

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



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, 30 January 2012

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact
Martin Royston-Wright
Ext 7217

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Global Post (Kenya)

Friday, 27 January 2012

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatches/globalpost-blogs/africa-emerges/charles-taylor-former-liberian-president-not-cia-agent>

Charles Taylor, former Liberian president, not a CIA agent after all

Boston Globe admits its claim that Charles Taylor was a CIA spy lacked evidence.

NAIROBI, Kenya — The Boston Globe has all but retracted its recent story alleging that former Liberian President Charles Taylor had worked for the CIA.

Taylor's lawyer Courteney Griffiths had responded angrily — and threatened legal action — on behalf of his client who denies the allegation.

More from GlobalPost: Did Charles Taylor work for the CIA?

This week the Globe published a correction saying it "drew unsupported conclusions and significantly overstepped available evidence when it described former Liberia President Charles Taylor as having worked with US spy agencies as a 'sought-after source.'"

Before getting too carried away it's important to remember that Taylor may not have been a spook, but he still stands accused of some heinous war crimes committed in Sierra Leone. The trial in The Hague continues.

A video of Charles Taylor on trial at the Hague:

Daily Nation (Kenya)

Friday, 27 January 2012

Charles Taylor doubled as a US spy?



Charles Taylor is cooling his 64-year old heels at The Hague awaiting a verdict on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The former Liberian president wears the dubious badge of being the first African head of state to be hauled before the International Criminal Court.

He faces a life in the coolers if found guilty this April. Taylor pleaded not guilty to 11 charges of murder, rape and deploying child soldier during the Sierra Leone civil war.

He also allegedly helped rebels in exchange for looted “blood diamonds.”

But recent reports by the Boston Globe newspaper are that the father of Chuckie Taylor doubled as a spy for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

How did the confessions emerge after quarter century? Well, in 2006, the Boston Globe newspaper filed a request under the Freedom of Information Act for information of persistent allegations that Taylor worked for the CIA.

His brief was to gather intelligence on the late Libyan strongman Muammar Gaddafi, specifically, his role in the 1988 terrorist bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie in Scotland, his sponsorship of guerrillas across Africa, and the broader issues of Russian activities and arms trade in the continent.

Responding to the Globe request, The Defence Intelligence Agency, the spy arm of the Pentagon confirmed that Taylor worked closely with CIA agents in the early 1980s.

That was all. Any further information would “harm national security.” But details of his involvement with the CIA emerged during his war crimes trial in 2009 when he testified how intelligence agents helped him and four others escape jail in 1985.

Taylor had fled Liberia to the US after embezzling close to \$1 million in 1983 when he was the head of the General Service Agency for Liberia that handled procurement for the government of President Samuel Doe.

Taylor stashed his loot in a US bank. And fled. Doe sacked him, and requested the American government to extradite Taylor who argued he would be assassinated if he was condemned to a one-way ticket to face embezzlement charges in Liberia.

Taylor preferred to fight the extradition in the safety of an American jail.

And the Plymouth House Correctional facility in Boston it was, where he and four other escapees sawed through window grills of an unused laundry room, tied bed sheets together and slid down.

They then climbed off the wall of the maximum-security prison, and on to freedom.

Prince Yormie Johnson, who captured and executed Doe in 1990 told Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2008 that Taylor was released to topple the regime of Samuel Doe.

In his 2009 testimony at The Hague, Taylor repeated as much, saying intelligence agents helped him.

After the escape-by-sheet, he recruited 168 men and women and inducted into the National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL) and trained them as guerillas in Libya and on to Liberia where he became a warlord.

The one time husband of Jewel Taylor was Liberia's President from 1997 to 2003, when he resigned and fled to Nigeria after Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted him for war crimes.

He was captured three years later and handed over to the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

But Taylor, through his Jamaican-born lawyer Courtenay Griffiths, denied he worked as a spy "in his personal capacity" and plans to sue the Boston Globe over the revelations that are mere "speculation."

"Such unsubstantial insinuations are distasteful and insulting and amount to the character assassination of someone who is a revolutionary and Pan-Africanist" Griffiths said in a statement published by Liberia's New Dawn newspaper.

But Taylor acknowledged that Liberian Security Agencies and National Patriot Party worked with the CIA.

Griffiths is demanding for all the correspondence between the Globe and the Pentagon over Taylor's role as a spy and questions the timing of the revelation when his client's verdict is nigh.

