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SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR
FREETOWN – SIERRA LEONE

TRIAL CHAMBER II

Before: Justice Teresa Doherty, Presiding Judge
Justice Richard Brunt Lussick
Justice Julia Sebutinde

Registrar: Mr. Robin Vincent

Date filed: 5 August 2005

THE PROSECUTOR

Against

**ALEX TAMBA BRIMA
BRIMA BAZZY KAMARA
SANTIGIE BORBOR KANU**

Case No. SCSL – 2004 – 16 – T

PROSECUTION FILING OF EXPERT REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 94(BIS)

Office of the Prosecutor

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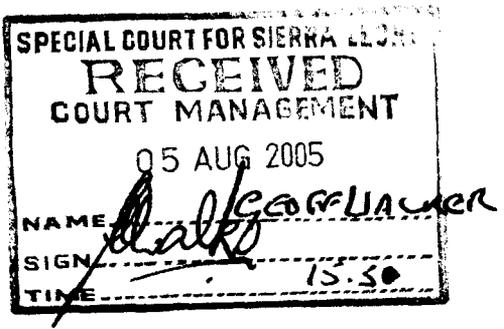
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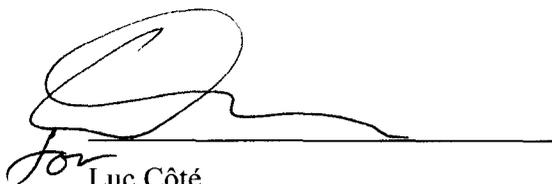
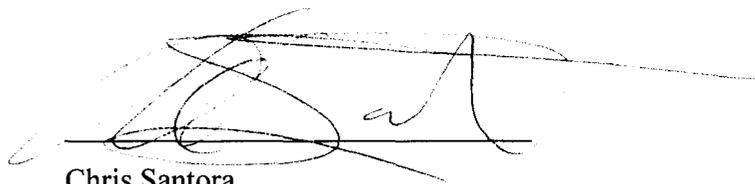
THE PROSECUTOR**Against****ALEX TAMBA BRIMA
BRIMA BAZZY KAMARA
SANTIGIE BORBOR KANU****Case No. SCSL – 2004 – 16 – T**

PROSECUTION FILING OF EXPERT REPORT PURSUANT TO RULE 94(BIS)

1. Pursuant to Rule 94(*bis*) the Prosecution hereby files the expert report of witness Colonel Richard Iron (TF1-301) entitled “Military Expert Witness Report on the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council” and a copy of the witness’s curriculum vitae, see Annex A and Annex B respectively.

Filed at Freetown on 5 August 2005

For the Prosecution,

Luc Côté
Chief of ProsecutionsChris Santora
Trial Attorney

ANNEX A

“Military Expert Witness Report on the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council” by
Colonel Richard Iron OBE

MILITARY EXPERT WITNESS REPORT

on the

ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY
COUNCIL

by

Colonel Richard Iron OBE, British Army

Norfolk Virginia

August 2005

PART A
INTRODUCTION

A1. I was first approached by the UK's Ministry of Defence to be a military expert witness in June 2003, to assist in the determination of the extent to which the AFRC and other organizations involved in the Sierra Leone War were military organizations with military command and control. Since then I have visited Sierra Leone three times to establish the facts upon which I can make opinions, spending a total of six weeks in country. I have read witness statements and interviewed a number of those who served with the AFRC and RUF. I have walked the ground with such witnesses, who were able to describe to me first hand what happened and where, and in what context. My discussions with them were almost entirely based on the military events of the war, rather than any particular crime that may or may not have taken place. This analysis has taken some 18 months to research and write, mostly at home in the UK and USA.

A2. This report analyses activities that took place over 6 years ago. Since there are few documentary records, it is primarily based on interviews and is therefore reliant on the personal memory of those that took part. It is inevitable that there are some inaccuracies and inconsistencies, and some details within the report may be inaccurate. It is also inevitable that there are other individuals with different experiences who have a different perspective on some aspects of this report. However, I have built a picture of the entire organization from many such personal perspectives, and although some details may be inaccurate, I am confident that the conclusions I have drawn and judgments I have made are accurate, except where I have indicated there is some doubt.

A3. Approach. In order to establish whether the AFRC was a military organization and whether command was effective, I have devised four tests. I then reviewed the available evidence against these tests in order to come to my opinion. In addition to this Introduction, this report consists of:

- a. Part B – Methodology. This Part examines the four tests; it explains the theoretical and intellectual basis for each test; and then describes the criteria to be used in applying them.
- b. Part C – February-December 1998. This Part is a narrative and analysis of the formation of the AFRC faction, from after the ECOMOG Intervention up to the launch of the operation to capture Freetown.
- c. Part D – December 1998-February 1999. This Part is a narrative and analysis of the Freetown Campaign; starting with operations in the Freetown Peninsula, the 6 January attack and subsequent battles, and the AFRC's withdrawal from Freetown following ECOMOG and CDF counter-attack.
- d. Part E – Analysis. This Part takes the methodology explained in Part B and applies it to the evidence, analysis, and judgements made in Parts C and D. It

reaches conclusions against each test, and then synthesizes the conclusions to reach a general opinion as to whether the AFRC was a military organization and whether command was effective.

A4. Terminology. In this report, the following terms are used to describe organizations:

- a. 'The AFRC' describes the organization consisting primarily of ex-SLA soldiers, excluding RUF elements; during or after the ECOMOG Intervention of February 1998.
- b. 'The RUF/AFRC' describes the bulk of junta forces following the February 1998 Intervention; but excludes the AFRC faction commanded by SAJ Musa and Gullitt that emerged from mid 1998 to early 1999.
- c. 'The AFRC faction' describes the force predominantly consisting of AFRC fighters that planned and executed the 6 January 1999 invasion of Freetown, and was led by SAJ Musa or Gullitt.

PART B **METHODOLOGY**

B1. Introduction.

B1.1. To determine whether an armed group is a military organisation in the traditional sense, and whether command responsibility exists, we need to examine four questions:

- Did the group have a recognisable military hierarchy and structure?
- Did it exhibit the characteristics of a traditional military organisation?
- Was there coherent linkage between strategic, operational, and tactical levels?
- Was command effective?

B1.2. It is important to note that absence of one or more characteristics of military organisation does not mean that military organisation does not exist. Similarly command and control that is at times ineffective does not imply absence of military hierarchy. All humans are fallible and no organisation is perfect. Mistakes are common even in well established and ordered armies: orders are occasionally disobeyed; decisions made that are illogical; systems established that are not coherent; some rules kept, and others ignored, for no apparent reason. In particular, personality conflicts are common among senior commanders in war, and can greatly influence decision-making. So, the question is not 'is this a perfect military organisation?'; instead it is 'does this demonstrate sufficient characteristics of a military organisation to qualify as such?'. Thus judgement is required to determine answers to the questions above.

B1.3. To establish a methodology to answer the above questions, I examine the characteristics of military organisations and the nature of military command. I start by establishing why military groups fashion themselves into recognisable military organisations, and why such organisations exhibit similar characteristics. I then examine their structure, both within the hierarchy of command and staff organisation. I list and describe the functions which military organisations typically require to sustain themselves and to succeed in conflict. I finally describe the nature of military command, including the elements of effective command.

B1.4. By comparing the evidence presented against these criteria for military organisations and their command, I intend to form an opinion as to whether the group in question was a military organisation and whether effective command was being exercised. Judgement will be required; it is most unlikely that any organisation will fulfil completely all the characteristics and requirements for military organisation.

B2. The need for military organisation.

B2.1. Conflict is an activity fought by humans against other humans. As a result, the human dynamic is the most important factor in conflict; and since all humans are different and respond differently to stress, fear, and deprivation, conflict is at root chaotic and unpredictable. Usually, victory comes as a result of managing this chaos better than

an adversary, and focussing activity to a common goal. Any person or group who intends to use armed force to pursue an objective therefore has to overcome human individuality through the creation of military organisation. Military organisations exist to achieve unity of purpose, reduce chaos, and mitigate its effects. Military organisation therefore exists in *any* conflict waged between recognisable groups; otherwise it is simply a state of aimless violence.

B2.2. Military organisations tend to exhibit similar characteristics because of the nature of conflict: highly complex, dynamic and adversarial. It is ridden with uncertainty, violence, friction¹, and human stress. Military organisations, and the command and control structures that support them, need to be able to accommodate such complexity: coping with uncertainty and exploiting it where possible; helping humans to deal with and overcome fear; breaking down the complex into the simple so to minimise the effect of friction; and maximising ones own forces' and commanders' willpower while undermining that of the enemy.

B2.3. Note that the *nature* of conflict is regardless of the *type* of conflict. General war and insurgency, whether today or two thousand years ago, have more in common with each other than any other kind of non-warlike activity. It should be no surprise, therefore, that military organisations tend to have recognisable hierarchies and structures.

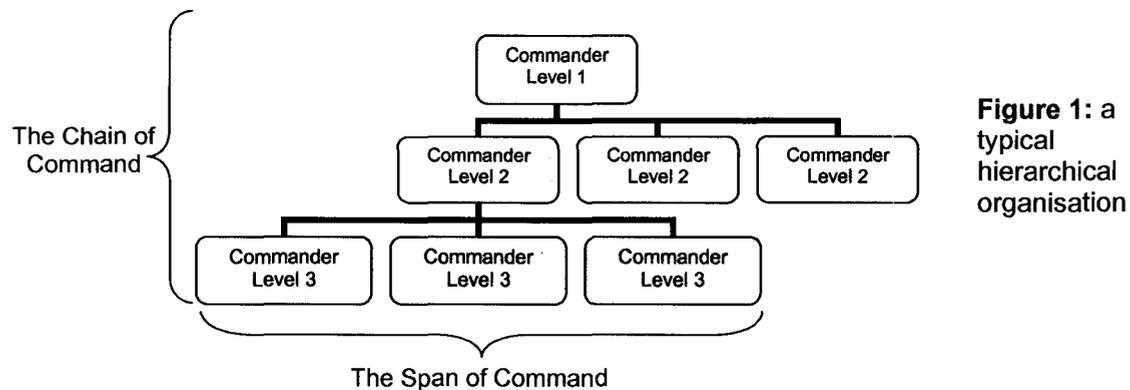
B3. Did the group have a recognisable military hierarchy and structure?

B3.1. The detailed structure of a military organisation is dependent on its unique circumstances, in particular the complexity of its conflict. However, a general model has evolved over millennia, and is remarkably consistent across cultures and time². It is the result of the human brain's ability to deal with the complexity of conflict: to limit the information the brain has to process, we create hierarchies with any one level of command responsible only for a limited number of subordinates. This is called the **span of command**, and typically consists of 3-5 subordinates in complex and rapid moving situations, maybe many more in static situations where the rate of information delivery is much lower and consequently less demanding on the human brain³. The coherent linkage between multiple levels of commanders is described as the **chain of command**. A typical hierarchical military organisation is shown in Figure 1.

¹ Karl von Clausewitz: "Everything in war is simple, but even the simplest thing is difficult, and these difficulties, largely unforeseen or unpredictable, accumulate and produce a **friction**, a retarding brake on the absolute extension and discharge of violence." *On War*, translated by Col J J Graham and edited by Col F N Maude. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962) Book 1, p. 53 and 77.

² This model is common to the Roman legions and the modern armies of the US, Russia, and China. It is also common to less conventional armies, such as the Polish Resistance of WW2, ZIPRA in the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe War, and the Provisional IRA.

³ For example, the British Army conventionally has four battalions in a brigade designed for mobile operations. However, in Northern Ireland the operation was more static, and each brigade typically had 8-10 battalions.



B3.2. As well as creating hierarchies to manage complexity in conflict, military organisations are characterised by a number of functions that enable them to live and operate. Some are common to all organisations, military or civilian, such as pay, communications, and provision of food. Others are specifically military in nature (although may also have utility in some civilian fields), such as intelligence and provision of weapons. These functions are described more fully in Section 4 on characteristics of military organisations.

B3.3. The mechanisms for implementing functions are determined by the unique circumstances of the organisation. A function may require complex organisation, or be combined with several others in one man. Others may not exist at all. However, the totality of activities required, even in a simple organisation, is beyond the ability of a single commander. Military organisations have therefore developed **staffs** to assist the commander. They consist of officers, not normally commanders in their own right, given functional responsibility to assist the commander lead, make decisions, and control the force under command.

B3.4. Staff officers are more or less organised into **functional branches**, with branch chiefs who may report to the commander directly or through a **chief of staff**. A variation of standard NATO nomenclature of functional staff branches, used by many armies and guerrilla organisations throughout the world, is:

- G1 – personnel issues
- G2 – intelligence
- G3 – operations
- G4 – logistics
- G5 – civil-military relations

Of course, other military organisations may organise their staff structure in completely different ways, although their functions will be broadly similar. A typical staff structure to support a commander is shown in Figure 2.

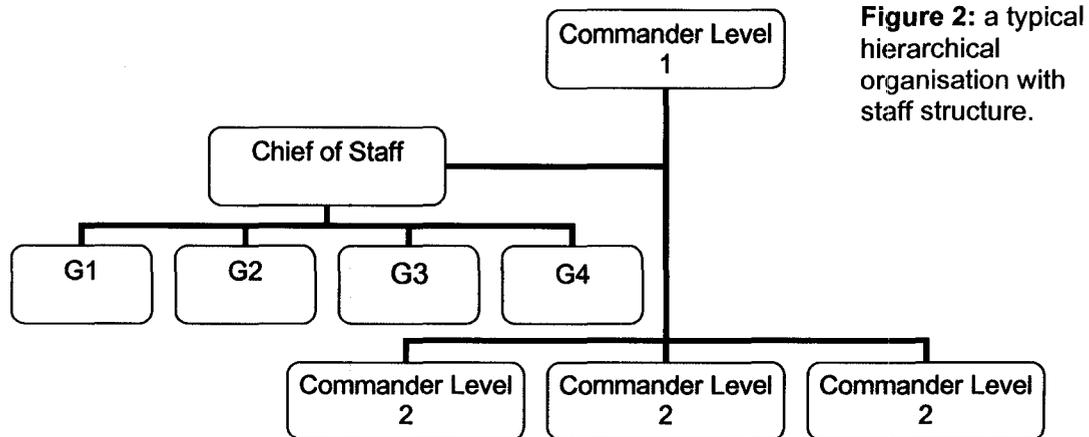


Figure 2: a typical hierarchical organisation with staff structure.

B3.5. The role of a chief of staff varies with the culture of the military organisation and personalities involved. However, he is often treated as a close confidant and advisor to the commander, as well as coordinator of the staff supporting the commander. There may in addition be a deputy commander, separate from the chief of staff. Again, individual roles are entirely dependent on personality, even in well established military organisations.

B3.6. Each level in the chain of command will have some form of support for the commander, although the lower the level the more rudimentary the support becomes⁴.

B3.7. Organisations need to adapt to survive, especially when the character of the conflict changes, or when fighting against an organisation that is itself adaptive. An organisation may need to change how it operates⁵, or it may need to change its structure. Such changes may be in its hierarchical chain of command, or its staff structure, or both⁶.

B4. Did the group exhibit the characteristics of a traditional military organisation?

B4.1. Paragraph 3.2 described how military organisations require a series of functions to survive and succeed, in addition to the activity of fighting, which are likely to require dedicated staff within the organisation. Typically, they would be grouped within a headquarters in support of the commander. This section describes these functions in

⁴ For example, in the British Army, even a commander of an 8 man section has a second in command, specifically responsible for provision of ammunition and other supplies.

⁵ Such as the German Army in 1917-18, which adopted "stormtrooper" tactics to overcome the stalemate of trench warfare.

⁶ Such as the Provisional IRA's move from battalion to cell structure, to improve security after several British intelligence successes following penetration of the earlier organisation.

more detail. Not all these functions are required in every situation; absence does not necessarily indicate absence of organisation.

B4.2. The Intelligence Process. Intelligence is information on the enemy or environment (terrain, civil population, weather) that has been analysed and ordered so that military decisions can be based upon it. Accurate intelligence is critical to success in conflict; although usually some compromise has to be reached between quality of information against the time taken to produce it. An intelligence process usually consists of some form of collection, communication, and collation and analysis. Collection of information can be by technical means (such as aerial photography and electronic eavesdropping), by espionage, or by observation (such as use of observation posts and patrols). Communications are required to permit the transfer of that information to the organisation that is going to analyse and use that information. Collation and analysis is the process for converting information into useable intelligence; in most regular armies it is conducted by specialist intelligence personnel. So, for example, a sighting by a patrol of a group of armed men moving down a road is an item of **information**; intelligence staff may be able to combine this with other information to assess that the enemy is planning to attack a particular point – this is **intelligence**.

B4.3. Communications System. Communications are the glue that allows military organisations to work in a coherent way. Without some form of communications system, effective command cannot be exercised over subordinates, nor can operations be coordinated, since military operations typically extend over far larger areas than that which can be controlled within the sight or earshot of one man. Communications can be transmitted by some form of post system, or carried by runners, or done electronically by radio or telephone. Communications need to achieve an appropriate level of reliability, security, and timeliness. **Reliability** is the degree of certainty the sender has that the message will be received and understood: if the system used is inherently unreliable (such as sending runners through enemy territory, with high probability of intercept) then redundancy is often planned (such as sending multiple runners with the same message). **Security** is measured by the degree of difficulty the enemy may have to intercept and understand the message. More advanced armies tend to use secure electronic communications; some others use systems of codes and ciphers. **Timeliness** relates to how long the message takes to transmit and (if necessary) decode. Frequently, its importance is not the total time taken *per se*, but time taken relative to an adversary. So, for example, one day to send and receive a message may be too long if the enemy can do the same in one hour, but may well be timely if the enemy takes two days. Military organisations in conflict frequently attack an enemy's communications system⁷, thereby causing a breakdown in command; effective organisations protect themselves from such attack.

