

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Friday, October 22, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248  
MOBILE: 232 76 645 914

# How Credible Is The Special Court For Sierra Leone?

By John Abu 076-643-396

*I have always reserved my opinion on any issue regarding the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.*

Most people in Sierra Leone today see no significance in the Special Court. Some do, because they are either gainfully employed by the Court, or are seeking employment, contract or favour from them. I have no qualms about that anyway.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone as we all know, was established on the basis of an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone. It was the Government of Sierra Leone through the UN Security Council that requested the establishment of the Court - by Resolution 1315 of 14 August 2000. In that Resolution, the Council reaffirmed that persons who committed or authorised serious violations of international humanitarian law are individually responsible and accountable for those violations - and that the international community will exert efforts to bring those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards of justice, fairness and the due process of the law. This is what is inexplicable to most Sierra Leoneans including myself.

In the first instance, the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone is a violation of the Lome Peace Agreement of 7 July 1999. To accentuate this fact, Article ix (nine) in the Lome Peace Agreement emphatically states that "to consolidate the peace and promote the cause of national reconciliation, the Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure that no official or judicial action is taken against any member of the RUF/SL, ex-AFRC, ex-SLA or CDF in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of

their objectives as members of those organisations, since March 1991 up to the time of the signing of the Lome Peace Agreement."

The agreement continued: "Legislative and other measures necessary to guarantee immunity to former combat-

*Was the Special Court imposed on the people of Sierra Leone? Is the establishment of the Special Court a mandate from the Lome Peace Agreement?*

ants, exiles and other persons, currently outside the country for reasons related to the armed conflict shall be adopted ensuring the full exercise of their civil and political rights, with a view to their reintegration within a framework of full legality."

Was the Special Court imposed on the people of Sierra Leone? Is the establishment of the Special Court a mandate from the Lome Peace Agreement? Was the United Nations not a witness to the signing of the Lome Peace Agreement of 7 July 1999, under the auspices of then Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Ambassador Francis G. Okelo? So, is it that the UN collaborated with the Government of Sierra Leone to treat that

document with levity? How credible is the Special Court when its architects or arbitrators have themselves violated a whole

peace document? No wonder the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is incomplete. How can such an historic report be presented incomplete? It is incomplete in the sense that the people of Sierra Leone never heard the other side - from Chief Sam Hinga Norman, Foday Sankoh, Johnny Paul Koroma, all of whom were principal actors in the decade-long civil war. So if the people of Sierra Leone could not read their own testimonies in the TRC report then such a document should be regarded as incomplete.

The Special Court was so hostile towards a TRC request to allow chief Sam Hinga Norman to testify before the Commission. I want to believe Sam Hinga Norman and the others are not serfs. I don't want people to misunderstand me please! What I want everyone including the international community to be aware of is the fact that this Court is not promoting peace and reconciliation in this war-torn country but rather fanning the flames of enmity amongst Sierra Leoneans.

How can an American citizen who is immune from prosecution prosecute people for crimes? How can the Special Court prosecute people for committing crimes after November 30 1996, when in fact they were immune from prosecution after July 7 1999? I would like to emphatically state here again to the people of Sierra Leone and the international community that this Court will never promote peace and reconciliation. It totally lacks that capability. Full stop.

What is most disturbing is the pattern of the Court's proceedings. Why should the Court conceal the identity of its witnesses if indeed it is genuine in promoting peace? In fact I have the strong conviction that the Court has induced its witnesses to manufacture evidence against the indictees. If not so, why should they be absolutely responsible for the witnesses? Concealing the Identities of witnesses, in my view, gives no credibility to such trials.

"The advantage of delivering Justice when and where it matters - where it can be seen to be done by those who need it most are very important."

We all agree that there can be no peace without justice. But it should also be made absolutely clear that there can never be justice where witnesses are not identified, and where the root cause of a conflict is not identified and adequately addressed.

The Special Court says it wants to combat impunity by holding people accountable for crimes committed during the war - those who they say bear the greatest responsibility.