Whichever way the case goes, it is not the first time Western intelligence agencies are using spies who were common currency during the height of the Cold War, sometimes with political ramifications.

Take John Dennis Profumo. As Kenya prepared for her independence, Britain's Secretary of State for War was girding his loins with a hooker, Christine Keeler.

The "Profumo Affair" became a national security issue when it emerged that the showgirl at a cabaret club was shuttling between Profumo, M15 spy chief Sir Roger Hollis, Sir Anthony Blunt, the curator of the queen's artwork... and Eugene Ivanov-the naval attaché at the Soviet embassy-where it had all been planned at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis- that pitted the Soviet's and Cubans against the US after America's failure to overthrow Fidel Castro.

In her 2001 bio, *The Truth at Last: My Story*, Keeler's brief from Ivanov was to find out when American nuclear missiles would be taken to the then West Germany.

Keeler had affairs with two other men who were killed by Soviet agents leading the press to investigate her.

The ensuing scandal that was uncovered brought down the government of Prime Minister Harold McMillan in 1963.

For the Soviets, the US and other European countries eyeing a foothold on African affairs and resources, spies came in handy.

And is now well documented, the Kenyatta administration had its own inside government in the name of Bruce Mackenzie.

Daily Nation (Kenya)

Monday, 30 January 2012

US newspaper backpedals on Taylor spy claim



By TAMBA MATTHEW NATION CORRESPONDENT

Posted Sunday, January 29 2012 at 18:58

DAKAR, Sunday

The publishers and editors of the Globe newspaper in Boston have retracted the story carried last week linking Charles Taylor the former Liberian president to spying for US.

The report had claimed that Taylor, the first African head of state to be prosecuted for war crimes by an international tribunal, had a years-long relationship with the US spy agency. The Globe said its report was based on information uncovered through a freedom of information request to the Central Intelligence Agency.

However, in a lengthy correction, the Globe said the front-page story “should not have run in this form.”

The newspaper said it had drawn unsupported conclusions and significantly overstepped available evidence when it described former Liberia president Charles Taylor as having worked with US spy agencies.

The story had claimed that the CIA “confirmed its agents and CIA agents worked with Taylor beginning in the early 1980s.”

However, in its correction, the daily said “the agency offered no such confirmation.”

Nevertheless, “there has long been speculation that Taylor had such a role,” the Globe added.

In a letter sent to Mr Taylor’s legal counsel, the publishers and editors of the Globe said the story was “not based on adequate reporting and drew unsupported conclusions.”

The reaction came from Mr David McCraw, the Vice President and Assistant General Counsel of the Globe which also belongs to the New York Times Company and the newspaper's editor Mr Martin Baron, a Liberian newspaper reported.

The letter from the publishers further explained the article "significantly over stepped available evidence" when it described Mr Taylor as having worked with US spy agencies as a "sought after source".

The reaction ostensibly stems from a threat by Mr Taylor to sue the newspaper and use American lawyers following the startling revelation on January 17, 2012.

Mr McCraw said he discovered the flaw after a careful review of the article and its sources especially the part noting that the US Defence department failed to provide further comments on the revelation citing security reasons.

In the initial report, the Globe article reporter explained that its source revealed the information in keeping the Freedom of Information Act and after six years of waiting.

But in Mr Taylor's reaction after the publication, he acknowledged that Liberian government security agencies as well as his National Patriotic Party of Liberia had associated with the US spy agencies but not himself "personally".

Meanwhile, it is expected that Courtenay Griffiths, who is Mr. Taylor's lead counsel, will proceed with a settled negation of the matter while his clients awaits the UN-backed Special Court's judgment in his trial for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The former Liberian president is awaiting the verdict in his war crimes trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Netherlands.

He is accused on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity on claims that he armed Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in exchange for illegally mined, so-called "blood diamonds."

The Sierra Leone civil war claimed some 120,000 lives in the 10 years to 2001, with RUF rebels, described by the prosecution as Taylor's "surrogate army," mutilating thousands of civilians by hacking off their limbs.

Agence France-Presse

Saturday, 28 January 2012

US newspaper retracts Charles Taylor-CIA claim

NEW YORK — The Boston Globe newspaper on Friday retracted a report published earlier this month that Liberia's ex-leader Charles Taylor used to work for the CIA.

The report had claimed that Taylor, the first African head of state to be prosecuted for war crimes by an international tribunal, had a years-long relationship with the US spy agency. The Globe said its report was based on information uncovered through a freedom of information request to the Central Intelligence Agency.