B4.4. Planning and Orders Process. Military activity does not usually occur spontaneously; generally it is the result of a coherent plan that all or parts of the organisation will attempt to implement. The key part is the **decision** – the selection of a

⁷ Such attack can be electronic (eg jamming of radio nets) or physical (eg destruction of radio relay stations, or patrol activity to intercept messengers on foot).

course of action. This decision can be made singly by a commander, or may emerge through a more collaborative process: it is discussed in further in Section 6. Once a decision has been made, it is transmitted to those responsible for its implementation through an **orders** process. This frequently implies cascading orders through the chain of command, although orders can also be given simultaneously to an organisation through a general briefing, in person or by radio. In well established armies, orders for major operations are generally written and frequently supplemented by oral orders. For smaller operations, or where time is short, oral orders only are given.

B4.5. Lessons Learnt System/Doctrine Development and Dissemination. Successful military organisations learn from their mistakes or from enemy successes. Not to do so would risk strategic defeat once an enemy has identified and exploited a particular weakness. Successful learning requires some form of analysis of past operations, and a system for distributing good ideas or lessons. This can be direct to other units, or indirectly through the training system. For example, if one group finds a particularly good method of ambushing an enemy convoy, it will wish to pass on that knowledge to other groups in the same military organisation to increase the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole. It may also pass on the information to any training organisation so all new members of the organisation know the most effective method of ambushing. In this way, we can see that a military organisation tends to build a common doctrine – or *modus operandi* – which is constantly evolving as new lessons are learnt. Frequently, these lessons will be a result of evolution of an enemy, which is also likely to be a learning organisation.

B4.6. Disciplinary System. Conflict causes normal social structures and inhibitions to break down. Soldiers are trained to kill, thus overcoming one of society's strongest taboos. Soldiers are also expected to suffer considerable hardship; including hunger, sleep deprivation, absence from family, and fear. It is not surprising that, given opportunity, soldiers tend to lawlessness and excess. This is regardless of race or culture: British and French armies, after successfully storming cities in the Napoleonic Wars of the early Nineteenth Century, conducted atrocities similar to those seen in late Twentieth Century Africa. Although education can assist prevent such breakdown, the most reliable means of controlling soldiers is through an effective disciplinary system, threatening identification of crime and a level of punishment sufficient to deter wrongdoing. This may involve some form of military police and a military legal system to dispense justice and impose punishment.

B4.7. Recruiting and Training. Recruitment is essential for a military organisation to survive; either to expand, or simply to remain at its current strength to replace casualties, deserters, or others who return to civilian life. Some armies offer inducements to young people to join, others use some form of compulsion; this latter category includes those nations that employ conscription, such as Germany. Once in the organisation, the recruit then has to be trained in military skills, to become an effective member of the organisation. Usually this takes place in specialist training establishments, although it can be done on-the-job within a unit consisting primarily of trained soldiers who pass on their skills to the recruit. Training is also likely to include inculcation of the values and

standards of the organisation, so that the recruit comes to believe in what the organisation stands for. Frequently, there is some form of recognition at the completion of training, such as a "passing-out" parade or certificate.

B4.8. System for Promotions and Appointments. Military organisations are complex bodies, and there are many different appointments to be filled by people with a wide variety of skills. Some may be commanders, others radio operators, and others staff officers. As people gain experience in the organisation many become capable of greater responsibility. At the same time, others become casualties or otherwise leave the organisation; or the organisation expands offering considerable opportunities for new appointments. An effective appointment system seeks to marry the most appropriate skills to the right posts within an organisation, whilst at the same time attempting to meet the aspirations of deserving individuals. Within military organisations, appointments are generally tied to rank, and the most common system of reward is through promotion in rank.

B4.9. Logistic Supply (including Arms Procurement). Armies require considerable quantities of combat supplies to remain effective, typically consisting of water, food, fuel, and ammunition. Some, such as water and food, may be available locally. A light force that has few vehicles has little need for fuel. All forces depend on supplies of arms and ammunition, without which they cannot fight. Unless the military organisation runs some form of arms factories⁸, then it will rely on some form of procurement system to purchase munitions and other supplies from elsewhere. It then needs to transport the supplies into the theatre of operations; and provide some form of tactical transportation system to where they are required.

B4.10. Repair and Maintenance of Equipment. Many armies are reliant on technology and equipment, much of it expensive. Since military useage tends to be heavy, constant maintenance is often required to keep it working. Well developed armies rely on sophisticated repair and maintenance systems; armies less reliant on equipment may only have rudimentary systems for repair, or none at all.

B4.11. Medical System. Effective military organisations care for their injured and sick. They do this partly because they do not wish to waste trained manpower; but also it is to give soldiers the confidence that if they are wounded in battle then they will be looked after. A medical system requires effective evacuation from the point of wounding (often under fire), immediate first aid (to restart breathing or staunch excessive blood loss), and then evacuation to proper medical care, and subsequent recuperation. Provision of adequate medical supplies is essential. Well developed armies have highly effective medical systems⁹, matching the best available civilian standards.

B4.12. Fundraising and Finance. Military organisations usually need money, to pay for procurement of supplies and equipment, and to pay the salaries of its soldiers. Established

⁸ Such as the Provisional IRA that built improvised mortars, bombs, and rocket launchers.

⁹ For example, in the British Army the goal is get any casualty to an operating theatre within one hour of wounding.

national armies do this through government taxation and provision of a defence budget. Others do so through fund raising internally or externally: this could be through voluntary donations; or through exploitation of resources which the military organisation controls or has access to¹⁰. It is likely that sources of funds are likely to be strictly controlled: this also gives control of the supply system; and subsequent control of the military organisation as a whole.

B4.13. Pay or Reward System for Soldiers. Most people expect some form of reward for their labour. In most armies this is provided financially through salaries, coupled with some system of promotion or appointment reward system. In less well developed armies, or in environments where money has less meaning, such rewards may be in the form of goods, money, or enhanced living conditions.

B4.14. Religious Welfare System. Religion tends to play a significant role in many military organisations. Some military organisations are wholly based around religion, such as medieval Crusader armies; but even when not it is noticeable that in times of stress or high threat, an increased number of soldiers take solace from religion. Military organisations tend to provide opportunity for such religious welfare¹¹, either within the military structure, or permit access to it outside the structure.

B5. Was there coherent linkage between strategic, operational, and tactical levels?

B5.1. Most modern analysts divide conflict into three levels: strategic, operational, and tactical¹². War aims and high level objectives are developed at the strategic level; broad approaches are designed at the operational level, to achieve strategic aims; and then individual battles and engagements are planned at the tactical level which, together, achieve operational level objectives. In an effective military organisation, there will be clear linkage between the three levels.

B5.2. An example of clear, coherent linkage between strategic, operational, and tactical levels is Operation OVERLORD in June 1944. At this time the Allied Powers had the *strategic* aim of defeating Germany by opening a second front in Western Europe and invading Germany from both East and West. At the *operational* level, land, air, and maritime force was concentrated in south east England, to enable invasion of Normandy; coupled with *operational* level deception to convince Hitler that any invasion would be in the Pas de Calais. *Tactical* operations were then conducted to clear sea minefields, suppress German defences, and seize beachheads to permit rapid reinforcement.

¹⁰ For example, the warlords' control of poppy production in Afghanistan.

¹¹ Except for noticeably secular organizations such as Communist guerrillas in Malaya 1948-60. Even in such cases it can be argued that secular ideology or nationalism fulfilled the same need.

¹² This categorization first emerged from 19th Century Prussian/German thinking, although it was primarily developed by the Soviet Union between WW1 and WW2, resulting from experience of the Russian Civil War. It was adopted by the US Army in the 1980s, and rapidly became standard military thought in all major Western powers.

B5.3. Poor linkage existed for Operation BARBAROSSA, the German invasion of Russia in 1941. The German *strategic* aim was the takeover of the Soviet state through military invasion. *Operationally*, they intended a massive blitzkrieg to defeat the Soviet Army, with *tactics* of armoured encirclement. But coherent linkage between levels did not exist. The Soviet Army was too big, and the Soviet Union too large, for armoured encirclements alone to defeat it (a breakdown in linkage between tactical and operational levels). Similarly, defeat of the Soviet Army did not equate to the collapse of the Soviet state – for that Hitler needed to win support of at least some of the peoples within the Soviet system; but his own racist policies would not allow this (a breakdown in linkage between operational and strategic levels).

B5.4. Linkage between the levels of conflict also exists in non-conventional wars. In the Rhodesia-Zimbabwe War of the 1970s, the two guerrilla armies of ZIPRA and ZANLA had the strategic aim of forcing the collapse of the minority white Rhodesian government and replacing it with black majority rule. One of their operational-level objectives was the collapse of the rural economy upon which the wealth of the country depended. They achieved this at the tactical level through attacks on remote white farmers, forcing the abandonment of many farming areas through fear.

B5.5. There is much political, military, and academic debate on the nature of insurgent and terrorist groups, and how they may be different from each other. Both may use terrorist methods, but insurgent groups tend to operate within a military and political framework: simultaneously overcoming the opponent's military structure while building popular support for the insurgency¹³. Terrorist groups generally do not attempt to defeat opposing military forces, but intimidate governments directly into granting political concessions¹⁴. They may conduct tactical operations to have strategic effect, without the existence of an operational level. Terrorist groups therefore have less need of classic military structures; insurgent organisations cannot succeed without them¹⁵. This is not to say that terrorist groups cannot become insurgent organisations over time, indeed they usually aspire to do so; simply that when they are acting as terrorists they do not have the same strategies or structures.

B6. Was command effective?

B6.1. One useful model of command incorporates three overlapping elements: **leadership, decision-making, and control**. These encompass all the activities normally associated with command. In essence, command involves deciding what has to be

¹³ For example, the Viet Cong built up considerable public support for their operations, while simultaneously fighting the South Vietnamese and American Armies: a classic case of Maoist revolutionary theory in action.

¹⁴ Examples are the European terrorist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, misnamed “urban guerrillas”, such as the Italian Red Brigades and German Baader-Meinhof Gang. They consisted of small numbers of terrorist cells, who never attempted to combat the armed forces of their opponents.

¹⁵ The *foci* of Che Guevara and Carlos Marighella attempted to break this linkage in Bolivia in the late 1960s, by cutting off the guerrilla groups from the population and not build up a popular base for the insurgency. As a result, they were relatively easily defeated by security forces.

achieved (decision-making), getting subordinates to achieve it (leadership), and supervising its achievement (control).

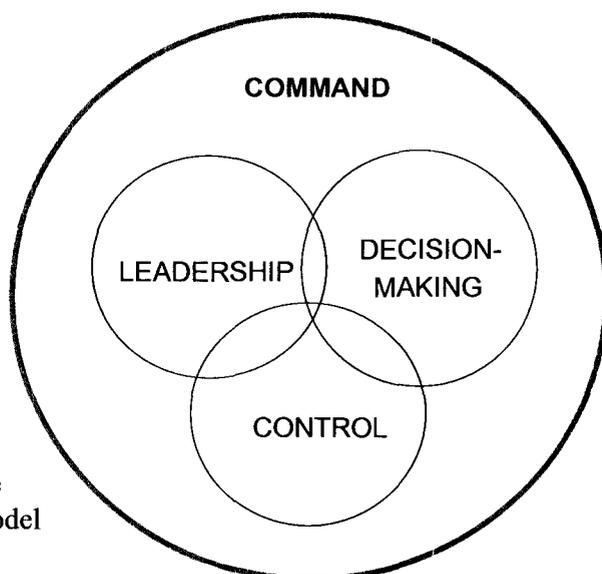


Figure 3: the command model

B6.2. Decision-making is the process of deciding what to do. It is the result of analysis, either rational or intuitive, to determine the best way of achieving the goals established by the superior commander. At the highest level, it will be to achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation. Accurate and effective decision-making relies on an understanding of the situation (knowledge of enemy, own forces, and the terrain). Such knowledge requires some form of intelligence organisation, to find out the enemy's dispositions, intentions, strengths and weaknesses; and also a system of reporting status and location of own forces. Knowledge of the terrain comes from maps, personal knowledge, or scouts. Decision-making can be done individually by the commander, or as part of a collaborative activity involving many of the staff and subordinate commanders. The final responsibility for the decision reached, however, remains that of the commander. The output of decision-making is operational plans, articulated in written or oral orders to subordinates.

B6.3. Leadership is an intrinsic part of motivating a force. People are usually motivated through both *physiological* and *psychological* means. Physiological motivators include food, shelter, security, and sex. Military organisations provide all these (except sex, for most armies); but on occasions military service also demands that physiological motivators are suspended, because of danger, hunger, and cold etc. Military organisations therefore also have to provide powerful psychological motivators. This is usually provided in two overlapping ways (although narcotics and alcohol could also be used):

- Belief in a higher ideal/vision: nationalism, freedom from oppression, religion etc.

- Leadership: provided through combination of example, persuasion, and compulsion. Its purpose is twofold: to unify to a common purpose (to create cohesion), and to inspire (to build the moral will of the force).

B6.4. Control consists of direction, oversight, and coordination.

- Direction incorporates the communication of a decision once made, through the passage of orders. This can be done face to face, in writing, or by radio/telephone. Direction is not only given at the start of an operation, but may be given during execution, to respond to a changing situation.
- Oversight is the process of ensuring orders are implemented. It requires communications and reporting systems so the commander is adequately informed. Oversight needs to be backed by a disciplinary system: this is normally achieved through a rank structure, investigative system, and punishment.
- Coordination of subordinate activities is required when two or more subordinates are working together in time and/or space to achieve a common goal. Although two subordinate commanders may coordinate together without superior command involvement, this becomes increasingly difficult with a greater numbers. Coordination requires effective oversight: reporting systems and communications.

B6.5. Judgement on whether effective command was being exercised is based on the assessment of the extent to which the three elements of decision-making, leadership, and control were present.

PART C
FORMATION OF THE AFRC FACTION & THE ADVANCE TO FREETOWN
FEBRUARY – DECEMBER 1998

C1. Introduction

C1.1. The purpose of this part of the report is to examine how the AFRC faction was formed and to analyse its operations prior to the invasion of Freetown, so to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the AFRC faction as a military organisation, and to assess the quality of command.

C1.2. The period of February-December was pivotal for both the RUF and AFRC after the ECOMOG Intervention of February 1998. It started with both organisations in complete disarray during the escape from Freetown, and ended with them launching separate but related attacks against the capital Freetown and the Western Area.

C1.3. This part of the military analysis examines the campaign in four broad phases:

- a. The retreat from Freetown, and the formation of the AFRC faction resulting from the split from the main RUF/AFRC force.
- b. The consolidation of the AFRC faction at Camp Rosos and Major Eddie Town.
- c. The impact of the arrival of SAJ Musa at Major Eddie Town, to take command of the faction.
- d. The advance towards Freetown, up to the occupation of Newton.

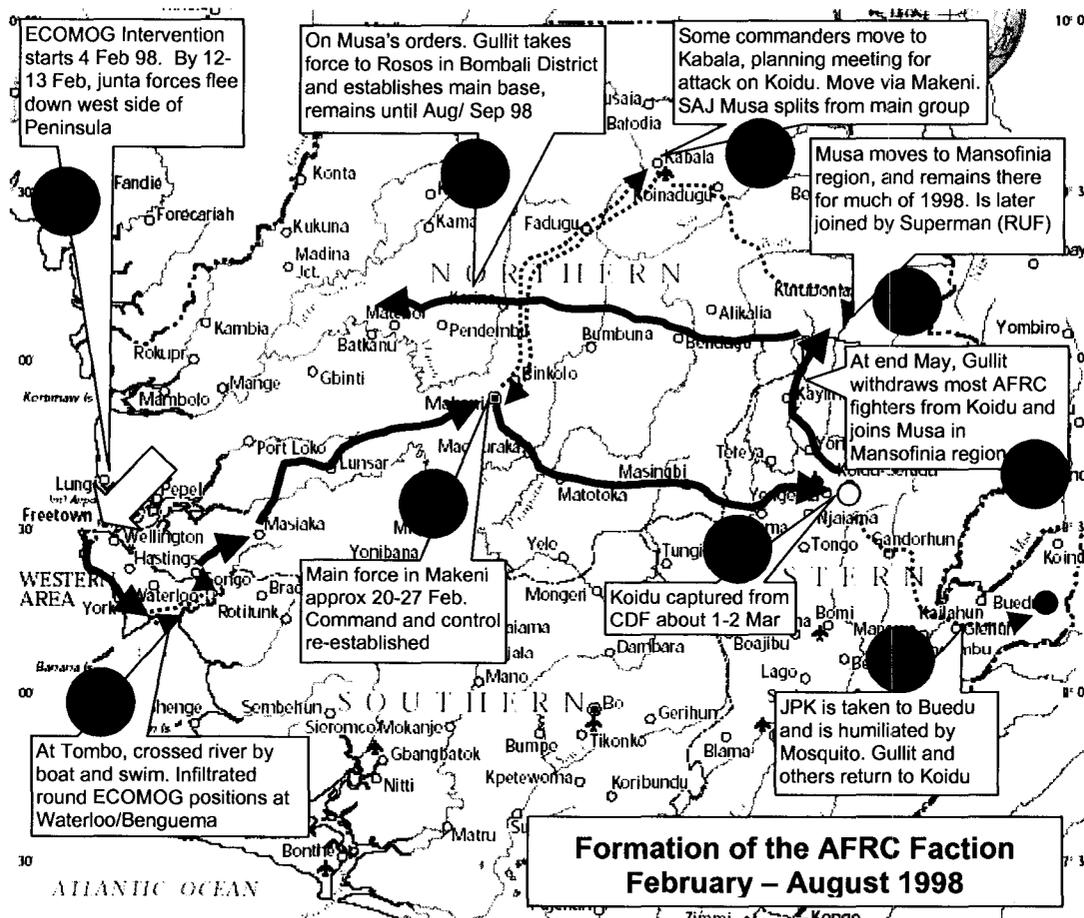
The narrative and analysis of the actual attack on Freetown, including the preceding operations at Benguema and Jui, are contained in Part D of this report.