There is a clause in one of the Special Court documents which states that defendants who are indicted and arrested may apply for bail and are entitled to counsel of their choice, or to defend themselves. If they are sincere, why is it that the accused are not being granted bail? Or is it that they never applied for one, or actually applied but were rejected? I would like the Court to clarify this issue for the benefit of the public.

One more important thing I would like to comment on is the legacy of the Special Court and its impact. Whether the Court found the indictees guilty or not, there is every possibility of drawing bad blood between families for a long period of time.

I am not arguing in support of impunity - that people should not be held accountable for their actions during the war. No! In fact I am a victim of the war. What every Sierra Leonean is yearning for now is lasting peace and reconciliation. We cannot succeed in addressing impunity where we fail to promote reconciliation? From 1991 to 2002, the rule of law completely collapsed as chaos and mayhem engulfed the country.

But this is not the first time violence has occurred in Sierra Leone. What about 1977 and 1982? So do we really need the Special Court in Sierra Leone?

To Be Continued

# "I was forced to marry RUF"

## Witness tells Special Court

BY THEOPHILUS S. GBENDA

The 15th prosecution witness in the ongoing RUF trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone TFI-016, has narrated

her agony in the hands of the RUF rebels.

In her testimony, the witness told the court that she was captured by RUF rebels and forced to become the wife of a palm wine tapper, collaborating with the rebels.

According to her, she fled Kono to neighboring Guinea, when rebels eventually captured Koidu town.

Struck by hunger in Guinea, the witness said she and her family decided to return to their farm at Tormandu village, in the Kono district, in search of food.

She said that they were captured at the farm and taken to

*CONTINUED BACK PAGE*



David Crane...Prosecutor

# "I was forced to marry RUF"

FROM PAGE 1

Tormandu town, where they were all locked up in a small room.

After some time in the room, the witness recalled that they were later removed and lined up in two rows of men and women. Using a razor, the acronym 'RUF' was inscribed on the chests, back and hands of the male captives before they were let go, she revealed.

The female captives, including herself and her eleven year old daughter, were frog marched to a village called Kissy town, where all of them were distributed to various RUF fighters, as bush wives.

Her eleven-year-old daughter was given to one of the combatants, while she was commissioned to be the wife of the palm wine tapper Kotor Koroma, attached to the commander on the

ground, 'C.O. Alpha'.

She added that in addition to regularly sexing her, she was also responsible for all domestic jobs including cooking, laundering and pounding of husk rice.

According to the witness, she only got her freedom, when orders came that all child combatants and civilians be released as part of the terms of the cease-fire agreement.

What the prosecution eventually deduced from the testimony was that forced marriage and forced labour contrary to international humanitarian law, was evident during the war.

The defense argued that the witness being an illiterate, could not substantiate whether in fact it were actually RUF who captured her and forced her into marriage, especially so when other factions were active in the area.

Standard Times

Friday Oct 22

2004

# 'I was sexed even during menstruation'- Special Court told

By Tamba Borbor

A witness- TF1- 016 testifying in the local Kissi language has told the Special Court how she was oversexed by one of her captors during the rebel war. Speaking through an interpreter, the witness

explained that after the rebels were forced out of Freetown and retreated to Kono, she was in her village called Tormandu which is in the Lei Chiefdom in Kono District when the rebels captured her husband,

daughter and herself. We were at first in Guinea and returned back to or village in search of food, as starvation was threatening, she explained; adding ten rebels of the Revolutionary United

Front (RUF) captured them and took them to Kissi Town also in the same Chiefdom as her village. "At Kissi Town, the rebels shared all the women between themselves

Contd. Page 2

Friday October 22, 2004

AWOKO NEWSPAPER

Page 2

## I was sexed even during menstruation

From Front Page

and I was given to the Palm wine Tapster called Kortor Koroma. The Head of the rebels in Kissi town known as Alpha, gave him a specific instruction to have sexual intercourse with me on a daily basis and at any time; even when I am going through my menstrual period," the Special Court witness went on. Continuing her testimony, she disclosed that when they were captured, all the men in the group had the letters- RUF carved on their backs and arms with a new razor blade by a rebel called-

