

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



Hills in Bo District.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office

as at:

Monday, 1 September 2008

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
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The Peep!

Monday, 1 September 2008

Monday September 1, 2008

PEEP! MAGAZINE (incorporating EVENING SCOOP)

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OPINION

GEETER'S BLOG

DIARY OF A HOME SICK WHITE BOY IN AFRICA (PART ONE)

I received this strange blog in my e-mail box a few days ago together with a note.

This is what these kids sent here by the UN are writing. You should take a look and draw your own judgement...

Geeter is a white expatriate, an American presumably, who gives a running commentary on our country.

He appears to work for the U.N. or a U.N. agency. He divides his blog into a PG (Parental Guidance) and non P.G. section.

We are bringing his views to you, unedited (except for length), because sometimes we need to see ourselves as others see us.

Your comments and opinions are very welcome.

Geeter's Travels [<http://www.geeter.blogspot.com>]: Gerold Wharton, an undergraduate major in Economics, African Studies and Chinese received an international internship award to complete an internship with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Public Health and Community Empowerment in Freetown, Sierra Leone. As a volunteer researcher, Gerold will be working with the UNDP's Peace and Development Unit in collaboration with various local NGO's, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, and other civil society groups working on projects dealing with solid waste management, hygiene education, and economic reconstruction after the country's decade long civil war.

9. KRIO

It is not politically correct to say this, but then again none of this blog is politically correct.

These are my thoughts and I let you read them to provide insight into my thoughts alone. What I say should not be taken any further than this post.

Krio is classified as an actual language and some have even attempted to set up a writing system for Krio.

All of this is garbage.

Krio is a spoken dialect not a full language- that is essentially English without verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, verb conjugation, nominative vs. objec-

tive case, and calls upon a third grade vocabulary.

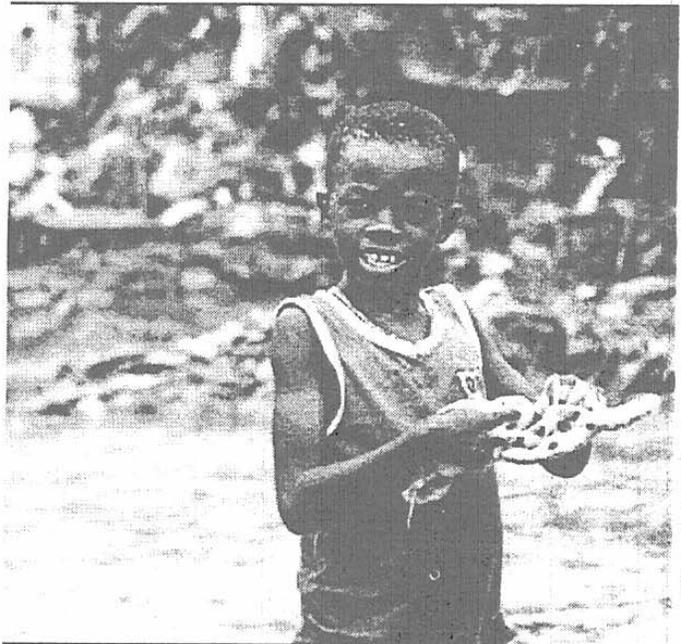
Is it politically correct or grossly inappropriate to name a pamphlet "*Wetin na speshel kot?*" (What is the Special Court?).

I would be infuriated if my children were taught formally in a specialized dialect that enabled them to communicate with perhaps a million people instead of learning the first global language spoken by 1.8 billion people worldwide. Sierra Leoneans have their own dialect- that is perfectly fine and wonderful. But it is not a true, independent language and thus should not be glorified as one.

If business in Sierra Leone was conducted in Mende or Temne or Limba, I would be much more inclined to learn these languages. But since it is conducted in Krio or poor English, it becomes quite irritating and annoying.

These kids can "talk the Krio" all they want outside the classroom, but I almost had a hernia when I heard they were being taught this stuff formally.

- *udat* - who ("who that")
- *ustem* - when ("what time")
- *usay* - where ("what side")



It should not be viewed as a progressive approach to the way different people speak. It should be regarded as insult. If you can read "*Wetin na Speshel Kot.*" you can also read "*What is the Special Court.*" There is no need to stoop down and belittle Africans because their normal, day to day spoken English is different than ours.