C2. Retreat from Freetown and Formation of the AFRC Faction

C2.1. When ECOMOG attacked the junta in Freetown in early February 1998, junta forces collapsed after a week long fight. Since ECOMOG controlled the eastern approaches to Freetown, junta forces had no choice but to escape with their families down the south west coast road, as far as Tombo. Most escapees used transport – either civilian cars and pick-ups or army vehicles. North of Tombo the route was blocked by ECOMOG: the original intent was to attack this ECOMOG position, but J P Koroma abandoned this plan when he heard that ECOMOG had constructed minefields around Benguema. The escapees were therefore forced to take the river to by-pass the enemy positions; some with money paid local fishermen to take them by boat, others swam. Senior leaders managed to pay for speed boats (a typical price for one trip was Le500,000) to take them as far as Fo-Gbo. They then walked by paths to join the main Freetown to Masiaka Highway at around Newton, to the east of ECOMOG forces, and

then up to Masiaka. The journey from Freetown to Masiaka took about 3-4 days in total for most people.

C2.2. It is important to appreciate the chaos during this retreat: there was no control of retreating forces, no centralised defence, and no organisation of boats at Tombo. Identifiable military units and structures broke down. Nearly everybody had to fend for himself as best he could, and find his own way to Masiaka. The scene at Tombo was of complete disorder: everywhere there were abandoned trucks, cars, artillery, and stores. Over flying ECOMOG jets contributed to the panic. People coalesced into small groups in almost random fashion, depending on who they happened to be next to, and agreeing to stay together for mutual support. Instances of commanders imposing control were rare, although there are reports that Superman (an RUF officer) gathered spare weapons and ammunition at Fo-Gbo and organised a truck from Makeni to collect them. There appeared to be no distinction here between AFRC and RUF – small groups consisted of both in shared desire for survival.



C2.3. At Masiaka, the mass of AFRC and RUF fighters and their families, friends and supporters, stopped for several days rest. They settled anywhere in and around the town, again without order or system. AFRC and RUF were entirely mixed, and no distinction

could be drawn. There appears to have been little attempt to impose any form of order on the forces. Finding food was an individual responsibility. At Masiaka were also survivors of the CDF attacks on Koribundo, Pujehun, and Bo; it is impossible to say how many there were, but they included the brigade commander from Bo, Major A F Kamara¹.

C2.4. As ECOMOG advanced, the group set off for Makeni. There doesn't appear to have been any formal order for this to happen, although it may have happened through word of mouth as senior leaders departed. The vast majority of the column was still on foot, although some of the leaders had by now commandeered cars and pickups – mostly from Lunsar² and Makeni, and then driven back to Masiaka to collect the senior officers. The column marched all night and all day, arriving in Makeni during the second day. Many reached Makeni late in the afternoon and throughout the evening. There were reports of a large number of wounded arriving at Makeni, and taken straight to Makeni Hospital. Those seriously wounded were later abandoned in the hospital when the RUF/AFRC group left for Kono.

C2.5. On arrival, most of the column went straight to Teko Barracks; those who had family or friends in Makeni went to their houses. The barracks covers a large area with many accommodation buildings, and people found it relatively easy to find somewhere to stay or set up camp. Food was foraged or purchased from the local people, and for the time being Makeni was a comfortable and safe place to be for the ex-junta forces.



Figure 1 - entrance to Teko Barracks at Makeni.

C2.6. Before the Intervention, Makeni had been a joint RUF/AFRC base. Although they were still separate organisations during the junta government period, the RUF HQ offices were opposite those of the AFRC and there was close daily liaison. In the early days of the junta there had been natural suspicion between these two previous enemies, but both commanders had done much to overcome this; by personal example and through joint social activities (such as football matches). So, when the column of escapees arrived at Makeni on or around 20th February, they entered into an existing RUF/AFRC

¹ Kamara was one of the 24 army officers later executed in Freetown.

² The Catholic Mission at Lunsar appears to have been the source of much of the transport in the early period at Masiaka.

command structure that worked well. This is likely to have contributed to early re-establishment of organisation of the force. A muster parade was called for the morning after their arrival: men were organised into ranks, and commanders separated from soldiers. The force was addressed by both Superman and, possibly, JPK; the fighters were told that they were heading for Kono and Kailahun. Muster parades were then held each morning until the force left for Koidu, and a structure for the force created. There appears to have been little difference between AFRC and RUF members at this point, with inter-mingling of manpower within units; although it is likely that people naturally gelled with their own colleagues, so that it is probable that units were recognisably majority AFRC or majority RUF depending on the background of the commander.

C2.7. Some time during the stay at Makeni, the commanders and some forces moved north to Kabala, where there was a command group meeting to plan the move to Koidu. It was at this meeting that SAJ Musa appears to have split from the rest of the group; although there is a report that this took place later, during the advance to Koidu. He stated that he intended to remain in the Northern Jungle, so as to block any possible ECOMOG advance into Kono using the northern route. His plan is reported to have been agreed by the rest of the RUF/AFRC leadership at the Kabala meeting. It is difficult to decipher Musa's real motivation to split from the main group: it is my opinion, based on other decisions that Musa made, that he preferred a more independent role than being under the command of RUF leaders.

C2.8. The move to Koidu started at the end of February 1998, with fighters moving direct from Kabala though Makeni onto the Koidu Road. The majority joined at Makeni. The move did not go entirely to plan, with the advanced guard being ambushed by the CDF on the outskirts of Koidu, when they lost both their twin barrelled AA guns mounted on pickups. They appear to have retreated back to Makali after this ambush; reorganised, and attacked again. On about the third day, Superman's group finally captured Koidu town. It appears the CDF abandoned their ambush after their initial success. On receipt of this news by radio, the order was passed for everyone to mount up and move direct to Koidu. This last move into Koidu became something of a race, with all remaining groups becoming intermingled in the rush to get into the town. For those on foot, the march took all day and most of the night, arriving just before dawn. On arrival in Koidu, once again it took time to reorganise the force, after control broke down during the move. Superman established an HQ in Dabundeh Street, behind the Opera Cinema, and established control of the force. At the meeting orders were



Figure 2 - Koidu, Dabundeh Street HQ, established by Superman on arrival.

given for defence of the town, and forces allocated to each of four sectors around the town. The AFRC was allocated the Masingbi Road area to the west of Koidu; most AFRC soldiers at this stage were now part of this main AFRC group.

C2.9. Once Koidu was captured, a team went back to Magbonkineh³ to collect JP Koroma. He was brought to Koidu where he stayed about 2-3 days. He was acknowledged as the overall commander while in Koidu, and Issa Sesay and Superman took his orders (including clearing the area of civilians). It is not absolutely clear why he then went to Buedu: some witnesses indicate that Mosquito had ordered him to be brought to Buedu; others indicate that it was his decision, prior to going to Liberia to seek logistic support. He had some difficulty on the route as the road was blocked by the CDF. He was therefore forced to take the jungle route which would eventually become the RUF's main resupply route from Beudu to Koidu. He was accompanied by Issa Sesay and Gullit, among others, leaving Bazy to command AFRC forces at Koidu.

C2.10. At Buedu, JP Koroma was received at Mosquito's house where he was subject to severe humiliation by Mosquito and Issa Sesay. Koroma was disarmed, and was stripped and searched and, reportedly, his wife raped. Mosquito said that one of Koroma's body guards had informed on him, that he was planning to escape across the border with seven bags of diamonds. Mosquito took the diamonds. Koroma was effectively in RUF custody for the next year. He was kept in the neighbouring village of Kangama, about 5 km away. He was permitted his family and bodyguards, but did not have access to a radio and his freedom of movement was severely limited. It is possible that Mosquito told the truth, and that Koroma intended to flee. However, there had been reports of disagreements between Mosquito and JP Koroma from the junta period in Freetown, and it is equally possible that Mosquito planned this event so as to remove JP Koroma from contesting command of the RUF/AFRC.



Figure 3 - Mosquito's house in Buedu. This was the scene of JP Koroma's humiliation by Mosquito and Issa Sesay.

C2.11. Gullit remained at Buedu until May 1998, when he returned to Koidu to deal with some RUF/AFRC in-fighting. On arrival, ECOMOG forces were advancing into Kono District to recapture Koidu, and RUF/AFRC forces were pulling out of Koidu into the surrounding jungle (from which they would eventually besiege the garrison and destroy it). Gullit assumed command of the AFRC forces and quickly decided that he would

³ It appears that many of the commanders returned to Makeni following the CDF ambush on the outskirts of Koidu. JP Koroma seems to have gone back to his home village of Magbonkineh, just north of Makeni.

leave Koidu and lead them to join SAJ Musa, still in the Northern Jungle, reportedly as a result of JP Koroma's humiliation at Buedu. He ordered all AFRC to rendezvous at Tombudu and then led them via Yomadu to Mansofina. Leaving most of the force there, Gullit and others commanders went forward to meet SAJ Musa at Mongor Bendugu. Gullit explained what had happened at Buedu, and asked Musa for orders. Musa told him to take his force to the Rosos area in Bombali, to the west, and assigned him a number of reinforcements from his own force (including "55"). Gullit subsequently returned to the main body at Mansofina, and conducted a complete re-structuring of the force. He created a brigade headquarters, and divided the majority of troops into four companies (later to become battalions). Although subsequently amended and built upon, this basic structure remained intact until after the retreat from Freetown.

C3. June – December 1998: Camp Rosos and Major Eddie Town

C3.1. The move to Rosos took some time with a number of contacts against ECOMOG positions. The force also attacked and destroyed a number of villages en route. During one of these contacts the AFRC radio operator deserted with the radio, so the force was unable to communicate effectively since the only other radio had no microphone. They arrived at Rosos sometime in June.

C3.2. The force remained in Camp Rosos until September. During this period they mounted a number of attacks in the local area, and ran a 3 week training course to convert abducted civilians into fighters. A total of 77 were trained, including women and children. Although the AFRC faction maintained its traditional military structures, its time in the jungle with the RUF was making it look similar to the RUF in some aspects, including the use of child soldiers. The AFRC had little choice but to run such training: there was a finite number of trained ex-SLA soldiers, and each casualty or other loss could not be otherwise replaced.

C3.3. On one of the raids on an ECOMOG base, a microphone was captured which permitted communications to be established with SAJ Musa. Interestingly, Gullit also called Mosquito and Issa Sesay: despite taking the AFRC force away from under direct RUF command, he took care to restore personal relationships with the RUF leadership. He was still clearly interested in cooperating with the RUF. It is difficult to assess whether he hoped simply to coordinate operations; or whether he was keeping his options open for possible later rapprochement.

C3.4. Sometime in early September Camp Rosos was discovered by ECOMOG who conducted an air raid against it. Although the damage caused was light, Gullit decided he should evacuate Camp Rosos, moving 20km further into the jungle to the west, and occupying Gberi Mantmtank and a number of other surrounding villages. The area was originally named after Major Eddie, the AFRC Brigade Major⁴, although it changed its name to Colonel Eddie Town after Gullit promoted him to lieutenant colonel sometime in

⁴ A "Brigade Major" is the principal staff officer in a brigade staff; he is responsible for supervising the rest of the staff.

late 1998. Gberi⁵ is some 30 km to the east of Kambia, on the south east bank of the Little Scabies River. Few, if any, of its AFRC inhabitants ever knew its name, since the inhabitants fled before the AFRC fighters arrived.



Figure 4 - general view of main street, Gberi (Major Eddie Town)

C3.5. For most of the time while at Major Eddie Town, the force continued to be organised as a brigade headquarters (often described as the “brigade administration”) and four companies, later re-designated as battalions. These battalions were smaller than usual in conventional armies⁶. One battalion is reported to have had 150 armed men; it was supplemented by about 200 abducted civilians: males used as labourers, and females described as the

“families” of the fighters. Together with other forces directly under brigade control, the total armed strength of the AFRC faction was about 700-800 at this time. They were still mostly ex-SLA soldiers; in one battalion there were about 30 abductees who had received military training at Rosos, and 14 RUF members (7 men, 5 women, and 2 children). The command structure was made up entirely of ex-SLA soldiers.

C3.6. Major Eddie Town itself is a medium size village, with a peacetime population of about 600. The AFRC faction settled its brigade headquarters here, with senior commanders and their bodyguards occupying the houses in the centre of the village. Other buildings were used for the radio, infirmary, and provost staff⁷.

C3.7. The four battalions were deployed in nearby villages to the south: 1st Battalion was at Kufkaw; 2nd Battalion was at Laia; 3rd Battalion was at Gberi with the brigade HQ; and 4th Battalion was at Rochin. The outlying villages were all 2-5 km from Gberi. This dispersion made it more difficult to find and attack the AFRC forces; and the disposition of the battalions provided security for the force HQ at Gberi.

C3.8. The force was fairly settled during the three months it was at Major Eddie Town. Daily routine in the jungle was similar to that of the RUF; adopted during their time with the RUF outside Koidu. Battalions would hold muster parades every other morning

⁵ Gberi is not shown on most maps, but is at Grid Reference 605133.

⁶ For example, typical battalions in the British Army are 550-750 strong, made up of 4 companies each of about 100 and a headquarter element.

⁷ The provost staff was the military police, under the Provost Marshall, Major (later Lt Col) King.

before dawn (including Christian and Moslem prayers); these were conducted in standard military fashion – soldiers were drawn up in three ranks by the regimental sergeant major (RSM); the officers would then march on (a total of 5); and the second-in-command would present the parade to the battalion commander. After the parade the soldiers and their families would disperse into the jungle to avoid air attack during the day. These daytime dispersal areas were known as “Zoo Bush”. Families would take cooking utensils and food for the day. Abductees were used to harvest nearby rice crops, which was the main source of food. All the camps had guard posts on the entrance routes; typically these were organised into two shifts, changing over at 0600hrs and 1800hrs daily.

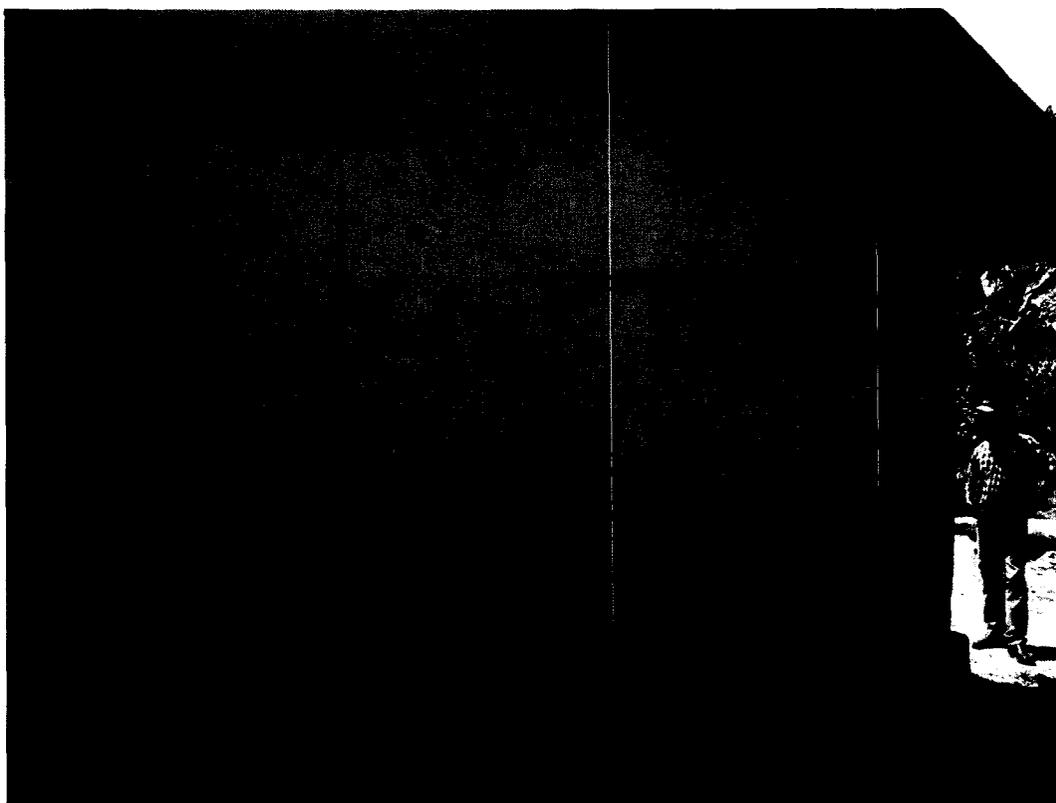


Figure 5 - AFRC graffiti in Rochin village, base of the AFRC 4th Battalion. It illustrates many of the weapons used by the AFRC. Armoured vehicles were used by ECOMOG forces.

