

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



Fish trap in Kenema 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:

Wednesday, 8 August 2012

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

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Daily Observer (Liberia)

Saturday, 4 August 2012

Opinion

Sacrificial Lamb

Written by Omari Jackson



Taylor considered himself the 'sacrificial lamb' for Liberia to have peace

The announcement that he would be concealed from the eyes of mortal men for almost half a century did not come as a surprise to him. What concerned the former Liberian president were the intrigues that characterized the entire charade. So while he received the news about his concealment with a sense of foreboding, his mind was afar, hunting the experience he had gone through in The Hague.

Though he must count his days, Taylor could only stare blankly at the prison walls, as beads of perspiration formed on his forehead, despite the humming air-condition, with its attendant mild temperature. Examining the road he traveled so far, Taylor could sense that he should have had a premonition of his eventual fall into the hands of his enemies, especially the day he predicted that he would return, if God willed it. In his temporary prison cell, he knew the die was cast. He had come so far to cross the Rubicon, and yet, the Rubicon was so far away. That his chances of gaining freedom were gone, was nothing much to worry about.

All said and done, he had fought a good fight. What else could a mortal do? Now that he had been condemned and presently caged like a violent animal, he would let destiny do the rest, and comforted himself that his sufferings were ordained by God.

In his final days in Liberia, he was assured of maximum protection by his presidential peers. That day was unlike any other day. After much consultation and self-examination he reached the road of no return. Dressed in white, he allowed his body to drop on the floor. Observers watched in horror at what had become of Ghankay in his final days. For they knew Ghankay was a man full of action and intrigue.

Two days to this scene, he met the elders of the land and told them the ultimate sacrifice had come for him. Now, it was the time to deliver his farewell message. Though in the secrecy of his home, he wept, for it was torture for him. His enemies seemed to be winning this time. He knew King David of old lamented his sufferings in the good old book, where he received help from above. Ghankay could not remain stubborn and be murdered, after torture, because the tragic death of the late president was too fresh in his mind. He did not want to fight till the last soldier was gone. He would explain his reasons to give up the throne and leave Liberia, at least, he believed, for a while. By now it was time and he lifted himself from the ground. After the initial salutation, Charles Taylor appeared emotionally overpowered. His voice was somber, his eyes glowing as if he had some inspiration.

Then his voice sounded purposeful, as he turned this way and that way.

“The people’s revolution,” he said, “had been justified as the former president’s administration was corrupt and responsible for numerous atrocities and human rights abuses.”

Ghankay knew too much was at stake, and was prepared to claim self-righteousness.

“Our friend and ally the United States refused to acknowledge the existence of war,” Taylor said, with reference to the LURD rebels. In the beginning, many of his opponents said there was nothing like the LURD rebels and that Taylor was creating imaginary enemies to perpetrate himself into power.

“The international community,” he said, “denied us our right to defend ourselves by imposing arms embargo.”

So now that he was being sent away, Taylor decided to remind the people about it. He said: “A UN travel ban prevented government officials from visiting Western nations to defend our cause and timber sanctions starved our country of revenue.”

A smile came across his face, when he said: “[The United States] caused this war, but we appreciate their presence. They can call off their dogs now.”

After a lengthy diatribe, Taylor confessed, “I’ve decided to make the ultimate sacrifice, and be the “sacrificial lamb,” the “whipping boy.” That was the crust of the matter. Presently, Taylor recognized that he was day-dreaming and doing a lot of thinking. Why did he forget his own prophetic message that he was a sacrificial lamb? Now he was seeing the writing clearly on the wall. The only difference was that he was seeing it on the prison wall. Long before he agreed to go into exile and spared Liberia of bloodshed, he failed to note that he was a doomed figure. Whatever anger he had against the United States and Great Britain, he realized he was caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. He had a serious disappointment but then he did not have many choices, and the only choice was for him to bow out of the government and leave into oblivion.