Sow, while the women were asked to be pardoned by one of the rebels. The markings she went on, was to ensure that none of them would escape, as anyone who happens to run away to neighbouring Guinea would be killed there when the marks are discovered on them. Asked how she knew the rebels were members of the RUF by learned Counsel in the Prosecution Team- Boi-Tia Stevens, the witness said that "I heard them referring to

themselves as RUF and that is how I knew." Back to what she experienced while in the informal and illegal matrimony with Kortor Koroma, she explained that "even when I am menstruating and tell this man, he would not listen, as he would often say 'that is not my business' as he was given instructions to have sex with me at anytime," adding that she had no choice but to obey or risk losing her life. Her daughter who was the one serving the Head of the RUF at one point in time the witness explained,

came and told her that Alpha as the man was called, had done a very bad thing to her; although the daughter she said, could not specify what the "very bad thing" was. Defence Counsel for Morris Kallon- Shekou Toure while cross-examining the witness put

it to her that she was happy with the relationship with Kortor Koroma and hadn't not been so; she had all the chances to escape. "There was no way I could escape, as I feared being captured by another group of rebels. So I decided to stay until..." Meanwhile, while cross-examination of the witness was

ongoing, Presiding Judge of the Trials Chamber of the Special Court- Benjamin Itoe told "learned Counsels" not to waste time in asking irrelevant questions, as the Tribunal has been wasting time; noting that they have been very lenient with Counsels. "We should try to speed up," Justice Itoe stressed.

AWOKO

Friday Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004

# NPRC Fighter Named At Special Court

*By Joseph Tacey*

Special Court prosecution witness George Johnson aka Junior Lion on Wednesday testified that former Secretary of State East in the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) regime, Captain Tom Nyuma, encouraged him to join the Ranger Force that was under the officer's command.

The witness said he was a

personal friend to Capt. Tom Nyuma before he joined his Ranger Force that vividly

pursued the RUF rebels during the early days of the rebel

war, adding that the officer persuaded him to join the Ranger Force.

George Johnson also explained that the Ranger Force was popular in the Eastern

Regional headquarters of Kenema because whenever  
*Contd. page 2*

## NPRC Fighter Named At Special Court

*From front page*

there were attacks on the town and its environs by the RUF rebels, they would be the first military men to repel those attacks.

The witness further explained that he joined the Ranger Force as a vigilante and fought alongside with some members of the Sierra Leone Army who also belonged to the Ranger Force and took command from Capt. Nyuma.

He explained that the Ranger fighters were feared by civilians in Kenema de-

spite their relationship with them was cordial. George Johnson revealed that in 1996 he was deployed in the mining fields in Kono District where he discovered a 5.25 carat diamond and decided to hide it instead of submitting it to his commander.

The witness further revealed that he was eventually arrested for the diamond and detained in Kono before he was finally transferred to the

Pademba Road Maximum Prisons the same year, adding that with he hid the diamond until he was released from the central prison.

When the defence counsel Melron Nicol Wilson for the second accused Morris Kallon of the RUF asked in a cross examination how George Johnson got the name Junior Bofo, he explained that he got the name when he was an athlete and a trainee in martial art in Kenema in 1990.

The prosecution witness also explained that he attended the Magburaka Boys Secondary School where he was well known for his sportsmanship.

*The Exclusive*  
*Friday Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004*

# HOW WE LOOTED F'TOWN, LUNSAR - JUNIOR LION

*By Mohamed Mansaray*

*Special Court prosecution witness, George Johnson alias Junior Lion told the court this week that it was they who looted shops and business houses in the far west of Freetown when they were pulling out of Freetown in 1998.*

The witness told the court that they also looted vehicles to convey their loot and other personal belongings. "Shops along Spur Road, Lumley,

Juba and Goderich were comprehensively looted," he testified, adding that they also looted filling stations.

The witness further informed the

court that they also looted St. Joseph's Catholic School and the Catholic Hospital in Lunsar in the Port Loko district, adding

*SEE BACK PAGE*



*Prosecutor David Crane*

## Junior Lion At Special Court

that missionaries in the town were also looted. "Dennis Mingo alias Superman looted medicines in the hospital while Mike Lamin looted vehicles belonging to the missionaries," Mr. Johnson testified.