C3.9. Battalions were structured along classic military lines. Under the commanding officer and second in command were a number of companies (perhaps 3 or 4), although they were closer in size to a regular army platoon. Each company would be commanded by an officer. The RSM was primarily responsible to the commanding officer for discipline within the non-commissioned officers and soldiers. The battalion also had a G4 officer responsible for logistics and a G5 officer responsible for the security and management of the abducted civilians.

C3.10. There appears to have been little effort to use this time to conduct further military training; most of the days were spent relaxing under the jungle canopy. Although

weapons were kept clean, the AFRC faction did not zero⁸ them. Initially at Major Eddie Town there was little ammunition: it was all held by individual soldiers with no central reserve stocks. Later as more arms and ammunition was captured during raids, central reserve stocks were built up; these were generally supervised personally by the battalion commander. The battalions were equipped with rifles, heavy machine guns, SPG-9s and RPGs. At Brigade HQ was the artillery section which had the mortars and twin barrelled 20mm cannon.

C3.11. All communications between Gberi and the outlying battalions were conducted on foot. Until the arrival of SAJ Musa, the AFRC faction had only one radio, located in a building in the centre of Gberi. Command meetings were held regularly in Gberi, perhaps once per week, where the battalion commanders were expected to be present. At other times, battalions used “runners”, small boys whose task was to run messages between the dispersed groups; typically there would be two per battalion who would always be close to the commander.



Figure 6 - the radio hut at Gberi. The radio was kept on the veranda under the thatched roof.

C3.12. The radio set at Gberi was used to communicate with SAJ Musa prior to his arrival at Major Eddie Town. The set was in the open, outside the radio building, and it could be overheard by many in Gberi. There was also open contact with the RUF headquarters at Buedu and with RUF forces at Koidu, but not with J P Koroma in Kailahun district. At this time there were two radio operators from the RUF. Once SAJ Musa arrived, he banned direct contact with the RUF, and affixed a sign above the radio stating that no RUF were authorised to use it.



Figure 7 - the military police building in Gberi. Note the rice box which was used to incarcerate offenders.

C3.13. Discipline was strict at Major Eddie Town. Typically, infractions would be punished by beating or incarceration in a rice box outside the military police building. Discipline for the women was dispensed by the “Mammy Queen” who was responsible to “55”. There was one case of

punishment of witchcraft at Major Eddie Town – five women were accused: they were impaled and two died, their bodies being chopped up and dumped in the river.

⁸ “Zeroing” is the process of adjusting the sights of a weapon to the fall of shot, so the weapon can be aimed and fired accurately. Without this basic procedure conducted regularly, the weapon will soon lose accuracy, in particular at longer ranges. It is surprising that a force made up of ex-regular soldiers did not zero their weapons as a matter of course: witnesses state that it was due to a general lack of ammunition.

C3.14. The AFRC faction mounted a number of raids on ECOMOG positions and civilian towns while at Major Eddie Town, principally to capture ammunition, although food and medicine was also sought. These raids were invariably conducted at night. They were ordered and coordinated by the HQ at Gberi, who would appoint a commander (usually one of the battalion commanders), and then instruct each battalion to send a specified number of men to join the raid. This is an important point: instead of selecting a specific battalion complete to conduct a military operation; the force was made up of individuals from all the units. This ensured that battalion areas (and their abductees) were not left undefended; on the other hand it meant that military operations were conducted by ad hoc organisations that did not necessarily know each other, rather than the cohesive battalion structure that lived together the entire time. Later, during the battle for Freetown, this practice of breaking the battalion structure was to contribute to the breakdown of discipline within the AFRC faction.

C3.15. There were no ECOMOG or CDF attacks on the AFRC faction at Major Eddie Town, although it is reported that there were over flights almost daily, both by fixed and rotary wing aircraft, presumably in an attempt to find the AFRC faction's jungle hideout. There is some suggestion that close to the end of the period in Major Eddie Town ECOMOG forces were close to identifying where they were, since the number of AFRC raids made a pattern that indicated that their base was close to the centre.

C4. Early December 1998: Arrival of SAJ Musa

C4.1. During most of the time the AFRC faction was at Major Eddie Town, SAJ Musa remained with a group of fighters in Koinadugu District. He had previously been joined by Superman, who had been ordered to join Musa by Mosquito to ensure he remained under RUF control. Following his disagreement with Superman he joined the AFRC faction at Major Eddie Town, with a force of some 200 fighters – a journey that probably took about a week on foot, arriving early in December 1998. Musa called by radio and established an rendezvous at Makaranki, a relatively well known village some 15 km east of Major Eddie Town.

C4.2. I consider it likely that Musa always intended to rejoin and take command of what was by now the main AFRC force in Sierra Leone; some 3 weeks earlier he had sent "05", a trusted officer, to Major Eddie Town with a group of about 100-200 fighters – Musa referred to this as an "advance party". During the September-November period he had passed a number of radio instructions to the force, establishing a clear command relationship. There is some indication that Gullit tried to maintain command of the force and make Musa his subordinate when he arrived; however, Musa commanded such loyalty and respect in the AFRC that this was never possible. It is noticeable that when Musa arrived at Major Eddie Town there was a spontaneous celebration to greet him, with fighters lifting him onto their shoulders and carrying him in triumph into the village.

C4.3. Musa's arrival at Major Eddie Town had an immediate impact on the force. Morale improved: there had been a general loss of direction and motivation through the previous few months. Musa quickly gave the organisation a sense of purpose and

urgency. Within three days of arrival, he held a command meeting and unveiled his intention to attack Freetown. He told the meeting that the RUF were planning to attack Freetown and that the AFRC had to do it first and re-instate the SLA.

C4.4. It is difficult now to determine the exact motivations behind the AFRC's decision to advance to and attack Freetown. The decision was made by Musa, and he died in Benguema a few weeks later without revealing his inner thoughts. In my view there were probably three connected motivations in Musa's mind:

- a. To restore the SLA, which he appears to have loved as an institution.
- b. To trump the RUF's planned attack which, if successful, would almost certainly solidify RUF dominance over the AFRC in any junta that re-emerged.
- c. To give the AFRC a unifying sense of purpose and restore morale.

Presumably Musa heard about the RUF's plan to advance to Freetown via Koidu and Makeni from Superman. Interestingly, rumours of an AFRC advance to Freetown started with "05"'s arrival in Major Eddie Town three weeks before Musa arrived: it can be surmised that Musa had discussed this option much earlier whilst in Koinadugu District.

C4.5. He re-organised the AFRC structure, although it did not change fundamentally from the organisation that Gullit had created⁹. The force now consisted of six numbered battalions, the Red Lion Battalion (consisting mostly of Liberian soldiers¹⁰), and the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) consisting of soldiers who had accompanied Musa to Major Eddie Town. The RDF appears to have been frequently used to guard the brigade headquarters. Each battalion also had a "battalion supervisor"; these were trusted individuals who would answer directly to the Commander in Chief or second in command, who would ensure that battalion commanders followed orders. Musa also created the post of the Battlefield Inspector who, although junior to the Chief of Staff, answered directly to the Commander in Chief; this was another effort to ensure that Musa knew what was happening and that his orders were obeyed on the battlefield. Although to a western military observer such multiple layers of bureaucracy may be inimical to efficiency, in this case it permitted AFRC commanders to strengthen their control of the organisation. The total fighting strength of the AFRC was now about 1000-1200.

C4.6. Musa became the Commander in Chief, and Gullit became Deputy Commander (or second in command). He appointed Bazy as Third in Command. Although I have been unable to determine the precise duties of each of these three figures, it appears that the Commander in Chief and his Deputy worked closely together: battalion supervisors, the Battlefield Inspector, and the Operations Commander all answered to both of them. The Third in Command had a more limited role; although he was senior in rank to, for

⁹ Gullit had previously expanded the organization to six numbered battalions, incorporating the manpower brought by 05 prior to Musa's arrival.

¹⁰ These Liberians had previously been members of the Liberian-manned "Special Task Force" of the SLA during the counter-insurgency against the RUF, before the junta period.

example, the Operations Commander, he did not have the power to give him orders. Musa appointed his trusted friend, "05", the Operations Commander, responsible for the detailed planning and execution of operations. Apart from changing the personalities within the headquarters, consisting of the command element and the staff officers, Musa did not fundamentally change the way the force was commanded or managed.

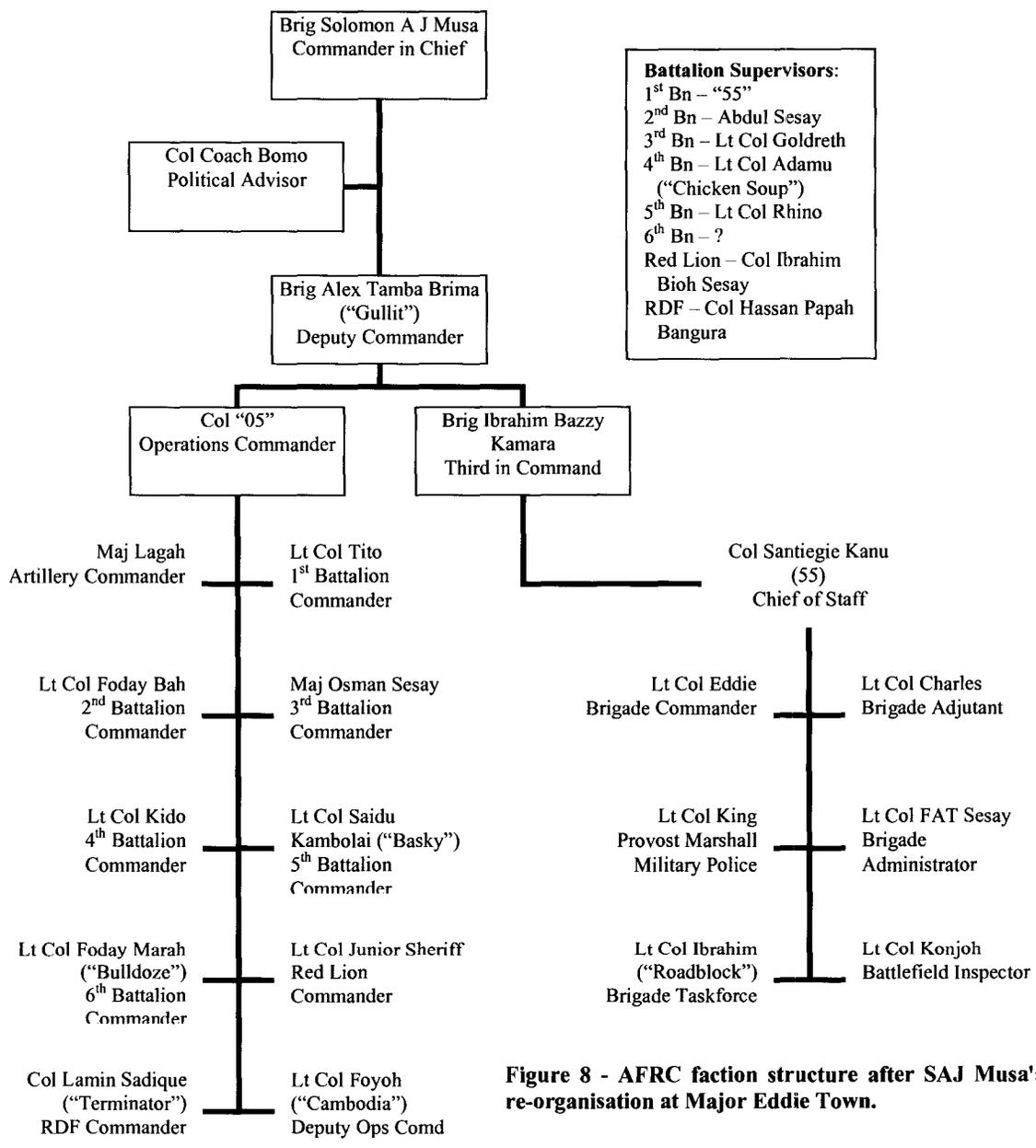
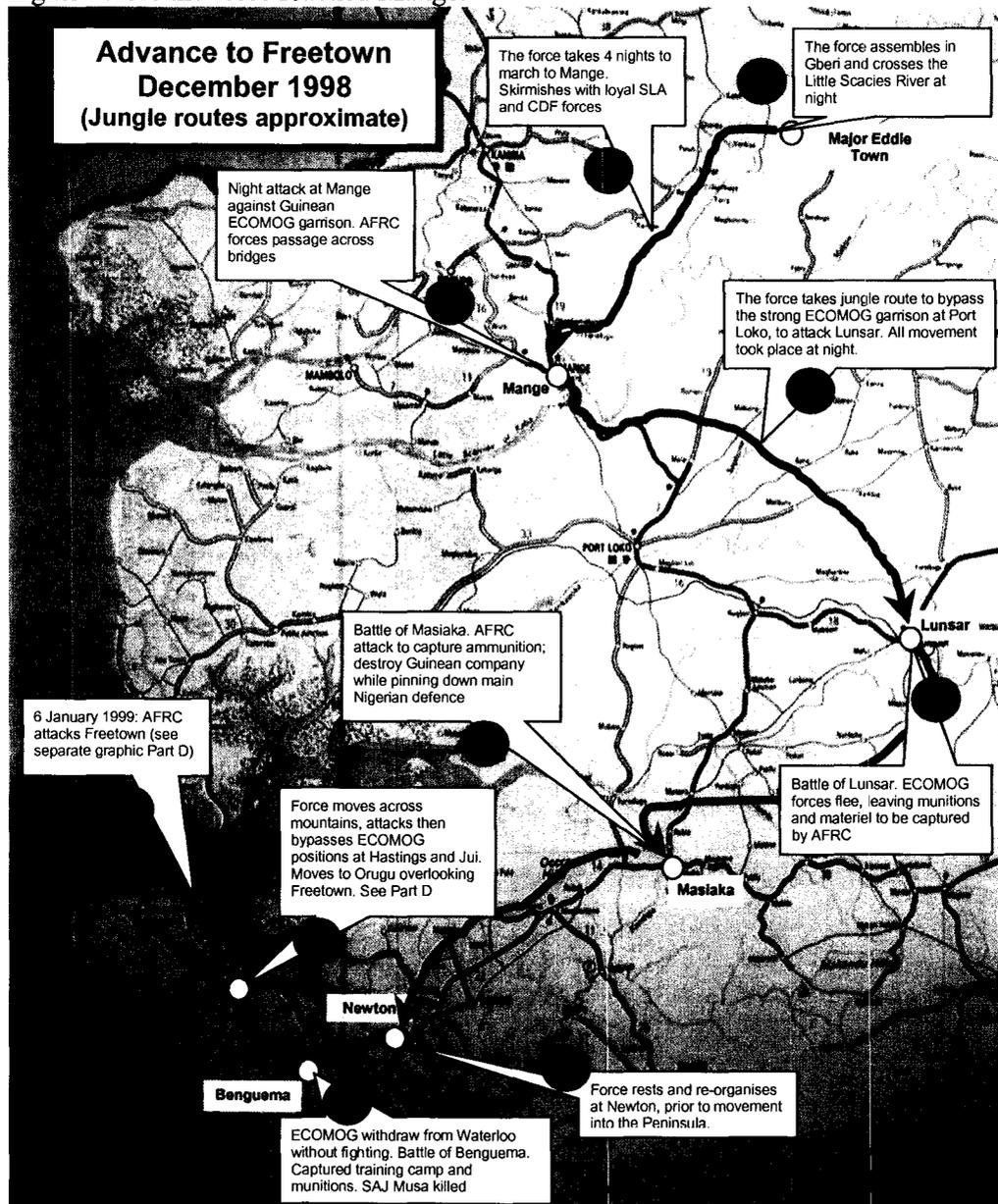


Figure 8 - AFRC faction structure after SAJ Musa's re-organisation at Major Eddie Town.