But considering the ultimate sacrifice, which hung over him like the sword of Damocles, he said: “I must stop fighting now.” The people applauded. But was Taylor making the decision out of fear? No, that could not be.

He said, “I do not stop out of fear of the fight.” Then why are you stopping the fight, Ghankay? Why?

“I stop now out of love for you. For me it is no longer important that I fight. What is important is that you live and there is peace.” Taylor’s words released an emotion that had built among the women listening to him, and they began to weep.

“I’m stepping down from office of my own volition,” Taylor said. “No one can take credit for asking me to step down.” But at the same breath, he contradicted himself, for leaving Liberia was too hard for him. “I did not want to leave this country,” Taylor said, choked with emotion, “I can say I am being forced into

exile.” About the suffering in Liberia he said, his voice low: “I can no longer see you suffer, the suffering is enough.” All along Taylor was fighting back tears while the women wept for him. The parting was unbearable! But in his characteristic manner, Taylor prophesized: “God willing,” he said, “I will be back.” Remembering these thoughts ignited the sentiments of sorrow and regret that had buried deep in his heart. He wanted to return as a triumphant leader, and not as a fugitive in shackles. Taylor saw it as the end of the world.

This is because for all his troubles, Charles Taylor believed he was a good man. Though the world considered him otherwise, he always believed that there was much humanity in him. The fact that he had been condemned for events he was far away from fitted his conclusion that he was like a sacrificial lamb, being disposed off for others. Yes, he made the ultimate sacrifice and willingly allowed himself to be sent into, what he thought, would be a brief exile, where he could have returned home to the loving arms of his people.

For the last couple of hours, Taylor had been reviewing the road he had traveled so far and the people who had all contributed, and ganged up against him. Questions that kept coming back to him were: Was his sacrifice, since 1989 invasion worth it? What was his legacy? Ghankay’s heart pounded in his chest and the thought that he might have been a failure frustrated him. For the last fourteen years, whatever he thought he was determined to achieve for Liberia failed. But was he really a failure?

Even if he was, he reasoned it was due to the involvement of powerful nations. “It was a system of divide and rule as usual,” he said to himself. “And the African just went for it.”

Then his mind went on the period when the revolution was launched. With hundreds and even thousands of volunteer soldiers, his forces swarmed across the entire land mass of Liberia. While his forces made significant gains, thousands died, or were cut down.

As he reflected in German, “Heute rot, morgen tot,” in which by the rough understanding, meant, “Today red, tomorrow dead. Here today, gone tomorrow.” He was bitter that thousands of his teenage soldiers were gone.

Taylor believed that his teenage soldiers who died for the revolution were the real heroes of the Liberian war. In pain, the former president reflected in Latin, “Heu, vitam perdidit, operose nihil agendo,” in which it is translated, “Alas, I have wasted my life, industriously doing nothing.”

He could argue against that since he succeeded in removing the despot from the throne. Like Ovid, (in *Metamorphoses*, 1, 190), Taylor could say, “Immedicabile vulnus ense recidendum est ne pars sincera trahatur,” meaning, “An incurable wound must be cut out lest the sound part be infected.” It was the method he applied when he launched the ill-fated war. And still, it is what his enemies would want him to experience. He was highly convinced that he was on the right side of history. His captors provided a pseudo “Onus probandi” that is to say, “the burden of proof,” for the crimes he was accused of. At least he had shown to the world that he was a man who stood up against a tyrant and won. So now that he was being sent away for good, he could say, in a manner of consolation, “Here The Man.” Ghankay looked at the temporary prison walls, and by calculation, he had been up for the last four hours, unable to sleep, since he heard the number of years he would be put away. Even nature had denied him repose.

It was the beginning of a long and a tortuous road that would eventually destroy him. Ghankay knew, and had been aware that the world had condemned him. But, whether the condemnation would lead to his death, he did not care. In those days where he was king in what he described as Greater Liberia, he remembered how the youths sung his praises.