However, in a lengthy correction, the Globe said the front-page story "should not have run in this form."

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Taylor pleaded not guilty to all charges.

The Bellingham Herald

Thursday, 26 January 2012

<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2012/01/26/2367379/us-culpable-in-african-atrocities.html>

U.S. culpable in African atrocities

By CLARENCE LUSANE

The United States is shamefully implicated in the terror that Charles Taylor, erstwhile leader of Liberia, inflicted on the people of West Africa.

Beginning in the 1980s, Taylor was an informant and collaborator with a number of U.S. intelligence agencies that included at least the Defense Intelligence Agency and the CIA, according to Freedom of Information documents obtained by the Boston Globe. While it is still unclear exactly what Taylor did for the United States, apparently it was at least worth a jailbreak.

On Sept. 15, 1985, while languishing in a maximum-security penitentiary in Boston for embezzling nearly \$1 million when he was in the government of Liberian dictator President Samuel Doe, Taylor made a dramatic prison escape. He strolled into freedom through an open cell door. It's likely that someone in the U.S. security apparatus helped him slip away.

Four years later, Taylor launched a civil war in Liberia to overthrow the Doe regime. The war raged on for five years. He financed it by the illicit sale of blood diamonds, iron ore, timber and rubber, and by gang-pressing children into his National Patriotic Front of Liberia. This militia committed countless atrocities across the nation. He forced more than 15,000 children, some as young as six, to fight.

Taylor also played a huge and ugly part in the civil war in Sierra Leone. In both countries, he allegedly committed virtually every type of war crime possible, including using child soldiers, conducting and ordering massacres, gang rapes and torture, and generally terrorizing millions.

By 2003, he was forced out of the Liberian presidency. On the run, he ended up on Interpol's most-wanted list. Eventually captured and brought to justice, he currently sits in a prison in the Netherlands waiting for the verdict in his trial on charges of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The West has long lambasted the civil and ethnic wars in Africa and used them as an excuse for creating harsh conditions for aid. U.S. political leaders have demanded that nations in Africa stop tyrannizing their citizens and build democratic and transparent governments. Those arguments have become a lot more hypocritical and toothless with new revelations regarding Taylor and his reign of oppression.

That the CIA would employ an unsavory character may perhaps not be news. Taylor was, however, a particularly egregious case, with a personal pathological drive that went on for years. Although the CIA claims that releasing more details about its relationship would jeopardize U.S. security, it is essential that the whole truth be told. Too many died and suffered at Taylor's hands for the entire story not to come out.

ABOUT THE WRITER

Clarence Lusane is an associate professor at American University in the School of International Service. He wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine. Readers may write to the author at: Progressive Media Project, 409 East Main Street, Madison, Wis. 53703; email: pmproj@progressive.org; Web site: www.progressive.org. For information on PMP's funding, please visit <http://www.progressive.org/pmpabout.html#anchorsupport>.

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Nazret.com

Monday, 30 January 2012

<http://nazret.com/blog/index.php/2012/01/30/ethiopia-african-dictators-can-t-run-can-t-hide?blog=15>

African Dictators: Can't Run, Can't Hide!

By Alemayehu G. Mariam



The International Criminal Court (ICC) is on the chase; and over the past few months, things have taken a slow turn for the worse for African dictators and human rights violators. They are finding out that they can't run and they can't hide.

Laurent “Cling-to-power-at-any-cost” Gbagbo of Cote d’Ivoire was snatched from his palatial hiding place in April 2011 after he defiantly refused to give up power to Alassane Ouattara in a presidential election certified by international observers in December 2010. In late November 2011, Gbagbo was quietly whisked away to the Hague from house arrest in Korhogo in the north of the country to face justice before the ICC on charges of crimes against humanity (murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, persecution and other inhuman acts) that were allegedly committed during the post-election period. The U.N. estimates well over three thousand people died between December 2010 and April 2011 as a result of extrajudicial killings by supporters of Gbagbo and Ouattara. Gbagbo is the second former head of state to be tried by the ICC since it was set up in 2002.

Last week, a High Court judge in Kenya ordered Kenyan officials to arrest and deliver Sudan’s president Omar Al-Bashir to the ICC to face charges of crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide if he ever set foot again in Kenya. The U.N. estimates well over 300,000 people have perished under Bashir’s regime. Bashir unsuccessfully claimed immunity from prosecution as a sitting head of state. Nearly all of the other unindicted African dictators have chimed in to severely criticize the ICC and demand suspension of Bashir’s arrest warrant. Five other suspects are also sought on ICC warrants in the Sudan including Ahmed Haroun, a lawyer and minister of humanitarian affairs, Ali Kushayb, a former senior Janjaweed (local militiamen allied with the Sudanese regime against Darfur rebels), Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, a rebel leader and two others.