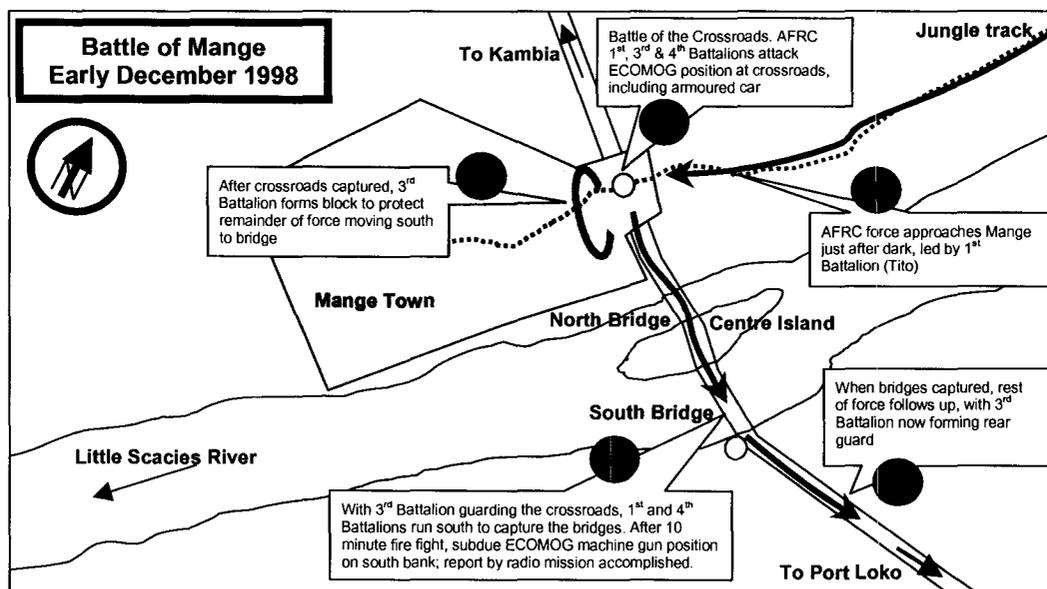
C5. December 1998: The Advance towards Freetown

C5.1. The force assembled at Gberi, and held a magical ceremony for luck. As dusk fell, they moved out to the Little Scacies River and crossed it by canoe¹¹. It took all night to move the force across. Shortly afterwards they were attacked by loyal SLAs and Gbentis (CDF fighters from the Temne tribe). Dealing with this attack and by-passing the relatively high density of government forces in this area took some time, and it took four nights before the force reached Mange.



¹¹ The force kept 10-15 canoes drawn up by the river, since crossing the river was one of their main raiding routes.

C5.2. The operation at Mange was interesting: prior to the attack, Musa gave orders for the operation. He made it clear that the objective was to get the force across the Little Scacies River by the bridge at Mange's southern end: it was not to defeat the Guinean ECOMOG garrison there. Fighting was to be limited to what was required to achieve the objective. This kind of sophistication is unusual in the Sierra Leone war: usually missions were limited to the defeat of an enemy force or, more usually, the capture of a defended town or village.



C5.3. The battle went exactly according to plan, despite heavy resistance from ECOMOG at the crossroads, which the AFRC needed to secure to gain access to the bridges. Eventually, three battalions and heavy weapons were required to force ECOMOG to withdraw into the centre of Mange.



Figure 9 - Mange cross roads from east. Three battalions fought here to overcome the ECOMOG defence, including an armoured car. This battle lasted for about 30 minutes. The bridges are to the left; the centre of Mange is straight on.

C5.4. The 3rd Battalion formed a block on the west side of the crossroads, to defeat any ECOMOG counter-attack. This left the route to the bridges open, and 1st and 4th Battalions rushed forward to capture them. North Bridge was unguarded, but South Bridge had a defensive position with a heavy machine gun on the southern bank. After a 10 minute fire fight (wounding one AFRC soldier), the ECOMOG defenders fled into the jungle. The lead battalion reported the success to Musa by radio, who brought the rest of the force up, past the crossroads and across the bridges. Once all the force was across, the 3rd Battalion collapsed their block, and followed the rest of the force across the bridge and on foot along the Port Loko Road for a further 10 km before striking off into the jungle.



Figure 10 - the Little Scabies River, viewed from Mange bridge. This was a major obstacle for the AFRC force, and was the reason for the Mange battle.



Figure 11 - Mange South Bridge looking south. The ECOMOG machine gun nest was at the far end on the right.

C5.5. Although the Battle of Mange may appear relatively simple and small scale, it illustrates high levels of military skill in command and execution. The operation was focused on the mission to get the force across the bridge, and was not distracted by, for example, following the Guinean forces into Mange. The AFRC force also operated in several moving parts, with separate bodies guarding the crossroads, seizing the bridges, and protecting the main body on the east of Mange. All were well coordinated and led. The use of tactical radio communications in battle was rare in the Sierra Leone war.

C5.6. One of the problems facing SAJ Musa was that of ammunition: he knew that to attack Freetown successfully he would need to build up considerable stocks of ammunition. The only supply open to him was captured stocks, since he had cut himself off from the RUF and any possible re-supply from Liberia. So, he had not only to get his force to Freetown without facing any superior forces (and hence risk defeat), but he also had to capture large stocks of ammunition. He decided to attack the ECOMOG garrisons at Lunsar and Masiaka, judging (rightly) that the garrison at Port Loko was too strong for

his force to match. In each case the objective was ammunition and any other useful military materiel.

C5.7. The first attack was against Lunsar. Here the ECOMOG Garrison abandoned its position without a fight, and the AFRC faction was able to capture large quantities of weapons, ammunition, uniforms, rations and radios. Abducted civilians were used to carry away all the captured material. This success reportedly had a major effect on AFRC morale; there had been some doubt before whether Freetown was a realistic goal – but now the force thought it could achieve anything.



Figure 12 - Masiaka, looking west on the Freetown road. The Guinean position was centred on the Bond Street Hotel (the pink building) on the right. The attack came from the back of this position, catching the defenders completely by surprise.

C5.8. The battle for Masiaka was similarly successful, although more difficult. Again attacking at night, two battalions were concentrated against the Guinean company based on the Freetown road, while another battalion attacked on a different axis to divert the large Nigerian forces further in the town, on the Bo road. The Guineans were totally surprised and were quickly overrun. Abducted civilians were used to carry away all the munitions while the Nigerians were still pinned down by the third battalion attack. After all the

material had been removed, the third battalion attack was called off and the force retreated back into the jungle.

C5.9. The force moved almost entirely by night, resting up in jungle harbour areas by day. Mostly they moved by jungle track, guided either by locals within the force (such as “05” in the area between Mange and Lunsar) or by civilians abducted for the purpose. An order of march was established for the movement: first were three of the battalions (often 1st, 2nd, and 3rd) then Brigade HQ with all the “families” and other abducted civilians, and then the remaining battalions. The force only had three radio sets for the earlier part of the move, so they were distributed to the lead battalion (the advance guard), the brigade HQ in the centre, and the rear battalion (the rear guard). After the force captured Lunsar they gained a further nine radios, so each battalion could have one.

C5.10. During the movement south, the force lived, moved, and fought (mainly) in its battalion structure. High levels of cohesion are created when this happens: officers get to know their soldiers; mutual understanding and trust are fostered; and discipline is enhanced. In regular armies such cohesion is nurtured in training and on operations, since it contributes significantly to fighting power. By the time the AFRC faction arrived at the Peninsula in late December 1998, it was a highly cohesive and effective military force.

PART D
THE BATTLE FOR FREETOWN
JANUARY 1999

D1. Introduction

D1.1. The purpose of this part of the report is to continue the examination of the AFRC faction during the 1999 invasion of Freetown and subsequent retreat, so to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the AFRC faction as a military organisation, and to assess the quality of command.

D1.2. This part of the military analysis examines the campaign in three broad phases:

- a. The operations in the Freetown Peninsula prior to 6th January 1999, including the death of SAJ Musa.
- b. The events of the 6th January, during the AFRC attack on Freetown.
- c. The battles for the Congo River bridges.
- d. The withdrawal from Freetown.

This narrative and analysis ends with the escape of surviving members of the AFRC from Freetown back to Waterloo. It does not encompass AFRC activity during the subsequent internecine fighting in the RUF nor the occupation of the West Side camp in the Occra Hills.

D2. Operations in the Freetown Peninsula prior to 6th January

D2.1. When the force reached Newton on the edge of the Freetown Peninsula, sometime in mid-December, SAJ Musa called a meeting of all commanders. He described his outline plans for the capture of Freetown, including allocating zones of responsibility for each battalion within Freetown. He ordered that there was to be no looting or entering private houses, but after the operation was successful soldiers were to be rewarded by three days of "Operation Pay Yourself". He also gave orders for the move into the Peninsula, with attacks on Waterloo and Benguema¹.

D2.2. After two or three days at Newton, the force moved at night to Waterloo. Here the ECOMOG garrison withdrew without a fight, so the force moved straight to Benguema. There was heavy resistance here from loyal SLAs, presumably the training team stationed at the barracks. However, the AFRC faction was by now an experienced, capable, and well led force: it was able to overcome the resistance at Benguema after heavy fighting.

¹ Benguema is the location of the Sierra Leone Army's training base. The majority of the AFRC had been trained there.

D2.3. After capturing Benguema, SAJ Musa was killed in an explosive accident. He was with a group of about five other celebrating commanders, including Gullit, by a burning building in the base, when something exploded inside the building – perhaps either some military ordnance or a gas bottle. He was standing with his back to the building about 5 metres away, when a piece of shrapnel penetrated the back of his helmet and killed him instantly. None of the rest of the group were affected².



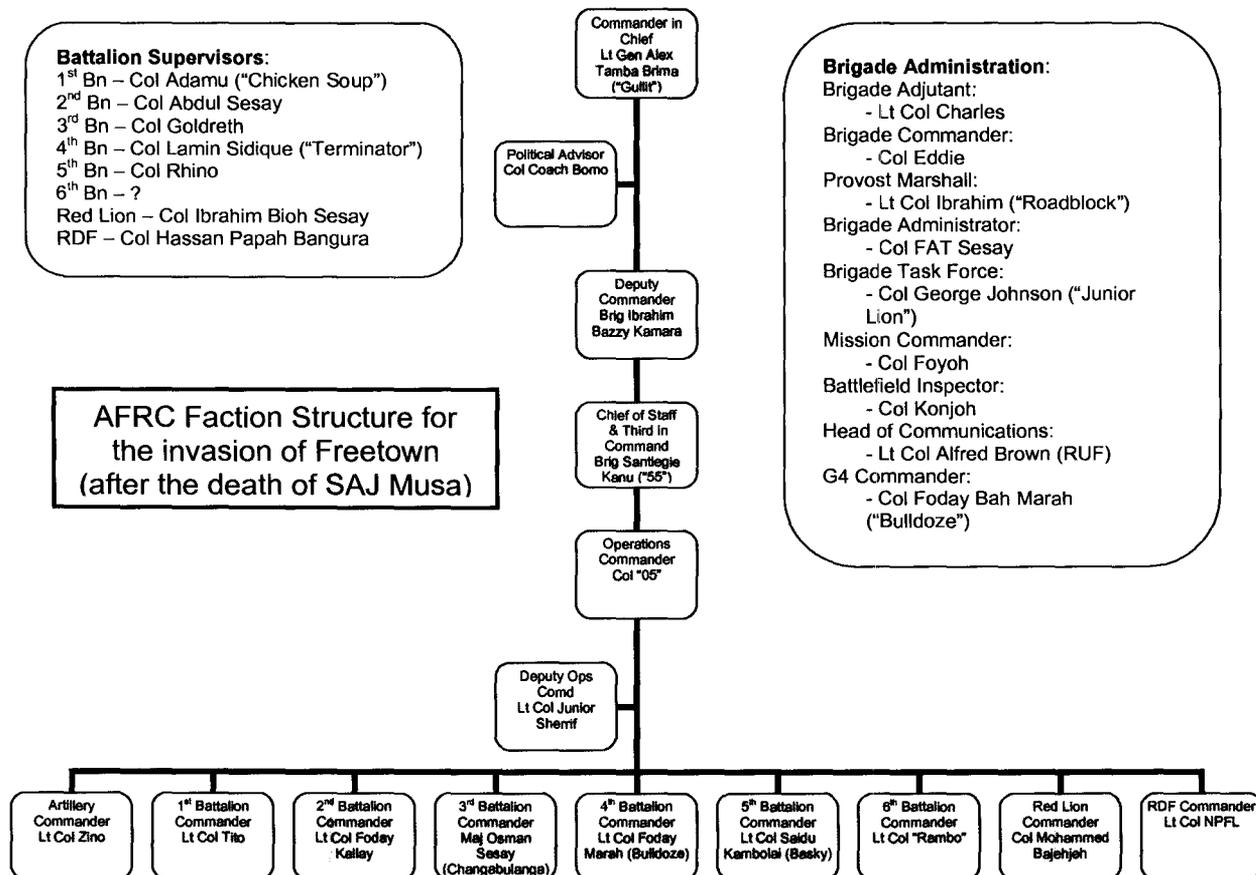
Figure 1 - inside Benguema Training Camp. SAJ Musa was killed in front of the white building, shortly after the capture of this base.

D2.4. Shortly after Musa's death, a rumour quickly developed that Gullit had murdered him, including those who were in the group with them at the time of the death. However, on questioning they state that he used witchcraft rather than any physical means. The rapid spread of the rumour, however, was indicative of the deep unease and drop in morale on hearing the news: Musa was an iconic figure who was revered and respected by his men³. It is unclear whether the rumours reflected a real rift between Musa and Gullit⁴, or whether they were spread by those who supported the appointment of Bazzy, rather than Gullit, as Commander in Chief. Reportedly the two commanders nearly fought each other over Musa's grave in a contest for the leadership. In the end, however, Gullit had been Musa's Second in Command, and was therefore the natural choice to succeed him. Nevertheless, Musa's death caused a deep rift within the previously cohesive structure of the AFRC faction, and is likely to have influenced Gullit's subsequent decision making.

² This is not unusual: explosions have two lethal effects – one is the blast caused by sudden over-pressure, and the other is flying high velocity steel fragments. In this case the group was outside the range of the blast, and Musa was killed by a random piece of shrapnel.

³ Some days later, when the force was crossing the Peninsula mountains, many soldiers ascribed the unseasonable heavy rains to be a punishment for Musa's murder.

⁴ The rumour was apparently exacerbated by Gullit wearing some items of Musa's uniform after his death.



D2.5. After assuming command, Gullit instituted another, final reorganisation for the attack on Freetown. He promoted himself to lieutenant general, and made Bazy his second in command. “55” was appointed third in command as well as retaining his position as Chief of Staff. “05” remained as Operations Commander, subordinate to “55”. There were a number of other appointments and promotions so, for example, all the battalion supervisors were now colonels.

D2.6. Within the “Brigade Administration”, general responsibilities were as follows:

- a. Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff was responsible for all the other staff officers in the force; in this case all within the Brigade Administration. He represented the commander to the staff, and would be expected to know what the commander wanted.
- b. Operations Commander. The Operations Commander was the chief planner of operations and directed operations in execution. As the chief planner,

he would develop operational plans and clear them with the chief of staff and commander in chief. In execution, he would run the operation and direct the activities of tactical commanders (such as battalion commanders) on the ground.

c. Brigade Adjutant. The adjutant is usually the personal staff officer to the commander.

d. Brigade Commander. The name of this appointment is misleading: the "commander" of the AFRC brigade was the Commander in Chief. The post was previously called "camp commandant" which described more accurately its responsibilities: to ensure administration and security of the force when settled in temporary or more permanent camps.

e. Provost Marshall. This appointment was responsible for maintaining military discipline throughout the force, and was given a unit of military police to identify wrong doing and then administer any punishment required.

f. Brigade Administrator. This appointment was responsible for all personnel issues in the force (identified in US and NATO nomenclature as the "G1"). He would maintain the records of all soldiers in the force, assign them to battalions, and register their promotions.

g. Task Force Commander. This appointment is used to coordinate the activities of more than one battalion on the ground. So, if two battalions are tasked with the same attack, the Task Force Commander may be ordered to accompany them to control the activities of both battalions. He is subordinate to the Operations Commander.

h. Mission Commander. It is not clear what the responsibilities of this appointment were, although I suspect they were similar to the Task Force Commander.

i. Battlefield Inspector. This appointment was invented by SAJ Musa to ensure that his orders were fulfilled and that he understood what was happening on the ground. Although he was junior in rank to the Chief of Staff, he answered directly to the Commander in Chief.

j. Head of Communications. This appointment was responsible for maintaining the AFRC net and manning the control station (which was always with Gullit). He was responsible for all other radios and operators within the force.

k. G4 Commander. Gullit made a new appointment responsible for brigade logistics, which is the "G4" staff branch in US and NATO nomenclature. This was probably as a result of the large amounts of ammunition and other material that had been captured at Benguema and elsewhere which needed to be stored and

looked after until it was required by the front line troops. Previously the quantities had been relatively small and had been issued directly to battalions.

D2.7. Whereas SAJ Musa had deliberately cut communications with the RUF, Gullit quickly called Mosquito and Superman⁵. He requested reinforcements and ammunition re-supply. At this stage (about 23 December) Koidu had fallen and the RUF was beginning to mount its attack on Makeni. Superman's force had been badly damaged by air attack just north of Makeni. Realistically, it would be some time before the RUF would be able to reach Waterloo in any strength, although Mosquito promised support.

D2.8. The force spent several days in the Waterloo-Benguema-Macdonald area. Musa's death seemingly affected the sense of purpose of the force and tempo was consequently lost. Gullit appears to have lacked Musa's confidence that he could capture Freetown without RUF assistance. Eventually, they moved into the jungle and crossed the mountains, emerging onto the old railway line near Hastings and Jui. This move took three days; the soldiers were short of food, still shocked by Musa's death, and were cold and wet from the heavy rain through the move. Morale was low, and Gullit needed to take action to restore the fighting effectiveness of the force. Consequently, he could not wait for the arrival of RUF support: he had to attack Freetown without delay.



Figure 2 - Jui bridge looking towards Allen Town. The AFRC faction had to cross this heavily guarded bridge to advance to Freetown.