“Anybody say no more Taylor we’ll kill you like a dog...”
 “Ghankay?”

“Our leader.”
 “Looting?”
 “Our pay.”

Those were the days that had passed like a dream. He heard a voice from afar and the former Liberian chief executive stretched his neck. The time was far spent. He felt his body sagging and he leisurely lowered his head; his eyes shining as he thought about the sacrifice he made to bring peace to Liberia.

3 comments



"The day's far gone; time's been recklessly spent as per my actions towards my own kind in all of life that I've lived so far and now, all that awaits me is a jar of poison to drink from the hands of ICC and fizzle away". - 2Taylor 4:7. A quotation from the deepest recess of the Ghankay's mind.

Ekay Monday, 06 August 2012 15:17

[Comment Link](#)



I have to write something! Who wrote this piece? Is this one of Mr. Taylor soldiers? Who made him a sacrificial lamb? His actions toward his countrymen and women or bad decisions? Liberians should be writing books about the war and not hailing a man who saw illiteracy and took advantage of it. We need to educate our people, those far away from monrovia. Similar days, like 1989 will come and the devil will look for uneducated citizens and give them arms to murder their countrymen and women again. So, to the person who wrote this paper, essay, hail to my king etc. Please I hope you have a book about the war in print and it is on its way to be publish. Thank You, My !!! sacrificial lamb.

ejuean Saturday, 04 August 2012 21:58

[Comment Link](#)



What an idiot and mass murderer. He should just shut up and serve his time and never to step his foot on Liberian soil. This murderer should never see daylight anymore. I hope there would a brave president who will take over and arrest all of them who were involve in slaughtering innocent Liberians. Ellen should keep in mind that Liberians have never forgiven her and that her time will come when she will be prosecuted and placed behind bars.

guess 1 Saturday, 04 August 2012 10:49

[Comment Link](#)

The New Dawn (Liberia)

Wednesday, 8 August 2012

‘General Butt Naked’ Supports War Crimes Court

T.K. Suah

The rebel general who commanded troops stripped naked at battle fronts during the Liberian civil conflict says he’s in support of the establishment of a war crime court here.

Joshua Milton Blayee, notoriously known as “General Butt Naked”, now an evangelist, said he and others identified as people who committed heinous crimes should have their day in court.

“Those of us listed in the TRC report of bearing the responsibility for the untold suffering of our people must be prosecuted,” said Blayee, who got the battle name “Butt Naked” because of striping himself naked at the battlefield as charms protection strategy during the civil war.

The ex-rebel general, who is the first former fighter to publicly declared support for the establishment of a war crimes court, said he was prepared to go before a tribunal to testify like he did during the TRC hearings.

“The trial would serve as deterrent to future generations because we do not want anything to create setback for the development of our country,” Blayee noted.

He once fought with the disbanded rebel ULIMO-J led by the late Roosevelt Johnson. Blayee testified before the TRC hearing in 2008 where he admitted to killing over 20,000 persons during the course of the conflict.

The Informer (Liberia)

Tuesday, 7 August 2012

'Make Torture a Crime' - RAL Appeals to Lawmakers - Resubmits Anti-Torture Bill

The Executive Director of the Rescue Alternatives Liberia (RAL) has resubmitted the Anti-torture Bill to the 53rd National Legislature and at the same time appealed to said august body to make torture a crime in the Liberian society by passing same into law.

Speaking to this paper in an interview yesterday at his Benson Street offices in Monrovia, RAL boss, Jarwlee T. Geegbe said the Anti-torture bill was submitted to the 52nd National Legislature, but regretted that said bill was never passed into law.

Mr. Geegbe said he of the thinking and hope that admirable men and women of the 53rd National Legislature will see logic in the Anti-torture bill before them (Lawmakers), and pass it into law so serve as an instrument in helping Liberia to be a torture free society.