BBC World Service Trust

Friday, 29 August 2008

A witness testifying in Charles Taylor's war crimes trial has revealed the relationship between the Liberian rebel group ULIMO and the RUF rebel group of Sierra Leone. As the lead Defence counsel of Mr. Taylor, Courtenay Griffiths QC tried to point out the relation between the two groups, the witness told the Court that the RUF was engaged in direct business with the ULIMO fighters. The witness also testified to the expulsion of Charles Taylor rebel forces from Sierra Leone.

The BBC World Service Trust Mariama Khai Fornah now reports.

FORNAH: During his cross-examination, the witness told the court that Charles Taylor ordered the withdrawal of his rebels from Sierra Leone. The witness said the Liberian rebels were withdrawn because they killed Sierra Leoneans indiscriminately. He said they also failed to take instructions from the RUF leader Foday Sankoh.

WITNESS: The issue of Charles Taylor asking them to withdraw, they were angry about it. So they just went on doing wicked things. If you were a woman they would rape you. If you were a young boy they would beat you up or sometimes kill you. So that was the time the infighting happened between the RUF and the NPFL. That was what they referred to as Top Final and that was to finally flush out the bad ones and that only the good ones were supposed to remain. So that was the time they resorted to that Top Final. All the bad ones were supposed to be flushed out and the good ones remain, so that was the name given to it.

The witness told the Court that during the disarmament process in Liberia, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) fighters refused to hand over their arms and ammunition. He said the ULIMO fighters buried their ammunition in Lofa County in Liberia. The Prosecution witness said the ULIMO and the RUF later made business out of the ammunition.

GRIFFITHS: Now the topic we're dealing with is this connection between the RUF and ULIMO... Now prior to that, in 1997 you had been purchasing arms from former ULIMO combatants in Lofa County, hadn't you?

WITNESS: Yes. Not arms, ammunition. Not arms.

GRIFFITHS: Now it was in particular ULIMO-K with whom you were dealing for those ammunition purchases, wasn't it?

WITNESS: Yes, Alhaji Kromah's remaining boys.

The witness said ULIMO was organized in Sierra Leone and was fully supported by the Sierra Leone Government at that time. He said ULIMO was formed with the aim to overthrow the government of Charles Taylor.

At the end of the day's session, the Defence made an oral application in response to the Prosecution motion for the evidence of four crime-base witnesses to be heard under Rule 92bis.

According to Rule 92, of the Special court, the Defence has 5 days to reply to such motion. The Defence however asked for an extended time since the five days would not be enough for them to file in their reply. The Court granted their request for the time to be extended to the 12th of September.

For the BBC World Service Trust, this is Mariama Khai Fornah reporting from The Hague.

Voice of America

Friday, 29 August 2008

Liberia Truth Commission Hearings Spark More Controversy

By Brent Latham

Dakar

Two former warlords have testified before the so-called Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Liberia, as the hearings recently gained new intensity. Brent Latham reports from our West Africa bureau in Dakar, their testimony has sparked controversy on the streets of Monrovia.

The Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission was conceived as a forum to publicly air the disparate points of view of the principal actors in the country's bloody, 14-year civil war. It also gives both participants of the war and victims the opportunity to share their stories.

The testimony before the commission this week of two former warlords has stirred debate and opened old wounds on the streets of the capital, Monrovia.

Prince Johnson, whose rebel group in 1990 captured and is alleged to have tortured and killed then-president Samuel Doe, and Sekou Conneh, who led the rebel group that staged a bloody siege of Monrovia in 2003, both came before the commission this week.

The head of the Liberian Press Union, Peter Quaqua, said the pair described their versions of events, taking more credit than blame, and causing consternation.

"We have had a situation where some of the testimonies have been contested by people in public. For instance, Mr. Conneh, as a matter of fact, he was jeered, or booed, in the hall when he testified, and it seemed as though people who witnessed the actions of his men were certainly not agreed to the testimony he gave," said Quaqua. "So there have been discussions on the streets of Monrovia and people are very much bitter. There have been calls to talk shows and people are criticizing especially his testimony."



Prince Johnson (2005 photo)

Conneh, who launched a failed bid for the presidency in 2005, led the rebel group which made it all the way to the capital Monrovia several times in 2003, sparking large-scale looting. During the months of fighting, his rebel forces indiscriminately shelled the capital, causing large numbers of civilian casualties. But Quaqua says Conneh portrayed his actions differently.