D2.9. Following a number of operations around the Hastings area, including a three-battalion raid against the police training college, the AFRC faction had to cross the bridge at Jui. This was protected by a strong ECOMOG force in the area of the Teachers College. In an operation reminiscent of the Mange battle, on the night of 4th January, two battalions under the Task Force Commander attacked the ECOMOG position from the south and drove the defenders to the north. This then cleared the road to the bridge, across which the remainder of the force hurried to safety on the other side.

D2.10. Immediately after crossing the bridge, the force moved south off the main road to the relative security of the hillside, and took occupation of the village of Orugu, above Allen town and dominating the road north into Freetown. The force that had driven the ECOMOG force away from the bridge the previous night had not followed the rest across the bridge, but continued to follow up the ECOMOG forces into the bush all night. The following day they then forded the river and moved cross country round Grafton to re-join the main force at Orugu at about 1000 hours on 5th January. While moving in the open in daylight they were seen by ECOMOG observers, and were subject to air attack in Orugu. This killed one major and five other soldiers in the area of the church.

D2.11. Despite this limited success for ECOMOG, they do not appear to have followed up this attack with any other action to interdict the AFRC faction now poised dangerously overlooking the route into Freetown. Defences in this area proved to be thin, and ECOMOG commanders seem to have suffered from complacency: they were faced by a force that in the course of four weeks had marched from the northern jungle through enemy held territory, defeating every garrison it had attacked, and had now penetrated to the edge of Freetown.



Figure 3 - Orugu church, which was hit by air attack killing a number of AFRC fighters.

Despite its relative lack of size, this AFRC force posed a formidable military threat. At the very least, ECOMOG should have strengthened its defences to the south of Freetown, while continuing its aerial bombardment of Orugu to disrupt the AFRC faction's build up for the attack. Now the AFRC was operating at full tempo, the speed of their operations took ECOMOG commanders by surprise. Within 24 hours of the air attack in Orugu, the AFRC was in State House.

⁵ It is also noticeable that he appointed Alfred Brown as Head of Communications. Brown was an RUF trained operator who had accompanied Gullit from Koidu. Gullit promoted him to lieutenant colonel within the RUF.

D3. The 6th January 1999 attack on Freetown

D3.1. The orders for the attack were given in Orugu at 1800 hours on 5th January, under the mango trees behind the house Gullit was using. All the command group and brigade administration were present, including the battalion commanders. The meeting was run by "55", the Chief of Staff, as was normal custom⁶. "55" did most of the talking, briefing the commanders on the plan. The force was to depart Orugu at 0200 hours that night and advance down a single axis through Allen Town. The order of march was 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Battalions, the Brigade Headquarters and "families", then 5th and 6th Battalions. The intention was to overrun the whole city before dawn. Gullit reportedly closed the meeting by telling everyone to concentrate on capturing Freetown and forget about what had happened before: this was a clear reference to the effect Musa's death was still having on the force.



Figure 4 - the AFRC HQ at Orugu, where Gullit was based. The final briefing for the Freetown attack took place behind this house.

D3.2. There was a suggestion from some of the commanders (including Bazzy) that the force should split and advance on a second axis through Grafton to Hill Cot, but Gullit rejected this idea saying it was too late; that the Operations Commander ("05") had made the plan and that they would stick to it. SAJ Musa, when he described his plan for attacking Freetown while at Newton, had stated that he intended to attack on two axes. It is likely that Gullit changed this plan since he was still unsure of the loyalty of his commanders after Musa's death: in particular he would wish to keep Bazzy close to him, rather than giving him a semi-autonomous command. Arguably, the two axis attack would have been more successful: seizing Hill Station early on 6 January might have captured the President in his residence, and subsequently make ECOMOG's position in Wilberforce untenable since AFRC heavy weapons would have been able to fire directly into the barracks. I suspect that ECOMOG would have been forced to withdraw back to Aberdeen, from where they would have had more difficulty in mounting a counter attack.

⁶ This is also normal custom in regular armies: the commander presides over the meeting, but only interjects when there is something of particular importance he wants to stress. The chief of staff normally runs the meeting. Of course, the chief of staff would agree the plan with the commander beforehand.

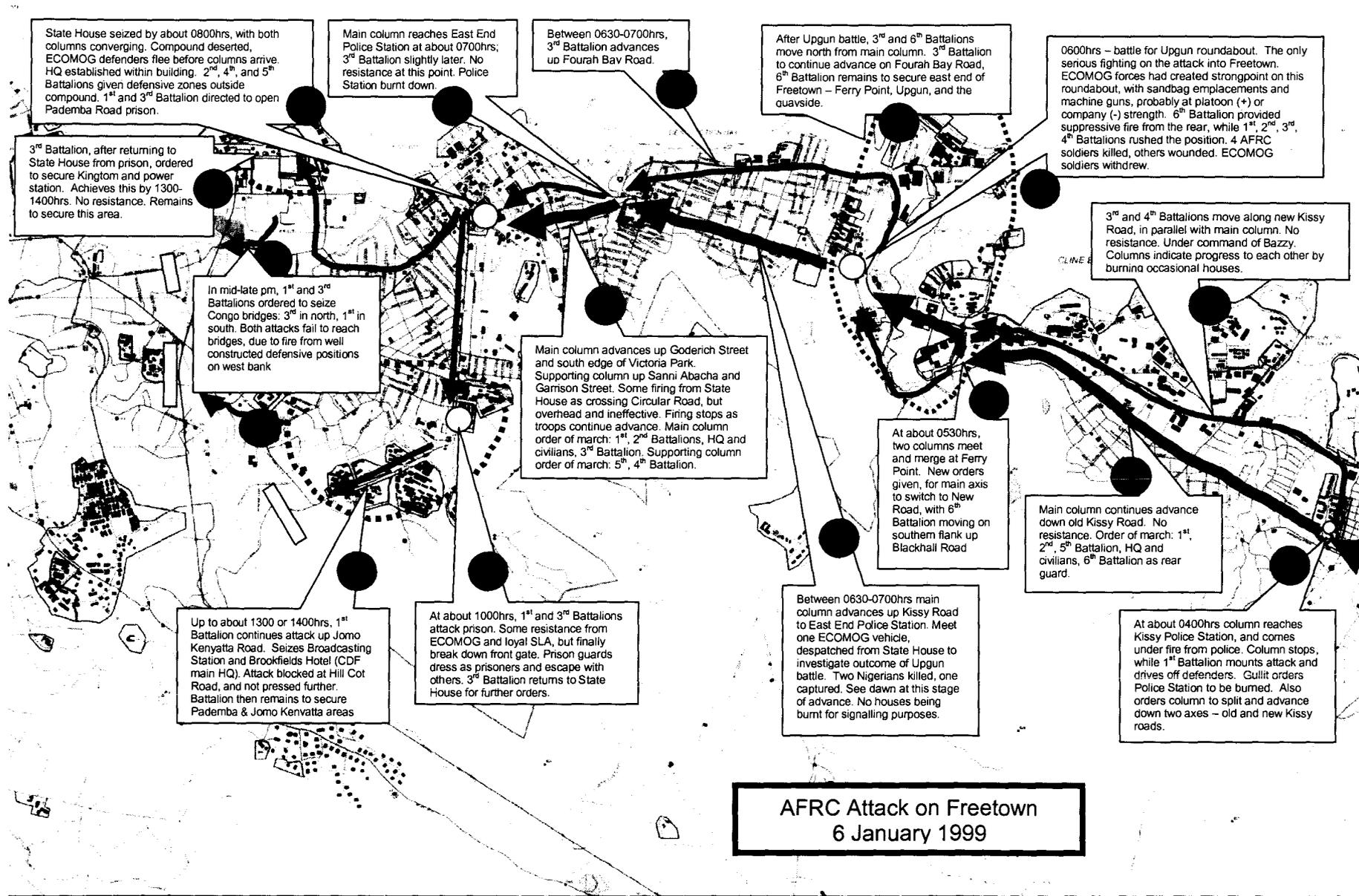
D3.3. The troops spent the rest of the evening preparing for the operation. Before 0200 hours, the battalion officers and RSMs lined the force up in the order of march along the main road in Orugu leading to Allen Town. The lead battalion stepped off exactly at 0200 hours. It was a moonlit night, so visibility was good. The first two kilometres were in relatively open terrain, with the mountains to the left and coastal plain to the right. At the edge of Allen Town the force encountered its first resistance – a CDF road block that fired on the leading battalion. Rather than attack it at once, heavy weapons⁷ were brought forward to destroy the outpost. The CDF defenders fled.



Figure 5 - the route from Orugu into Allen Town. Freetown is in the distance. The AFRC encountered a CDF road block at the bottom of this hill, but destroyed it with heavy weapons set up at the point at which the photograph was taken.

D3.4. By about 0400 hours, the leading elements of the force had reached Kissy Police Station. The attack had been delayed by a military uniform warehouse in Calaba Town: the battalions looted it as they passed, replacing the rags they had worn in the jungle for the past 11 months. At Kissy they met minor resistance at the police station, which they burnt, as previously directed by Gullit; and then split into two parallel columns, with Bazy commanding the 3rd and 4th Battalions on the Kissy New Road. They also captured a Hilux vehicle to carry the heavy weapons which remained with the main column on Kissy Old Road.

⁷ These heavy weapons included a heavy machine gun, a 20mm anti-aircraft gun, and a cannon. This was a profligate use of firepower and scarce ammunition against minor opposition.



State House seized by about 0800hrs, with both columns converging. Compound deserted, ECOMOG defenders flee before columns arrive. HQ established within building. 2nd, 4th, and 5th Battalions given defensive zones outside compound. 1st and 3rd Battalion directed to open Pademba Road prison.

Main column reaches East End Police Station at about 0700hrs; 3rd Battalion slightly later. No resistance at this point. Police Station burnt down.

Between 0630-0700hrs, 3rd Battalion advances up Fourah Bay Road.

After Uppgun battle, 3rd and 6th Battalions move north from main column. 3rd Battalion to continue advance on Fourah Bay Road, 6th Battalion remains to secure east end of Freetown – Ferry Point, Uppgun, and the quayside.

0600hrs – battle for Uppgun roundabout. The only serious fighting on the attack into Freetown. ECOMOG forces had created strongpoint on this roundabout, with sandbag emplacements and machine guns, probably at platoon (+) or company (-) strength. 6th Battalion provided suppressive fire from the rear, while 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Battalions rushed the position. 4 AFRC soldiers killed, others wounded. ECOMOG soldiers withdrew.

3rd Battalion, after returning to State House from prison, ordered to secure Kingdom and power station. Achieves this by 1300-1400hrs. No resistance. Remains to secure this area.

3rd and 4th Battalions move along new Kissy Road, in parallel with main column. No resistance. Under command of Bazy. Columns indicate progress to each other by burning occasional houses.

In mid-late pm, 1st and 3rd Battalions ordered to seize Congo bridges: 3rd in north, 1st in south. Both attacks fail to reach bridges, due to fire from well constructed defensive positions on west bank

Main column advances up Goderich Street and south edge of Victoria Park. Supporting column up Sanni Abacha and Garrison Street. Some firing from State House as crossing Circular Road, but overhead and ineffective. Firing stops as troops continue advance. Main column order of march: 1st, 2nd Battalions, HQ and civilians, 3rd Battalion. Supporting column order of march: 5th, 4th Battalion.

At about 0530hrs, two columns meet and merge at Ferry Point. New orders given, for main axis to switch to New Road, with 6th Battalion moving on southern flank up Blackhall Road

Main column continues advance down old Kissy Road. No resistance. Order of march: 1st, 2nd, 5th Battalion, HQ and civilians, 6th Battalion as rear guard.

Up to about 1300 or 1400hrs, 1st Battalion continues attack up Jomo Kenyatta Road. Seizes Broadcasting Station and Brookfields Hotel (CDF main HQ). Attack blocked at Hill Cot Road, and not pressed further. Battalion then remains to secure Pademba & Jomo Kenyatta areas

At about 1000hrs, 1st and 3rd Battalions attack prison. Some resistance from ECOMOG and loyal SLA, but finally break down front gate. Prison guards dress as prisoners and escape with others. 3rd Battalion returns to State House for further orders.

Between 0630-0700hrs main column advances up Kissy Road to East End Police Station. Meet one ECOMOG vehicle, despatched from State House to investigate outcome of Uppgun battle. Two Nigerians killed, one captured. See down at this stage of advance. No houses being burnt for signalling purposes.

At about 0400hrs column reaches Kissy Police Station, and comes under fire from police. Column stops, while 1st Battalion mounts attack and drives off defenders. Gullit orders Police Station to be burnt. Also orders column to split and advance down two axes – old and new Kissy roads.

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D3.5. The two columns continued to advance in parallel, with no opposition. They burnt houses every 100m or so, to indicate progress to the other group. They met up again at Ferry Junction, where "05" (the Operations Commander) ordered the 6th Battalion, previously in the rear, to take the bypass route to the left up Blackhall Road.

D3.6. At about 0600 hours, the force reached the Uppgun roundabout, which was the scene of the only major fighting that morning. Here ECOMOG had created a strong point, probably of company strength, with sandbagged defensive emplacements for machine guns. This position resisted several AFRC attacks, and in the end five battalions took part in subduing this position, including the 6th Battalion firing from the rear. Four AFRC soldiers were killed, and several others wounded. The ECOMOG defenders eventually fled, possibly because they had run out of ammunition.

D3.7. The force continued to advance to the west, with the main axis on Kissy Road and one battalion on Fouray Bay Road (again ordered by "05"). The 6th Battalion was left to secure the eastern approaches to Freetown, including Ferry Point, Uppgun, and Ferryside. ECOMOG commanders in their HQ in State House were still unaware of the situation: they dispatched a team in a land rover to the Uppgun roundabout position to find out what was going on, but ran into the advancing AFRC 1st Battalion and were killed or captured. The force reached East End Police Station at about 0700 hours, after dawn. The police station was burnt.

D3.8. At this stage the force was still operating in a disciplined manner. Since it was now light, there were few, if any, house burnings for signalling purposes. Looting on the advance early that morning was rare, if at all. The soldiers advanced in single file down the road, under control of their officers and RSMs.

D3.9. At East End Police Station, "05" gave his final orders for the advance to State House. Again the column divided into two axes, up Goderich Street and Sanni Abacha Street. There was some ineffectual firing from the direction of State House, but it was well over the heads of the approaching battalions. They arrived at about 0800 hours to find the doors open and the compound deserted. The ECOMOG commander, staff officers, and any protecting troops had fled.

D3.10. On arrival at State House, the senior commanders congratulated themselves and immediately started to occupy offices. Gullit chose the President's office for himself. The Brigade HQ was established in the compound. Generally, the AFRC troops were jubilant: State House was regarded as the most important target within Freetown, and many thought that they had already achieved their mission.

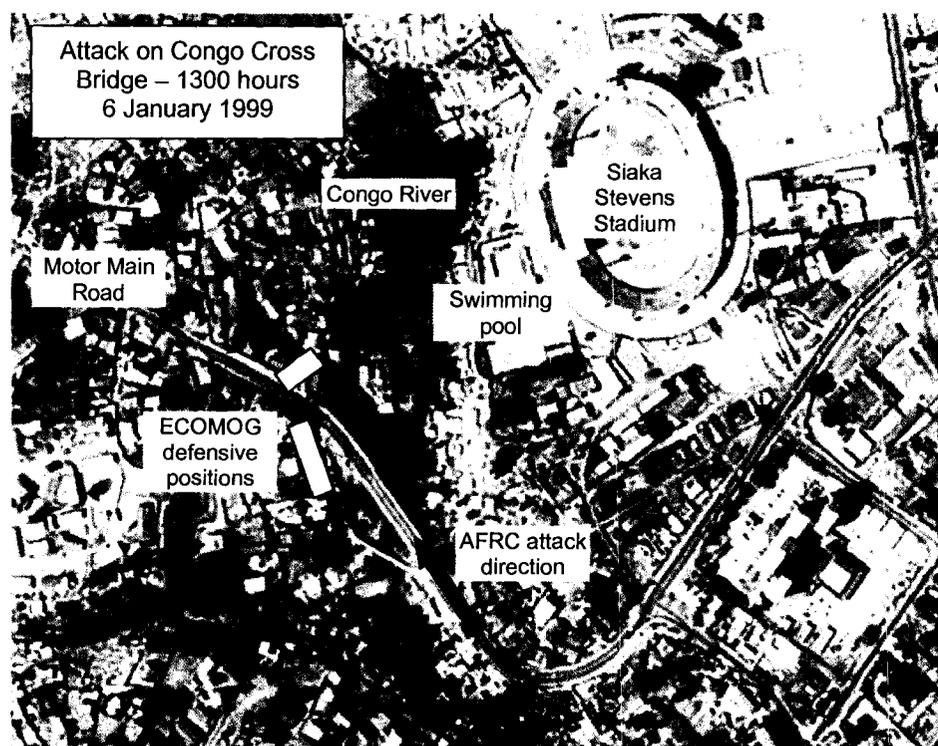
D3.11. Meanwhile, "05" ordered 1st and 3rd Battalions to open Pademba Road prison, and gave the remaining battalions defensive sectors around State House. There was a short fight at the prison, but the AFRC fighters finally subdued the prison guards at about 1000 hours. All the prisoners were released, and told to make their own way to State House, which many did. Others took advantage of the chaos to slip away. There was no plan to receive the prisoners at State House, nor to process them or administer them in any way.