The witness further informed the court that he operated a gun which he described as "a 16 mm. artillery mortar" when they were fighting ECOMOG forces in Freetown. Describing the weapon as destructive, Mr. Johnson testified that the weapon has a range of 2 miles radius and can kill many people. "I killed many people without knowing", he told the court, adding that he used the artillery whenever they came under attack from ECOMOG forces.

The witness was led in evidence by a prosecution lawyer Peter Harrison at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown. He testified openly in English.

Salome News  
Friday Oct 22  
2004

# Sanction imposed on Taylor supporters

...Shaw implicated

The noose is tightening on Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, slowly. Apart from his assets seized recently and his account frozen in Switzerland sometime ago, his home country Liberia has gone a step further to im-

pose sanction on his aides. Liberia has imposed economic sanctions on two people with connections to the exiled Charles Taylor. They appear on a list of 22 names compiled by the United Nations, which passed a resolution in March ordering the freezing of their assets. Justice Minister Kabineh Janneh says the government now has enough evidence to proceed with the resolution. Taylor is enjoying an asylum status in Nigeria and is wanted on war crimes charges in Sierra Leone.



**Taylor:reaching his Waterloo slowly**  
The assets of Emmanuel Shaw, a former finance minister in the 1980s and the former commissioner of Liberia's maritime affairs

## Saction on Taylor supporters

From front page

bureau, Benoni Urey, have been frozen.

The two men are both top officials at a mobile phone company, Lone Star Communication.

Despite persistent pressure on president Olusegun Obasanjo both within and out of Nigeria, he has persisted that

Taylor's asylum was granted after consultation with the international community. His foreign minister Oluyemi Adeniji is on record to have said in Freetown on a visit to Unamsil —where he served as Special Representative of the UN Secretary General— that no country would harass them to handover Taylor.

*The Independent*

*Friday Oct 22*

*2004*

Source: [News & Business > News > News, Most Recent 90 Days \(English, Full Text\)](#) 

Terms: **truth and reconciliation commission: history, truth report spares no parties** ([Edit Search](#))

Select for FOCUS™ or Delivery



*International Justice Tribune - English October 18, 2004*

Copyright 2004 Réseau Intermedia  
All rights reserved



International Justice Tribune - English

**October 18, 2004**

**SECTION: Truth and Reconciliation Commission : History**

**LENGTH:** 1395 words

**HEADLINE:** Truth report spares no parties

**BYLINE:** Thierry Cruvellier

**HIGHLIGHT:**

For those who have followed the tribulations of the Sierra Leone **Truth and Reconciliation Commission** (TRC) for almost three years, its official **report**, which was published on 5 October, constitutes a small miracle. No one could have predicted such a logically structured, abundantly detailed, and well-written **report** two years ago when the **Commission** almost dissolved itself through sheer negligence. Even a year ago when the **report** was first due out, hopes for a turnaround were not high.

**BODY:**

To accomplish its task, the TRC first had to broaden its scope beyond the official period - from the start of the civil war in March 1991 to the Lomé peace accords in July 1999. The **Commission** was not only mandated to document the serious human rights violations that took place during this period of terror (which witness testimony puts at 40,242), it was also charged with finding the causes. The **Commission** delved further back into pre-civil war **history**. No one who reigned over the small West-African country is spared a portion of the blame, from the colonial government to the two political groups that dismantled it before civil war broke out. The TRC commissioners write that until 1991, "corruption, nepotism and the plunder of state assets became standard government practice operating, as did the system of power, through patronage and exclusionary politics." They continue: "By the start of the conflict, the nation had been stripped of its dignity. Institutional collapse reduced the vast majority of people into a state of deprivation. Government accountability was non-existent. Political expression and dissent had been crushed. Democracy and the rule of law were dead. By 1991, Sierra Leone was a deeply divided society and full of the potential for violence. It required only the slightest spark for this violence to be ignited".