In another development in Kenya last week, Uhuru Kenyatta, finance minister and son of Kenya’s famed independence leader Jomo Kenyatta, resigned following an ICC ruling that he will face trial for crimes against humanity in connection with the communal post-election violence between supporters of presidential candidates Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki in 2008. The U.N. estimates some 1,200 people died in weeks of unrest between December 2007 and February 2008 and 600,000 people were forcibly displaced. Cabinet secretary Francis Muthaura, a close ally of president Mwai Kibaki, former Education Minister William Ruto and radio announcer Joshua arap Sang face similar charges.

The ICC had also issued arrest warrants for Moammar Gaddafi, his son Saif al-Islam and Libyan intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senoussi on charges of crimes against humanity. Last week, Libya's Justice Minister announced that Libya, and not the ICC, will be trying Saif al-Islam. Al-Senoussi remains a fugitive from justice.

Last but not forgotten is former Liberian president Charles Taylor who went on trial on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes in The Hague before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. He is awaiting a verdict after a nearly three and half year trial.

The ICC presently has open investigations against individuals in various countries including Uganda, DR Congo, Central African Republic, Darfur and Cote d'Ivoire. The rogue's gallery of suspects sought in ICC issued arrest warrants for crimes against humanity and war crimes include five senior leaders of the "Lord's Resistance Army" in Uganda including the notorious Joseph Kony and his deputy Vincent Otti and three other top commanders. In the DR Congo various rebel and militia leaders and Congolese military officers and politicians including Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo, Bosco Ntaganda, Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui and two others are targets of ICC investigation.

No ICC, No Justice?

The ICC, established in 2002, is an institution with a lot of legal and political limitations in its investigative and prosecutorial duties. For instance, it has authority over "crimes against humanity" only if the acts were "committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack." The crimes must have been "extensively or rationally orchestrated" by the perpetrators. The ICC can investigate cases only where the accused is a national of a state party that has accepted ICC jurisdiction and the alleged crime took place on the territory of a state party, or if a "situation" is referred by the Security council. Most importantly, it can exercise its jurisdiction only when national courts are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute such crimes.

The ICC has a very difficult job to do in investigating and chasing the world's worst human rights violations across the planet. Despite its recent establishment, obstacles and limitations, it has a respectable record. As of September 2010, the Office of the ICC Prosecutor had received 8,874 "communications" about alleged human rights violations. After an initial review, it declined to proceed with 4,002 of them concluding that they are "manifestly outside the jurisdiction of the Court". To date, the Court has opened investigations in seven African countries. Three investigations began following referral by state parties, the UN Security Council referred two more (Darfur and Libya) and two were begun proprio motu ("ICC prosecutor began on his own initiative"). To date, the ICC has charged 27 people and issued arrest warrants for 18 more. Five individuals are in various stages of trial and eight remain at large as fugitives. Two individuals died before their trials concluded and charges were dismissed against four.

The one unsettled question is what happens to those individuals who commit crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide in official or unofficial capacity but cannot be prosecuted because they are not part of the regime of the Rome Statute which established the ICC. For instance, Ethiopia has not ratified or accepted the Rome Statute and technically does not come under ICC jurisdiction. Does that mean the individuals who perpetrated crimes against humanity and war crimes in that country will never be held accountable under any international system of criminal justice?

The evidence of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ethiopia is fully documented, substantial and overwhelming. An official Inquiry Commission report in 2006 documented the extrajudicial killing of at least 193 persons, wounding of 763 others and arbitrary imprisonment of nearly 30,000 persons in the post-2005 election period in that country. There are at least 237 individuals identified and implicated in these crimes. In December 2003, in Gambella, Ethiopia, 424 individuals died in extrajudicial killings by security forces. In the Ogaden, reprisal "executions of 150 individuals" and 37 others were documented by Human Rights Watch in 2008 which charged:

Ethiopian military personnel who ordered or participated in attacks on civilians should be held responsible for war crimes. Senior military and civilian officials who knew or should have known of such crimes but took no action may be criminally liable as a matter of command responsibility. The widespread and apparently systematic nature of the attacks on villages throughout Somali Region is strong evidence that the killings, torture, rape, and forced displacement are also crimes against humanity for which the Ethiopian government bears ultimate responsibility.