Some attribute the start of the general break down of order to this mass release of prisoners.

D3.12. Lt Col Tito, commanding 1st Battalion, now tried to extend his area of control to the south west up Jomo Kenyatta Road. He seized the radio station and Brookfields Hotel (which had been the main CDF headquarters), but found his way blocked by ECOMOG on Hill Cot Road. He made one attempt to break the defence, but failed and reportedly did not have sufficient strength to try again. Lt Col Osman Sesay, commanding 3rd Battalion, took his troops back to State House and was ordered by "05" to secure King Tom and the power station, since ECOMOG had withdrawn from there. 3rd Battalion reached this area by about 1300-1400 hours.

D4. The battles for the Congo River crossings

D4.1. The AFRC attempted several times to force the ECOMOG positions guarding the west bank of the two Congo River bridges. These attacks took place in the afternoon and evening of 6 January and on 7 January. It is not clear whether the order for the attacks was given by Gullitt or "05". The first attack took place in the early afternoon of 6 January; perhaps at about 1300 hours, on the main Congo Cross Bridge, the southernmost of the two crossings. It was led by the Task Force Commander ("Junior Lion"), who hastily gathered as many soldiers as he could from the surrounding battalions. It should be noted that the battalion structure had already broken down – commanders were simply passing orders to any soldiers who they were near, rather than using the military chain of command.



D4.2. The attack was conducted rapidly with the minimum of preparation. It was a failure: AFRC soldiers did not even reach the eastern bank of the bridge before withdrawing under heavy ECOMOG fire, although one group of AFRC soldiers attempted to drive quickly across the bridge in a looted vehicle but it was destroyed by RPG fire midway on the bridge. ECOMOG appear to have prepared strong defensive positions on the river bank, and had good fields of fire over the eastern approaches to the bridge. They also used one armoured vehicle equipped with machine guns to fire straight down the road across the bridge. It is not clear whether these positions were identified and prepared well in advance, or were the result of hurried improvisation that morning as the AFRC entered Freetown from the east.

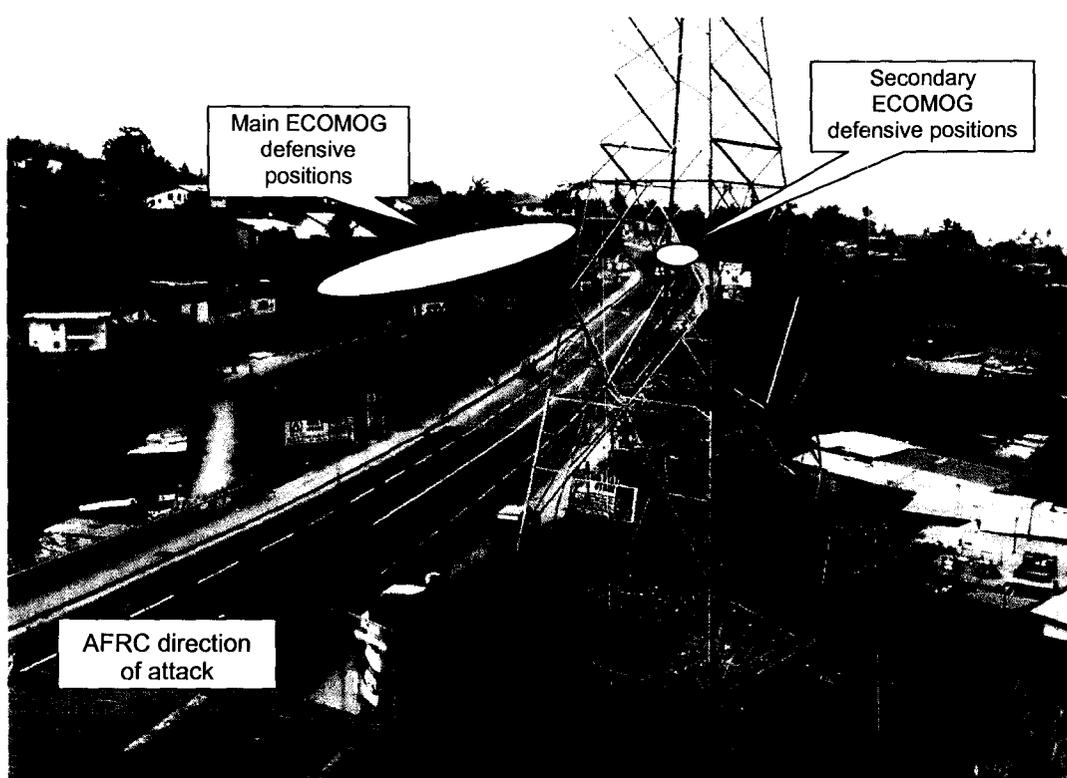
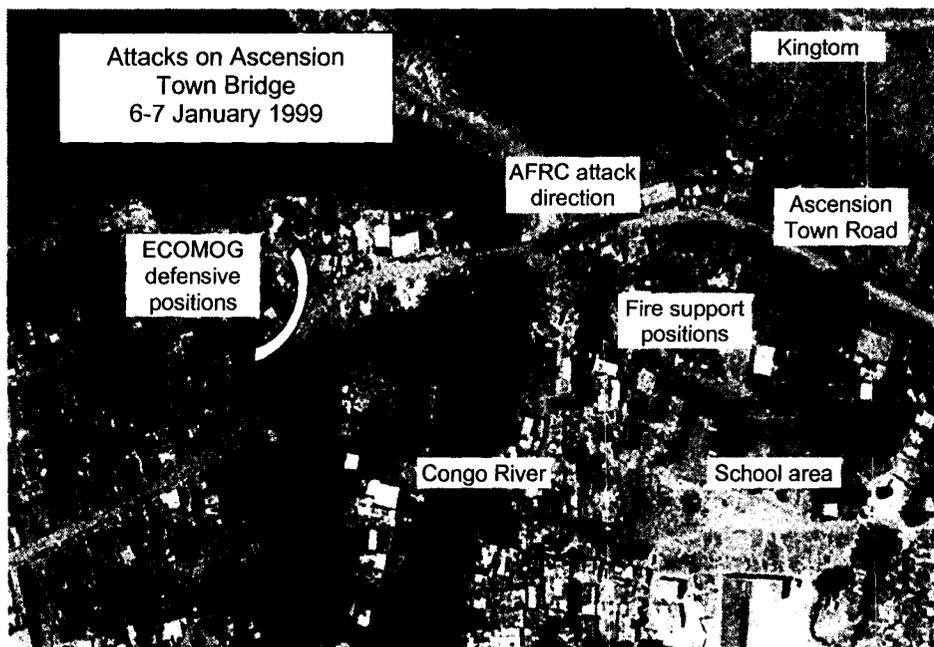


Figure 6 – Congo Cross Bridge looking from the east. The AFRC attack was a direct attack across the bridge with little subtlety: there was no attempt to use the high ground (from where this photo was taken) to position heavy weapons to suppress ECOMOG positions. Nor did AFRC attempt to bypass this strong ECOMOG position by infiltrating forces by night round to the left flank.

D4.3. The ECOMOG defensive positions in this area also overlooked the swimming pool beside the Siaka Stevens Stadium. Several AFRC soldiers were killed in this area as they attempted to release detainees held there by the Government.

D4.4. After this failed attack, the task force commander decided to move to the northernmost of the two bridges, the Ascension Town Bridge, and try an attack there. He also took with him many of the soldiers from the failed attack, leaving only a light force guarding the Congo Town Bridge. He took more care over the Ascension Town Bridge

attack, positioning heavy weapons on the high ground to the east of the bridge, and waiting until after dark.



D4.5. This attack also failed. Despite the suppressive fire from the AFRC positions, the ECOMOG defence was able to prevent any AFRC soldiers from crossing the bridge, killing the first man who stepped onto it. AFRC RPG firers were unable to hit the armoured car which was overlooking the bridge, raking it with machine gun fire. Once again there was no attempt to by-pass the bridge (it is easy to wade the river in January).



Figure 7 – view from ECOMOG defensive positions across Ascension Town Bridge, looking east. The AFRC fire support positions are just out of view to the right.

D4.6. The following day, at about 1200 hours, the AFRC faction attempted another attack; this also failed to dislodge the strong ECOMOG positions. Several times each side tried to lure the other into the open, by ceasing fire and pretending to have retreated; ECOMOG soldiers stood firm in their prepared sandbag positions; and the armoured car remained just out of effective RPG range. Junior Lion attempted to call up the AFRC's single (30mm?) cannon they had brought with them into Freetown over the mountains. Such a weapon would have penetrated the armour of the armoured car and destroyed the sandbag emplacements. However, Gullit refused to let it move from State House into the combat zone, for unknown reasons.



Figure 8 – view from Ascension Bridge looking east. On the right can be seen the high ground on which the AFRC faction placed their heavy weapons for fire

D4.7. This attack on 7 January marked the end of the AFRC's offensive and attempt to dislodge ECOMOG from Freetown. Although the first rushed attack on Congo Cross Bridge was understandable, given ECOMOG's lack of resistance so far, the following attacks showed military naivety. Once it was clear that ECOMOG were in prepared defensive positions and were not going to be frightened out of them, a much more considered approach was required. By the end of 7 January the AFRC faction was already beginning to run short of ammunition, having apparently wasted a great deal on inaccurate and ineffective fire over the previous two days. The momentum gained by their surprise attack on the 6th had stalled. It is difficult to assess the level of casualties: perhaps 30-40 dead. The battalion structure had completely broken down; and with it the disciplinary system. Morale had begun to suffer. Many soldiers tried to slip away to east Freetown, away from the fighting, although the AFRC had set up checkpoints behind the fighting to prevent such desertions. After 9 months in the jungle, free availability of alcohol and drugs was too much for many to resist. It was clear to many that the battle was turning; and that unless the RUF could break through into Freetown from Waterloo, or somehow otherwise get ammunition into the town, the AFRC faction offensive was doomed.

D4.8. It took several days for ECOMOG to mount a counter attack across the Congo River. Reinforcements moved by vehicles from Wilberforce Barracks to strengthen troops already in defence at the two crossings. These movements could be seen by the AFRC defenders on the east bank. The commander in the south was “05”; “Junior Lion” remained in the north. Both had their own radio communications, and attempted to coordinate the defence against the attack they knew was coming. Strangely, they did not attempt to equalize the defence forces across the two bridges: the majority of fighters remained in the area of Ascension Town Bridge, to where they had deployed from Congo Cross Bridge on 6 January. The result was that the defence in the south was particularly weak; when ECOMOG attacked here at about 1100 hours on 11 January⁸, the defence rapidly crumbled.

D4.9. The defenders from Congo Cross moved north and joined the defenders of Ascension Town Bridge, itself about to be attacked. ECOMOG advanced with three armoured cars laying down suppressive fire, followed by CDF infantry following on foot in single file. The AFRC defence had created a barricade on the home side of the bridge, mostly of abandoned vehicles. Nevertheless, the defence crumbled. It doesn't appear that any orders were given –

Battle for Freetown – Estimated Timeline

6 Jan	AFRC invasion
6-7 Jan	Battles for Congo crossings
9 Jan	ECOMOG counter attacks
9-10 Jan	Battle for Kroo Town Junction
11 Jan	Battle for State House
12 Jan	Battle for East End Police Station
16- 18 Jan	Battle for Ferry Junction
18-25 Jan	Withdrawal across Peninsular Mountains

most soldiers simply ran as the attack was mounted. As the defenders retreated, the remaining AFRC personnel in Kingtom abandoned their positions there, and joined the column heading back to the junction of Kroo Town Road and Siaka Stevens Road.

D4.10. The rapid abandonment of the Congo River positions is in stark contrast to the resolute defence of the other side by ECOMOG over the previous few days, and is a stark measure of how much AFRC morale had already been lowered. There can have been little doubt in most of the commanders' minds that the battle of Freetown had already been lost; the fighting was now simply for gaining time. However, this wasn't openly discussed amongst the fighting commanders: they simply got on with their jobs.

D4.11. State House had already been abandoned by the majority of the senior AFRC leadership by the time Congo River crossings had been lost; establishing a new headquarters in east Freetown in the Shankaras distillery.

D4.12. The style of fighting in Freetown was typical of that in the Sierra Leone war generally. Attackers would attempt to mass fire against the defenders from a range of 100-300m; the intention being to so frighten the opposition that they would abandon their positions. The defenders, similarly, would mass their fire against the attackers and try to make them call off their attack. Usually, one of the sides would disengage when they started to take casualties. Casualties tended to be light since not many of the combatants were well trained shots, weapons were invariably not zeroed, and forces tended to

⁸ The dates, including those in the text box, are estimated from a number of slightly contradictory sources. They might be one or two days either way.

disengage rather than fight to the death⁹. When both sides were in defensive positions, such as during the Congo bridge battles, then they would continue to fire at each other until one side ran out of ammunition, when they would withdraw. This style of fighting, and the calculus that emerges from it, explains many of the results of the battles fought in Freetown. In particular, the static nature of the Freetown battles meant that the AFRC faction could not over-run ECOMOG positions and capture ammunition supplies as they had in the jungle. Thus it was inevitable that the AFRC faction would run out of ammunition sooner or later, and be forced to abandon their positions.

D5. The AFRC retreat from Freetown

D5.1. ECOMOG's advance through Freetown was steady rather than determined, and often it was CDF fighters who would lead an attack, with support from ECOMOG armoured vehicles. Although the AFRC established defensive position after defensive position, gradually withdrawing to the east, eventually they would yield. The battalion structure had long since broken down, and orders were given to any soldiers who were there. Many fought bravely, but others deserted their posts – some of whom were caught by the military police posts behind the front line, and sent forward again. Ammunition was in very short supply, since all the G4's reserve stocks had long been exhausted. Overall, however the AFRC faction maintained sufficient cohesion as a fighting force to retain a credible defence: this was a fighting withdrawal rather than a rout, such as that seen after the withdrawal from Freetown following the ECOMOG Intervention a year earlier.

D5.2. During this period, Gullit was in radio communications with Mosquito in Buedu, although it is not clear how regular that contact was. He requested support from the RUF, in particular ammunition re-supply. I am not aware of the extent that he took orders from Mosquito, although there is evidence that the burning of Freetown was ordered by Mosquito and, possibly, Charles Taylor. Publicly, Mosquito was claiming to be in charge of the operation, and that it was being conducted by the RUF; so, for example, British officers visiting ECOMOG positions during the Freetown battle were unaware that it was primarily an AFRC operation.

D5.3. At some stage during the retreat, some 20-30 RUF reinforcements under the command of Rambo ("Red Goat") managed to penetrate through ECOMOG's positions at Hastings and joined the fighting. The RUF stated that further support was unable to get through since the AFRC hadn't opened the road to Freetown and kept it open¹⁰. Nevertheless, I consider that the RUF could have given much greater support to the AFRC faction if they had wished: In particular the AFRC's greatest requirement was for ammunition, which the RUF could have supplied on foot using abducted labour through the Peninsula mountains. My opinion is that the RUF were keen for the AFRC operation

⁹ According to Nigerian media sources, 38 Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers were killed in the fighting on 6th January.

¹⁰ Keeping the main road into Freetown open was not an option for the AFRC; they were not even strong enough to open the road, let alone keep it open. Hence they were forced to use bypass routes through the jungle.

to fail, so they could take any AFRC remnants under command afterwards, rather than join a successful AFRC as a junior partner in Freetown.

D5.4. Most of the damage to Freetown was caused during this retreat: some was no doubt the result of ill-discipline of individual deserters, but most seems to have been as the result of deliberate policy. There can be little military justification for what happened – it appears to have been a policy driven more by spite than any military need. The abductions seem particularly self-defeating: at a time when there was benefit in reducing the size of the force to make it faster moving during the escape, the abductees swelled the size of the column, slowed it down, and made it a bigger target. One reason given for the abductions was to make the fighting strength seem larger than it was; but I suspect that the truth is more simply that abductions were now common practice for the AFRC.

D5.5. The AFRC's retreat was blocked at the Brewery at about 1500 hours by a strong ECOMOG position. At this stage the column consisted of three broad elements: the advance guard was about 200 strong, with many of the AFRC's commanders (including Gullit); the centre group had all the "families", including the newly abducted civilians; and the rear guard consisted of the remaining troops. The battalion structure no longer existed in any form. Ammunition was very short, with many soldiers only having one magazine left. Most, if not all, of the support weapons¹¹ had been abandoned due to lack of ammunition. The first attempt by the advance guard to rush the Brewery position was cut down with strong defensive fire. Col Eddie, one of the Brigade Administration, was one of those killed in this attack. Gullit ordered the Task Force commander ("Junior Lion") to collect as many soldiers as he could from the rear of the column, and to bypass



Figure 9 - the Brewery cross roads. ECOMOG established a strong position in the Brewery building beyond the cross roads. Early attempts by the AFRC to rush the position were defeated.

the junction to the right and adopt a fire position overlooking the Brewery from behind. Although the commanders had radios and radio operators, they did not use them in this battle. "Junior Lion" led about 200 men to a position overlooking the Brewery, and shortly after bringing down suppressive fire, forced the ECOMOG defenders to flee down towards the Kissy New Road. This left the escape route open for the AFRC towards Allen Town, from where they were able to make their escape across the hills to Benguema to RUF-held positions.