**Warning to the government**

Now that peace has returned and the two main historical **parties** are once again battling for power, the



**Commission** has issued a warning to their respective leadership: "Today, proper governance still remains an urgent challenge in Sierra Leone. Corruption remains rampant and there is still no culture of tolerance in political discourse. Many ex-combatants testified that the conditions giving rise to the conflict persist in the country and, if given the opportunity, they would fight again. Yet, distressingly, the **Commission** did not perceive any sense of urgency among public officials to respond to the myriad challenges facing the country", which it noted is a "lamentable" and dangerous situation.

The dozens of pages detailing atrocities are no less forgiving of those more directly responsible for the war. The **Commission** leaves no doubt as to their identity: first, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which was responsible for most of the documented crimes, pioneered the enlistment of child soldiers and championed drug-use among its fighters. The second offender is the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military junta, especially for its "atrocities on a massive scale" carried out in the north and east of the country and its evident "specialisation" in amputation. Next follows the Sierra Leone army and finally the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), in particular the Kamajors, traditional hunters known for their "forced cannibalism". The **Commission** notes that a "defining characteristic of the CDF is the initiation ceremony, described by many witnesses before the **Commission** as entailing gross abuses and violations of human rights". No **party** is spared responsibility for crimes: "There existed an astonishing factional fluidity among the different militias and armed groups. Overtly and covertly, gradually and suddenly, fighters switched sides or established new units on a scale unprecedented in any other conflict." The country was carved up without exception: "Sierra Leone was systematically plundered and looted by all factions in the conflict."

### **Diamonds, the fuel of the conflict**

The **Commission** has a serious disagreement with the Special Court for Sierra Leone [see article p. 3]. The **report** delivers a rebuff to Prosecutor David Crane, who has always asserted that the cause of the civil war was the battle to control the diamond supply. "There is a widely held belief in the Western World that the conflict in Sierra Leone was initiated and perpetuated because of diamonds, the country's most important mineral resource. According to this version, the RUF (backed by Charles Taylor) initiated an armed rebellion in Sierra Leone to gain control of the diamond resources. In the years following the initial attack, the proceeds from the diamond trade enabled the RUF to finance its war effort through the purchase of weapons abroad," says the **report**. However, "in the **Commission's** view, this version of the conflict is simplistic". It concludes that the diamonds were the fuel rather than the cause of war. Once again, the **report** sends a warning about the current situation: "An entrenched culture of diamond smuggling by key members of the political elite exists, as do appalling labour conditions in mining operations with children today still being used as miners. [...] Although the government of Sierra Leone has recently made progress at tackling diamond smuggling, largely due to the introduction of the new international Kimberley Certification Process (KCP), smuggling is far from eradicated."

The **report** also points a finger at external actors responsible for the conflict. These are states as well as regional organisations, private mercenary companies and humanitarian organisations. Although the **Commission** states clearly that "this was not a war imposed from the outside", it concludes nevertheless that Libya "contributed in a small but significant way to the conflict that engulfed Sierra Leone" and that "although there were no suggestions of Burkina Faso involvement at state level, it is worthy to note the relationship that existed between Charles Taylor and Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso". Unsurprisingly, the former Liberian president is perceived as the main external offender. "Charles Taylor and his Government's denial of support for the RUF was nonsensical in the face of overwhelming testimonies and evidence gathered by the **Commission**", conclude the commissioners.

### **Executive Outcomes, "clean" mercenaries**

More surprising are the conclusions on the employment, between 1995 and 1997, of the famous South-African mercenaries from the company Executive Outcomes. The **report** notes that: "Although Executive Outcomes engaged the RUF on several occasions, the **Commission's** data base has not recorded a single allegation of any human rights violation against the mercenaries." It continues: "While the use of mercenaries in conflicts should not be encouraged, the **Commission** notes that when the Sierra Leonean

Government contracted with Executive Outcomes it was in a desperate state of affairs." The **report** even implies that the suspension of the contract, after "considerable pressure from the international community", was an unfortunate concession. Although the **report** aims to avoid certain pre-conceived ideas, it occasionally runs the risk of appearing lightweight, as, for example, when it seems to give credibility to accusations that the International Red Cross was involved in arms trafficking.