In 2010, Human Rights Watch made a submission to the U.N. Committee Against Torture “regarding serious patterns of torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in Ethiopia.” Torture and ill-treatment have been used by Ethiopia's police, military, and other members of the security forces to punish a spectrum of perceived dissenters, including university students, members of the political opposition, and alleged supporters of insurgent groups, as well as alleged terrorist suspects. Human Rights Watch has documented incidents of torture and ill-treatment by Ethiopian security forces in a range of settings. The frequency, ubiquity, and patterns of abuse by agents of the central and state governments demonstrate systematic mistreatment involving commanding officers, not random activity by rogue soldiers and police officers. In several cases documented by Human Rights Watch, military commanders participated personally in torture.

Universal Jurisdiction

There are obvious limits to the globalization of criminal justice under the ICC regime. But does that mean human rights violators who are not subject to ICC jurisdiction get away with murder, torture, war crimes and genocide? Maybe not.

There is an encouraging trend globally that more and more national courts are willing to operate under the doctrine of universal jurisdiction to prosecute gross human rights violators for atrocities committed outside their countries. Simply stated, if someone who committed crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide is found in another country where the crimes were not committed, that country makes it its obligation to bring the perpetrator to justice using its own courts. For instance, Article 5 of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment provides that each State shall “take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over such offences in cases where the alleged offender is present in any territory under its jurisdiction and it does not extradite him.”

Universal jurisdiction has been exercised in a number of high profile cases. A Spanish judge charged former Chilean president Augusto Pinochet in 1998 for crimes against humanity committed in Chile. After years of appeal and delays, Pinochet died in 2006 without facing justice. A Belgian court in 2001 convicted the killers of two Rwandan nuns for war crimes during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. A Belgian court in 2005 indicted the former president of Chad, Hissène Habré, for crimes against humanity, torture, war crimes and other human rights violations committed during his presidency in Chad. Two weeks ago, a Senegalese court blocked the extradition of the Chadian dictator because Belgium failed to file the “original arrest warrant and other papers”. A German court has convicted a former leader of a paramilitary Serb group for acts of genocide committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997. Over the past several decades, more than 15 countries have exercised universal jurisdiction in investigations or prosecutions of persons suspected of crimes under international law including Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, the UK and the United States of America.

There are other non-criminal legal remedies as well. For instance, the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Unit (HRVWCU) in the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) National Security Investigations Division conducts investigations to prevent foreign war crimes suspects, persecutors and human rights abusers from entering the United States. It also identifies, prosecutes and deports such offenders who have entered the U.S. Over the past 8 years, ICE has arrested more than 200 individuals for human rights-related violations under various criminal and/or immigration statutes and deported more

than 400 known or suspected human rights violators from the United States. Currently, ICE is pursuing more than 1,900 leads and removal cases involving suspected human rights violators from nearly 95 different countries. HRVWCU receives anonymous tips and information from those who report suspected war criminals and human rights violators residing in the U.S. Individuals seeking to report suspected human rights violators may contact the HRV unit at HRV.ICE@DHS.GOV

Justice Delayed is Not Justice Denied, Just Delayed

Justice delayed is just delayed. The victims of former Chilean dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet might have thought justice delayed is justice denied. So may have thought the victims of Argentina's Dirty War. The facts are very encouraging. Since December 2006, Chilean prosecutors and judges have convicted hundreds of former military personnel in the Pinochet regime accused of committing grave human rights violations. As of July 2008, 482 former military personnel and civilian collaborators were facing charges for a variety of offenses classified under crimes against humanity. Among these, 256 had been convicted, of whom 83 had had their convictions confirmed on appeal. In the Argentine Dirty War (the generals' war against thousands of activists, militants, trade unionists, students, journalists and others), the mighty generals have been held to account. Many of the top military officers involved including Leopoldo Galtieri, general and President of Argentina, Jorge Rafael Videla, former senior Army commander and de facto President and other lesser known top officers were tried and sentenced to life imprisonment or long prison terms. Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's dictator for over three decades, his sons, interior minister and others are today facing justice in an Egyptian court. Syria's Bashar al-Assad of Syria and Ali Saleh of Yemen will no doubt face justice in Syria, Yemen or elsewhere. Justice will also arrive like a slow, chugging and delayed train for those who have committed crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ethiopia.