According to the Rescue Alternatives Liberia (RAL), Chief Executive, the Anti-torture Bill was resubmitted to the 53rd National Legislature some time ago following the passed out of the 52nd National Legislature and added that there are plans by members of the 53rd National Legislature to discuss said bill for its passage.

"There have received some positive responses from the seat of the 53rd National Legislature that there will be a hearing this week and we are of the hope that members of this august body will put the Anti-torture bill on the floor for discussion and later send same into committee rooms for it to be considered and pass into law," the RAL boss noted.

He pointed out that his Civil Society group was in close consultation with some members of the 53rd National Legislature to have the bill (Anti-Torture Bill), pass and noted that it is the domestication of the United Nations, UN Convention against torture which was ratified in 2004 by the Liberian Government,

Speaking further, Mr. Geegbe noted that the issue of the Anti-torture bill is so important that if pass into law and considered as a crime in the Liberian society will put Liberia on path with other countries that are fulfilling the implementation of the UN Convention against torture which was ratified by Liberia in 2004.

He expressed the hope that members of the 53rd National Legislature will pass said bill, stressing that the Anti-torture bill is not contentious, but in support of what many Liberians have suffered the wrath of said ugly act(Torture) in the past and called on them(Lawmakers), to pass said bill so that others will not be victims of torture.

"We are of the strong hope and convection that the Anti-torture bill will pass because it is not controversial, it is in support of what most of them (Lawmakers), have suffered in the time past and of course it is time for them make their history so that what they have experienced others will not experience it," Mr. Geegbe pointed out.

He asserted that if the Ant-torture bill is passed into law, Liberians will benefit in that said law will be used as a national instrument that will hold perpetrators accountable for the act of torture and victims will have redress either taking would-be perpetrators to court to face prosecution.

Mr. Geegbe who is also president of the Liberia Coalition for Human Rights Defenders (LCHRD), added that the proposal in the Anti-torture bill is very strong and calls for high punishment like life imprisonment when the act of torture results into permanent disabilities or death.

Daily News (Tanzania)

Wednesday, 8 August 2012

US envoy refutes claims on Rwanda

THE Head of the US Global Criminal Justice, **Ambassador Stephen Rapp** has refuted reports that the US wants to prosecute senior government officials in Rwanda at the Arusha-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Speaking in Arusha, the envoy stated that reports by some foreign media outlets misquoted him (Ambassador Rapp) suggesting that senior Rwandan officials faced possible prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, for allegedly supporting the M23 rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"I did not suggest or call for any specific prosecution in this case," stated Ambassador (Stephen) Rapp who was visiting the Arusha-based ICTR.

Apparently the UK media outlets, especially the Guardian, somehow "mixed up" things because according to Ambassador Rapp, the context of the interview was Mr Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president who was, in May, sentenced by a UN-backed war crimes court to 50 years in prison for his role in assisting criminals in the neighbouring Sierra Leone.

The envoy however reinforced the importance of holding to account those responsible for crimes against humanity, pointing out that in the past neighbouring countries have been found to aid armed rebel groups.

"The US is working hard to ensure that cases of violence are stopped and this is also being achieved through ceasing all outside support aimed to empower rebel groups tearing nations apart as well as total demobilisation of such groups and protection of civilians and their human rights," stated the envoy.

Quoting Ambassador Rapp recently, The Guardian newspaper of UK carried a story which suggested that Rwandan leaders, who have been accused of supporting Congo rebels would face prosecution at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Already the ICC have released statements saying the International Criminal Court was not investigating any Rwandan leader, saying The Hague's current focus is on the arrest of the rebel leader Mr Bosco Ntaganda of the M23 rebel group.

According to the head of the Jurisdiction, Complementarity and Cooperation Division at the ICC Mr Phakiso Mochochoko, the court was not in any way looking at Rwanda, furthermore the country was not even a state party to the ICC.