### **Improbable compensation**

Paradoxically, cataloguing the violations and putting **history** in order is not the most difficult task. To fulfil its mandate of **reconciliation**, the **Commission** also directs its recommendations to the Sierra Leone government. This is clearly a far more delicate task. The TRC calls for the abolition of the death penalty, and notes that several members of the RUF who were arrested in May 2000 are still in prison. "This ongoing detention is tantamount to a continuation of the conflict itself, is corrosive to the prospect of national **reconciliation** and is evidence of the continuing struggle for justice in Sierra Leone."

But with 45% of the population aged between 18 and 35, attention is rightly focused on the condition of women, children and young people. Sadly, the problem of compensating the enormous amount of victims, added to that of a financially-ruined country, makes the **Commission's** recommendations on compensation highly theoretical. The TRC suggests that all amputees, war-wounded and rape victims be granted free health care for life. It also wants to see an (unspecified) monthly pension paid to these three categories of victims when their incapacity is judged to be over 50%. Free schooling is also recommended for children who were forcibly enlisted or are war orphans. But exactly how these compensation measures will be financed remains a mystery, even though the **Commission** has called on Liberia to pay a symbolic sum of compensation and for Libya to make a contribution to a war victims' fund.

**LOAD-DATE:** October 21, 2004

Source: [News & Business](#) > [News](#) > [News, Most Recent 90 Days \(English, Full Text\)](#) 

Terms: **truth and reconciliation commission: history, truth report spares no parties** ([Edit Search](#))

Mandatory Terms: **date from 10/16/2004**

View: Full

Date/Time: Friday, October 22, 2004 - 6:06 AM EDT

[About LexisNexis](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)

Copyright © 2004 LexisNexis, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.



## Tribunal Or Truth Commission

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

October 21, 2004

Posted to the web October 21, 2004

*- Liberia's Search for Genuine Peace At Crossroads, But T.Q. Harris' Campaign Team Says It Needs Not*

One year into the two-year period allotted Liberians to transform their society and governance process ahead of elections in October 2005, it seems they are too far from reaching consensus on what constitutes the fair way to pacify the victims of the recent war and keep the perpetrators at bay.

Those who are nonchalant about seeking justice simply want bygones to be bygones and those who think knowing the full story may force former perpetrators and would-be perpetrators to the bay, want a truth commission in place (The CPA agrees with this group.). But a third group believes justice is not served by telling tales about atrocities and they think a tribunal will permanently settle the scores. As Copy Editor Bill Jarkloh reports, the pro-tribunal group is not mincing words on the question of war crimes tribunal as the instrument of justice in transitional Liberia.

The group campaigning for the presidency of Mr. T.Q. Harris in the ensuing elections has underscored the inadequacy of the truth commission system of transitional justice and is therefore urging Liberians to push for a war crimes tribunal.

While the truth commission system of transitional justice may be applicable in some instance involving pawns in the war, the team contends, it would not be adequate for those who bear greater responsibility for the commission of atrocity against innocent women, children, and the early and desecrated whole communities in their quest for vain power.

The group did not name individuals in that categories, nor did it proffered a figure but warned that justice would not be served appropriately if the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as approved by the Accra Comprehensive Agreement (CPA) is allowed to substitute for real justice.

In a statement titled "Justice Knows Neither Victor, Nor Vanquished," sent to The Analyst, the Harris Campaign team indicated that most of what occurred in Liberia within the past 14 years was barbaric and criminal and should not be settled by just talking and confessing.

"While the TRC may be effective in addressing the emotional aspects of this senseless violence, an internationally recognized tribunal or court of law will establish the facts, which is essential to avoid mistakes of the past," the team said in its dispatch from the U.S.

The group said Africa's attempt to resolve the ever mounting problems through the method of "let bygones be bygones" and deceitful hugging of one another by parties at conflict resolution meetings, have proven to be flawed and deadly for the African people.

Arguing that the pursuit of justice against war criminals not as mere exercise of identifying victors or vanquished but an attempt to integrate the culture of democracy and rule of law in Liberia, the campaigners said, "Bringing to justice those persons responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Liberians is an important step in dealing with the problems that have caused this nation's collapse." The objective of searching for justice, according to the team, is not solely to punish or vindicate the guilty but rather to understand fully the root causes of such a senseless destruction of lives and properties as perpetrated in Liberia by so-called liberators and freedom fighters and to ensure that such dastardly act is never repeated again.

