in various internet archives, it is likely that Saint Regis was invented in 2001 or 2002, at first listing only five Americans and one Swiss individual as "professors." The full set of fake schools, many described as "affiliates" of Saint Regis, comprises fifty-two different degree-selling operations!

The owners of the Saint Regis group have repeatedly tried to shield their efforts under a false cloak of government recognition. To do this, they created a pair of fake Liberian embassy web sites and a fake Liberian higher education accrediting body, the "National Board of Education" (NBE). The primary purpose of the bogus embassy site was to show a list of "officially recognized" Liberian Universities. This list included several in the Saint Regis group, such as Saint Regis, Robertstown, James Monroe, and "The Virtual University." NBE claims it is "recognized by the Education Ministry of the Republic of Liberia" and sells Liberian accreditation to unaccredited "universities" for \$50,000. In a solicitation to Dr. Les Carr, the president of Columbia Commonwealth University, NBE stated that "the fee to NB[O]E covers ALL costs involved and comes with a guaranty of acceptance."

Exhibit 4

p. 1

The announcement "Urgent Disclaimer On The Illegal Establishment And Recognition Of Higher Education Institutions In The Republic Of Liberia" posted to the Embassy's web site last October had some effect. In particular, that statement allowed the legitimate Regis University, based in Denver, Colorado, to file suit against the operators of Saint Regis for damages and trademark infringement. The suit identifies Heidi Lorhan, Dixie Randock, Steven Randock, Kenneth Pearson, and Richard Hoyer as defendants. This appears to be somewhat of a family business: a reporter discovered that Dixie Randock is Heidi Lorhan's mother.

After Regis University filed suit against Lorhan *et al.*, the Saint Regis web materials were transferred to the James Monroe site, with minor changes made to enforce consistency of university name throughout the site. James Monroe claims to have received Liberian accreditation. Robertstown also claims Liberian recognition, and specifies the Liberian embassy in Washington as the venue for verification of its credentials.

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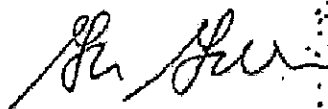
Filed 12/07/2007

The construction of bogus Liberian governmental agencies in order to further the sale of academically meaningless credentials is disturbing. It is wrong for Lorhan *et al.* to profit from the residual turbulence in Liberia as the country rebuilds. It is unacceptable that these individuals damage the reputation of Liberia's legitimate universities through the creation of their "Liberian" diploma mills.

These persistent attempts to fabricate Liberian government credentials for the Saint Regis group suggest a line of action. A brief statement from Liberia, confirming the lack of Liberian recognition of any of the entities in the Saint Regis group and posted to the Embassy's web site, will help the American authorities to take action. (At the present time, Saint Regis University, James Monroe University, Robertstown University, The Virtual University, Southern Pacific University, Adam Smith University, and American International University all claim to hold Liberian recognition.) I think we will find it surprisingly simple to solve the "Saint Regis problem."

If this should be possible, I would alert my contacts who work in university accreditation (as well as journalists who have written about the problem of diploma mills) to such an announcement. For your information, I have appended a few pages documenting the practices of Saint Regis group organizations.

With my greatest respect,



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