"Mr. Conneh had modified his concluding statement at the hearing to ask that a monument be built for him as a liberator of the people. He has said that he has brought liberation to Liberia so we can have democracy today, and that has been his insistence," said Quaqua. "He has refused to take responsibility for whatever might have occurred during the course of the conflict, and he says he cannot take responsibility for things committed by his soldiers."

Conneh blamed former President Charles Taylor for the civilian deaths. Taylor himself is currently in custody at The Hague, awaiting the resumption of his war crimes trial before the United Nations-backed Special Court of Sierra Leone. This concerns actions which took place in Sierra Leone and not Liberia.

Taylor says he is innocent of any wrongdoing, and that he himself is the victim of international conspiracy. One of his early allies in the war, Prince Johnson, who currently serves as a senator, also made a controversial appearance before the truth commission this week.

In the testimony, while denying any wrong-doing relating to the death of former President Doe, Quaqua says Johnson described for the first time the unusual train of events that followed Mr. Doe's death.

"Clearly Prince Johnson's testimony has also been a subject of discussion, especially with his revelation that the former president who was killed was later exhumed and then burned, and that has sparked confusion in the streets," said Quaqua.

The Truth and Reconciliation commission, which has staged hearings throughout Liberia and in the United States, does not have prosecutorial or judicial powers. Several Liberian human rights activists are calling for a war crimes court, and convictions for those found guilty of atrocities.

UNMIL Public Information Office Complete Media Summaries 29 August 2008

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

Newspaper Summary

UN Envoy Urges UNMIL's Military Top Brass to Uphold Integrity and Professionalism

(The Informer, New Democrat, Public Agenda, The News)

- UN Envoy in Liberia, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj, has urged senior military officials and commanders of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to continue upholding discipline, integrity and professionalism among all military personnel serving in Liberia. Ms. Løj was addressing the officers during a monthly UNMIL Military Conference hosted by Acting Force Commander, Maj.-Gen. Carl Modey, at the Pakistani Military Engineers Base in Margibi County.
- "In the eyes of civilians, soldiers are always associated with discipline, integrity and professionalism, and I count on you to ensure that each and every UN peacekeeper wearing the military uniform in UNMIL adhere to these core values," the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) said. She also urged all military personnel serving the mission in Liberia to live up to their responsibilities in this regard and commended them for their good work in Liberia. "You are the backbone of what we are doing here in Liberia," she added.
- The Force Commander's Conference brings together UNMIL's Military Chief of Staff, sector commanders, senior military observers and staff officers from across the country, to review their activities, identify challenges and set new objectives and targets in support of the UN's mandate in Liberia.

Former Interim President Justifies Change of Currency during Tenure

(Heritage, National Chronicle, The News, New Democrat, The Inquirer, The Analyst)

- The media reports that former Interim President, Dr. Amos Sawyer said the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) changed Liberian banknotes because banks were looted during the civil conflict. Speaking at the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) public hearings in Monrovia, Dr. Sawyer said banks around the country had been looted and looters were holding containers of money which prompted the change of the "J.J. Roberts" Banknotes then in circulation. The former interim President said he treated the currency issue as a national security matter and had consulted the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) before the decision.

Lawmakers Quash Impeachment Petition against President Sirleaf

(Heritage, National Chronicle, Daily Observer, New Democrat)

- The House Committee on National Security has ruled out the possibility of impeaching President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as recommended by former Armed Forces of Liberia soldiers.
- The Chairman of the committee, Representative Saah Gbollie said the reasons given by the ex-soldiers are not sufficient to formulate an impeachment bill against the President.
- Recently, ex-soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia submitted a petition to the House of Representative calling for the impeachment of the President for "dissolving" the AFL which they say was in violation of the constitution. The Government has however maintained that the army was not dissolved but restructured.

President Sirleaf Signs Proclamation to Extend Legislative Session

(The News)

- An Executive Mansion release issued in Monrovia said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has extended the third session of the 52nd Legislature from the 1st to the 12th of September.
- The joint resolution was presented to the President Sirleaf yesterday at the Foreign Ministry.
- Receiving the resolution, the President commended the lawmakers for the action and said the extension would enable them do the “peoples’ business”.