The team then reflected on the enormity of the problem the war has brought future generation of Liberians.

"The vast majority of Liberians will never recover from these losses, and the pain will linger," the team noted, adding, "For a long time to come, we will deal with a generation of uneducated, traumatized citizens who will place a heavy financial burden on future governments."

In view of what it considered the difficult task of national rebirth, the T.Q. Harris Campaign Team called on Liberians to accept nothing other than a war crimes tribunal if there must be an ounce of seriousness to bring corruption under control, eliminate discrimination, curb ethnicity and religious violence, prevent coups, and deal with the myriads of problems that plague the sub-Saharan nations.

While the Harris team did a nice job of raising salient points in favor of establishing a war crimes tribunal, according to analysts, it failed to appreciate the compromising position of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in light the difficulties associated with drawing a line between the overzealous cannon fodder and their masters.

If who bears the greatest responsibility theory is relied upon to the fullest, they argued, then before the law, the "Day-Body Bones," the "CO Deaths, Jungle Fires, and Nasty Killers" would bear the brunt of justice while their hidden masters go scot-free.

While there are disagreements over exactly how such a tribunal would work, some say, the argument that the drugged cannon fodder will be deemed in the court of law to bear greater responsibility for atrocities committed during the Liberian war while those who armed and sent them simply slip back into oblivion may not be farfetched.

This further heightened the question about the adequacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as the provider of justice in post-violence Liberia.

"But just exactly what is the role of the TRC, can it address the concerns of critics?" is the question many are asking.

Says Article XIII (1) of the CPA: "A Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall provide a forum that will address issues of impunity, as well as an opportunity for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to share their experiences, in order to get a clear picture of the past to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation."

Besides, according to the CPA, the commission will deal with the root causes of the crises in Liberia and recommend measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations.

It however did not say how, leaving observers to wonder whether the omission was deliberate or inadvertent.

But even if it did, others contend, the question would still remain, "What will become of the TRC if the War Crimes Tribunal concept turns out to garner broad-based support?" The debate continues with more questions that many would, for personal reasons, prefer left unanswered.

CBC.CA News - Full Story:

---

# Milosevic pleads to represent himself on war crimes charges

Last Updated Thu, 21 Oct 2004 19:16:37 EDT

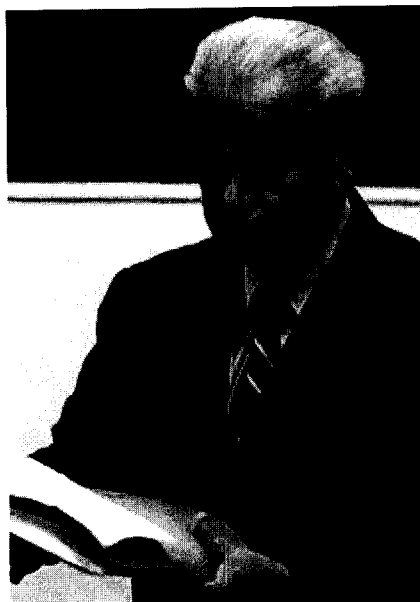
THE HAGUE - Former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic is pleading for the right to represent himself at his trial before the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

- INDEPTH: War Crimes

Prosecutors maintain he is not fit for the task because of continuing heart problems.

The former Serb leader conducted his own defence for the first 32 months of his trial on charges of crimes against humanity. But the proceedings were stopped repeatedly because of Milosevic's poor health.

In September, the UN judges appointed two British lawyers to represent him, prompting Milosevic to appeal.



*Slobodan Milosevic (File photo)*

Dozens of defence witnesses have since said they will not testify unless he is allowed to run his own defence.

Milosevic faces more than 60 charges including genocide stemming from the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, and could be sentenced to life imprisonment if convicted.

The trial is considered Europe's most significant war crimes trial since the Nuremberg trials after the Second World War.

No date has been set for when the judges will issue their ruling.