Former INPFL Leader Says He Owes No Apology to Slain President Doe Family

(The Informer, The News, Public Agenda, The Independent)

- The News newspaper quotes the former Leader of the defunct Independent National Patriot Front of Liberia (INPFL) leader, Prince Johnson, as saying that he owes no apology for killing former President Samuel K. Doe. Speaking to reporters at a news conference Thursday, Mr. Johnson said his kinsmen warned him not to apologize to the late President’s family on grounds that he and the family have since reconciled.
- The statement by the former rebel leader now senator, followed a statement by the family of slain President Samuel Doe ruling out any possibility of reconciling with the former INPFL leader. Appearing at the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission thematic hearings on Tuesday, Mr. Johnson said the body of former President Samuel Doe was cremated sparking an angry outburst from the slain President’s family. Senator Johnson said he was being stalked by unknown persons and warned that he was capable of remobilizing his former fighters to defend him saying.
- Meanwhile, the Government issued a stern warning against those making statements that will undermine the security of the state. Speaking to journalists yesterday, Information Minister, Laurence Bropleh said government would not tolerate any comment that would jeopardize the prevailing peace of the country warning that government would resist any attempt by individuals to solicit support from former Commandoes.

Radio Summary

Star Radio *(News culled today from website at 8:00am)*

Court Quashes Julu, Dorbor US\$15 Million Lawsuit

- The Civil Law Court has dismissed the suit for damages filed against the state by two former personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia recently acquitted of treason.
- Retired General Charles Julu and Col. Andrew Dorbor filed the suit for damages accusing the state of malicious prosecution.
- Julu and Dorbor were claiming US\$15 million in special and general damages for financial losses suffered as a result of their illegal detention and prosecution.
- The court in its ruling said the men failed to establish that the state had no reason for trying them.
- Meanwhile lawyers representing the two men have announced an appeal to the Supreme Court of Liberia.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

President Sirleaf Impeachment Petition Dropped

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

President Extends Legislative Session

Truth F.M. *(News monitored today at 10:00 am)*

Government Warns Against Statement that Could Jeopardize Security

- Government has issued a stern warning against those making statements that will undermine the security of the state.
- Speaking to journalists yesterday, Information Minister, Laurence Bropleh said government would not tolerate any comment that would jeopardize the prevailing peace of the country

warning that government would resist any attempt by individuals to solicit support from former Commandoes.

- The government's warning is in apparent reaction to a statement by the former Independent National Patriot Front of Liberia (INPFL) leader, Prince Johnson, now senator that he was capable of remobilizing his former fighters to defend him.
- The Senator assertion followed a statement by the family of slain President Samuel Doe ruling out any possibility of reconciling with the former INPFL leader.
- Appearing at the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission thematic hearings on Tuesday, Mr. Johnson said the body of former President Samuel Doe was cremated sparking an angry outburst from the slain President's family.

(Also reported on Truth F.M. and ELBC)

Former Interim President Defends Change of Currency

BBC

Friday, 29 August 2008

Karadzic to plead at Hague court

Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic is due to appear at the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague to respond to charges of war crimes.

He will be asked to enter pleas to 11 counts, including genocide, allegedly committed during the 1990s Bosnian war.

If he refuses to enter any pleas, a not-guilty plea will be entered on his behalf, according to court rules.

Mr Karadzic, 63, was arrested in Serbia's capital in July after 13 years on the run where he lived in disguise.

Deal claim

The indictment, which is being amended, includes genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The alleged crimes include Mr Karadzic's involvement in an attempt to destroy in whole or in part the Bosnian Muslim (Bosniak) and Bosnian Croat ethnic groups.

That included the killing of thousands of civilians in Srebrenica by Bosnian Serb forces, and the shelling of Sarajevo, killing and terrorising the city's civilians.

The indictment says Mr Karadzic knew about the crimes that were being committed by Bosnian Serb forces, but failed to take action to prevent them.

The BBC's Mike Wooldridge, at The Hague, says it is almost unthinkable that Mr Karadzic would plead guilty to the charges laid against him.

Our correspondent adds that there may well be procedural delays to the beginning of the trial as the prosecution have indicated they may prepare a new charge sheet.

Mr Karadzic has said he will need time to examine any changes.

Mr Karadzic has already made it clear that he intends to represent himself during any trial.

Since his first appearance before the court 30 days ago, he has filed several motions including one contesting the appointment of presiding Dutch judge Alphons Orie, who he claims is biased against him.

The judge has now been replaced.

He argues that the trial against him is illegal because under the terms of a deal made with former US peace envoy Richard Holbrooke, he was offered immunity from prosecution. The claims have been ridiculed by Mr Holbrooke.



Mr Karadzic has said the court is biased against him