¹¹ Support weapons are the heavy weapons of the force, used to give supporting fire, such as mortars and cannons.

D5.6. This battle for the Brewery indicates that although the AFRC had been defeated in Freetown, and that its battalion structure had broken down, it was still a capable fighting force. Commanders were still able to make sound decisions, and the command structure was effective enough to be able to conduct a relatively complex manoeuvre.

PART E ANALYSIS

E1 Introduction.

E1.1. The purpose of this section is to analyse the AFRC faction to determine the answers to the four tests posed earlier in this report, in 'Part B – Methodology':

- Did the group have a recognisable military hierarchy and structure?
- Did it exhibit the characteristics of a traditional military organisation?
- Was there coherent linkage between strategic, operational, and tactical levels?
- Was command effective?

I address each test in turn, using the methodology laid out in Part B of this report¹. I use the evidence, analysis and judgements presented in Parts C and D to draw conclusions for each question. Finally, I synthesise the conclusions to all four tests to provide an overall opinion on whether the AFRC faction was a military organisation and whether command responsibility existed. Military judgement is required for such synthesis, since not all characteristics and requirements can be expected to be met.

E2 Did the AFRC faction have a recognisable military hierarchy and structure?

E2.1. The structure of the AFRC faction emerged after Gullit withdrew the force from RUF control in Koidu, in about May/June 1998 to meet SAJ Musa and others in the north. Previously AFRC forces had been integrated into the joint RUF/AFRC command structure, but following the split the AFRC faction created its own military structure. It was modelled on a conventional brigade, with a number of sub-units; initially these were called companies, but they later were termed battalions. This re-titling was less to do with size, but more an opportunity to promote the commanders².

E2.2. Initially, there were only four companies/battalions, which is a reasonable span of command for a single headquarters. Later this was expanded into eight separate units (six numbered battalions, the Red Lion Battalion, and the Rapid Deployment Force). Although this number was manageable for administrative purposes, it was too many for a single headquarters to coordinate in battle. Hence individual appointments were created to command specific elements within a battle (the Brigade Task Force Commander and Mission Commander). So, for example, at the battle of Jui where two battalions were ordered to divert the ECOMOG garrison and free up a route for the rest of the force, command for that mission was delegated to the Brigade Task Force Commander, while the rest of the force remained under the direct control of the Brigade Headquarters. These appointments allowed the AFRC faction to retain a single wide span of command, but still permitted effective control at critical points in the battle.

¹ It is advisable to refer to Part B of the report through this analysis.

² In most conventional armies, companies are commanded by captains or majors, while battalions are commanded by lieutenant colonels.

E2.3. The AFRC faction had a traditional staff structure, with individual officers having specific responsibilities to assist the commander, under the direction of a chief of staff. These included logistics, operations, communications, and administration. The only staff function that appears to be absent was intelligence.

E2.4. The area of the AFRC faction's hierarchy that appears to be different from western armies is that of supervision. Gullit created the system of "battalion supervisors" who were senior officers who could advise the battalion commander and report directly to the commander. It is possible these posts were first created to give jobs to the many senior AFRC officers who had held posts in the junta government (the "Honourables"), but it provided a useful means of ensuring that missions were accomplished and of keeping the commander informed. It is noticeable that SAJ Musa retained this system when he took over command. In addition to the battalion supervisors, Musa created the post of "Battlefield Inspector" who, although a relatively junior officer, reported directly to him so he was aware of the reality on the ground.

E2.5. The AFRC structure began to break down during the battle for Freetown. By the end of the first day, the unit integrity of the battalions had been broken, and the fighting power of the force suffered as a result. Nevertheless, the AFRC faction still operated as a coherent body, with commanders still in command and staff officers fulfilling their roles. In defeat, some degradation of cohesion is inevitable, and it is perhaps surprising that the AFRC faction retained as much structure as it did.

E2.6. Conclusion. The AFRC faction had a clearly recognisable military hierarchy and structure which was very similar to the conventional armies upon which it was modelled. Although there was a break down in cohesion during the retreat from Freetown, the force still retained a recognisable form and military capability.

E3 Did the AFRC faction exhibit the characteristics of a traditional military organisation?

E3.1. Part B of this report identified 13 functions which characterise the operation of a traditional military organisation. This section lists the functions and determines whether each existed in the AFRC and if so in what form.

Function	
The Intelligence Process	The intelligence process in the AFRC was rudimentary, relying on captured civilians for information. There does not appear to have been a formal method for dealing with intelligence, nor its systematic collection. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that although the process was rudimentary, it appears to have worked: the attacks carried out by the AFRC faction en route to Freetown were precise and accurate – a sign of accurate intelligence.
Communications System	The AFRC faction continued to use the RUF radio network,

	<p>even after Gullit took the force to join SAJ Musa. However, for much of the time they were short of radios, and only had one radio at their base which they would use to communicate with SAJ Musa and RUF commanders. Subsequent to Musa's arrival, the AFRC faction started to use radios for the coordination of tactical operations, especially after the capture of Lunsar. Otherwise, local communications such as within the villages at Major Eddie Town, were carried by runners, usually small boys.</p>
Planning and Orders Process	<p>Planning was conducted by the Operations Commander, who would approve his plan through the Commander in Chief. Orders were never written, but given orally in briefings. Usually these were for the command group only, but occasionally the commander would brief the entire force.</p>
Lessons Learnt System & Doctrine Development and Dissemination	<p>There was no formal lessons learnt system or doctrine development, nevertheless the AFRC was clearly an organisation that learnt quickly. In their brief period operating with the RUF in the jungle in April-May they adopted RUF practice for surviving in the jungle, including air raid precautions. Throughout 1998 they learnt how to be a guerrilla force, rather than conventional army, but retained much of the structure and discipline of regular armies. By the end of 1998, under SAJ Musa's leadership, they had become the most effective military organisation in Sierra Leone.</p>
Disciplinary System	<p>There was a strict military discipline system, based on the provost marshal, who would investigate wrongdoing and be responsible for punishment of malefactors. The practice of justice was based on the whim of the commander: if the commander wanted to exert discipline to control the behaviour of his officers and men, the system was there for him to do it. If he decided not to, then wrongdoings could go unpunished.</p>
Recruiting and Training	<p>One of the strategic problems facing the AFRC was that the source of trained ex-SLAs was limited, while the RUF continued to expand through its system of forced abduction and training. As a result, they were forced to establish a recruitment and training camp, based on the RUF model, while at Rosos. However, this was not systematic, and only 77 were trained (including women and children), so the numbers of the AFRC were always limited. It is not clear why they did not recruit more heavily; perhaps there was inherent resistance to non-SLAs joining the movement.</p>
System for Promotions and Appointments	<p>Promotions and appointments were clearly the responsibility of the commander in chief. Both Gullit and Musa re-organised the force when they assumed command, using the opportunity to promote individuals, both to reward and</p>

	motivate.
Logistic Supply (including Arms Procurement)	Logistic supply (along with recruitment) was the AFRC faction's Achilles Heel. Having cut themselves off from the RUF they were not able to gain external supply from Liberia, but were instead reliant on captured supplies. This worked on the move down to Freetown, where there was a liberal supply of ECOMOG bases which could be attacked and overrun; but as soon as the battle in Freetown became static, the supply stopped.
Repair and Maintenance of Equipment	There did not appear to be any system for the repair or maintenance of equipment. Apart from weapons and radios there was little the AFRC needed once it was in the jungle, and if something broke they would steal another.
Medical System	Soldiers were treated by the AFRC medical system which was relatively rudimentary. There was a medical centre established in Rosos and Major Eddie Town, but it had basic facilities compared to, for example, the RUF in the jungle outside Koidu.
Fundraising and Finance	There was little need for funds within the AFRC faction, since they effectively closed themselves off from external support. There is some evidence of AFRC diamond mining while in the Koidu area, but this is more likely to be private enterprise by the officers than collective fundraising.
Pay or Reward System for Soldiers	Soldiers were not paid, although like other organisations, they used looting such as "Operation Pay Yourself" as a means of rewarding soldiers. Promotions were used as a reward system for officers.
Religious Welfare System	The AFRC did not seek to exploit the religious make up of Sierra Leone; they purposely united the Christian and Islamic religions wherever they could. Religious leaders from both callings were among those abducted, and they both led prayer in turn whenever the AFRC had parades. They do not appear, however, to have had any pastoral or welfare role.

E3.2. **Conclusion.** Of the 13 functions identified that characterise the operation of a traditional military organisation, few (such as promotions) are in the same form as that of well established armies. However, most are recognisable although in different form: they fulfil the same purpose as traditional functions and have simply been adapted to the particular circumstances of the AFRC in the jungle. Only one function is missing entirely: a system for care and maintenance of equipment. In this case, it was unnecessary. Therefore **the AFRC had the majority of the functional characteristics of a military organisation.**

E4 Was there coherent linkage between strategic, operational, and tactical levels?

E4.1. This is one of the most important tests to indicate not just the presence of military organisation but also effectiveness of command throughout the organisation. If the organisation is coherent with clearly delineated command systems working to common goals, then it should be possible to map all tactical activity to operational level objectives, and then to strategic aims.

E4.2. The strategic aims of the AFRC faction evolved over time. Initially, after the Intervention, they were identical to the RUF's but, after Gullit moved to SAJ Musa in the north, the AFRC faction developed its own objectives. It is my opinion that, initially, AFRC commanders were uncertain what to do, and goals were more concerned with establishing independence from the RUF than anything more fundamental. The AFRC had no underlying ideology which could help guide it. Later, as SAJ Musa became aware of the RUF's plans for a counter-offensive to Freetown, and as ECOMOG power waned in Sierra Leone, he evolved the objective to seize Freetown before the RUF: this was his *strategic* objective; it is not clear what his *political* objective was. It is possible that he wanted to seize power for himself; or that he simply wanted nothing more than the restoration of the SLA. After his death, the strategic goals of the AFRC faction become more muddled; but it is likely that Gullit sought a restoration of the junta in some form, and was more prepared than Musa to cede primacy to the militarily stronger RUF. Subsequently, after failure to seize the Congo River bridges, and victory was no longer possible in Freetown, the strategic aim switched to organisational (and individual) survival. It is not clear when this became clear in Gullit's mind; militarily and with hindsight it was obvious on 7th January, but it might have taken another few days before it became so to those on the ground.

E4.3. Below is a matrix charting how operational objectives and tactical activity connect to strategic aims.

Date	Strategic Aim	Operational Objectives	Example Tactical Activity
Feb-Apr 98	survival of the RUF/AFRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escape from Freetown • Establish safe areas in Kono and Koinadugu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Tombo to Fo-Gbo • Secure Makeni as temporary mounting base • Clear road to Koidu • Capture Koidu
May-Oct 98	establish AFRC as independent force; build the force for eventual counter-offensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create operational area separate from RUF • Build up numerical and logistic strength of the force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escape intact from Koidu • Establish base at Rosos, and subsequently Major Eddie Town • Establish training camp to train recruits • Raid ECOMOG garrisons to capture supplies • Create publicity for AFRC rather than RUF
Nov 98 – Jan 99 (to death of Musa)	the capture of Freetown before arrival of RUF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance to Freetown without serious loss of manpower • Acquire sufficient ammunition to capture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross bridge at Mange without serious battle • Seize logistic supplies at Lunsar and Masiaka

		Freetown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the ECOMOG garrison at Freetown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture Benguema etc
Jan-Feb 99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture Freetown and restore RUF/AFRC junta After defeat, organisational survival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the ECOMOG garrison at Freetown Link up with RUF forces Escape from Freetown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross Jui bridge Capture State House Capture Congo River bridges Withdraw with main body intact

E4.4. The tactical activities shown are simply examples; of course there were many activities at this level. However, in the vast majority of cases there was clear linkage between strategic aims and tactical activity. During the advance to Freetown, for example, I can find no tactical activity that was not coherent with operational objectives and strategic aims. Such coherence is rare, even in a professional military organisation. Even in defeat, the level of coherence was high: although it is impossible to justify some of the actions (such as house burnings) in military terms; most of the remaining tactical activities were clearly linked to escaping and ensuring organisational survival.

E4.5. **Conclusion.** The AFRC faction demonstrated high levels of coherence between strategic, operational and tactical levels, although at times the strategic goals of the organisation were not clear.

E5 Was command in the AFRC effective?

E5.1. The model of command used for this analysis incorporates decision-making, leadership, and control. This section analyses each in turn for the AFRC faction, looking principally at command in general, but where necessary drawing specific tactical examples from the advance to and attack on Freetown.

E5.2. Decision-making in the AFRC faction followed relatively conventional military lines. Plans were developed by the Operational Commander and submitted to the commander for approval. Although some commanders encouraged discussion of tactical situations and invited other opinions, in general the style of decision-making was autocratic; this became more emphasised after Musa's death, where Gullit felt his leadership was being questioned. In general terms, the decisions made by AFRC commanders were sound up to the 6th January attack. Once they had seized State House, however, many of the senior commanders seem to have lost their focus on the mission at hand: they were too busy enjoying the fruits of success in State House to concentrate on the difficult battles against ECOMOG at Hill Cot and the Congo River bridges. Consequently, these battles were fought rather ineptly, in complete contrast to the skill the AFRC faction had demonstrated earlier. For example the battles were fought by day, not night; fire support positions were not well chosen and there was no attempt to bypass the strong points at the bridges. It seems to have only dawned on the senior commanders how important it was to seize the Congo bridges after it was no longer possible.

E5.3. Again, leadership was strong in the AFRC. SAJ Musa in particular was a charismatic leader who seems to have had considerable military ability. His presence in

the group was a galvanising influence, and instilled great confidence. Gullit appears to have had more difficulty in creating the motivation necessary to keep the organisation together. His time in command in Major Eddie Town was characterised by infighting and loss of motivation. He had difficulty in stamping his authority on the group following Musa's death; but by deciding to attack Freetown immediately he provided the motivation the force needed – its self-discipline and training would see to the rest. Most of the more junior commanders were experienced leaders in battle, and led by example. The greatest failure in leadership was on the 6th January, where the senior commanders could not resist the lure of occupying State House, rather than treating it as just another objective and concentrating on the battle at hand. Much of the loss of discipline that occurred later that day and subsequently was the direct result of the commanders losing focus on the battle, and setting poor examples to the troops under them.

E5.4. Control has three elements: direction, oversight and coordination. AFRC commanders generally gave strong **direction**: invariably this was by giving orders face to face, although radios were sometimes available. Orders tended to be simple and clear; there is little evidence of subordinate commanders being confused over what was expected of them. The AFRC faction spent much effort creating a system of **oversight**: the battalion supervisors and the Battlefield Inspector all supported the commander's system of control, ensuring that subordinates fulfilled their orders and that he was informed of the progress of operations. Since the AFRC faction was a cohesive group, operating in a relatively compact geographic area, oversight was easier than for other groups operating in Sierra Leone. The loss of control that occurred in Freetown was the result of commanders not exercising the oversight that they could, rather than lack of ability to control the troops under their command. The AFRC **coordinated** the efforts of subordinate units through the personal presence of commanders. The appointments of Task Force Commander and Mission Commander were created to enable such coordination of, for example, two or more battalions operating together on the same mission. Some tactical coordination was done by radio, but the majority was by personal intervention.

E5.5. Conclusion. The AFRC had a strong command capability which failed on 6th January. The excitement of capturing State House diverted many commanders away from winning the battle for Freetown. As a result, poor tactical decisions were made, leaders set poor examples to those under their command, and the command did not exercise the control over the troops that it could. The result was the loss of the Battle for Freetown and the breakdown of discipline in the force.

E6 Synthesis of conclusions.

E6.1. It can be seen that the results of the four tests of whether the AFRC was a military organisation in the traditional sense, and whether command responsibility exists, are:

- a. **The AFRC faction had a clearly recognisable military hierarchy and structure which was very similar to the conventional armies upon which it was modelled.**

- b. **The AFRC faction had the majority of the functional characteristics of a military organisation.**
- c. **The AFRC faction demonstrated high levels of coherence between strategic, operational and tactical levels, although at times the strategic goals of the organisation were not clear.**
- d. **The AFRC faction had a strong command capability which failed on 6th January.**

E6.2. The AFRC faction strongly demonstrated its roots as a regular army, which influenced its structure, rank system, and ethos. It amended its operational style and processes as a result of operational circumstances, involving the adoption of jungle tactics and administration. It is difficult to determine with complete confidence the strategic goals of the AFRC faction, but where these are clear there was a high level of coherence between strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The command capability of the AFRC was strong, but weakened by Musa's death; nevertheless, the blame for the failure on 6th January lies entirely with the senior commanders, since the structures for command all existed – they were simply not used. **It can therefore be concluded that the AFRC was a military organisation, and effective command was being exercised, but on 6 January 1999 the senior commanders lost focus.**

ANNEX B

Curriculum Vitae of Colonel Richard Iron

COLONEL RICHARD IRON (OBE)

MILITARY SERVICE

UK National Liaison Representative at NATO HQ Allied Command Transformation (2005), Norfolk, Virginia

- Lectures on insurgency and counter-insurgency to military and non-military audiences, drawing on experiences and study of conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, the Far East, and Northern Ireland.

Assistant Director Land and Warfare (Doctrine) (2002-2004)

- Involved detailed understanding and development of: the contemporary strategic environment; the dynamics of both conventional and unconventional conflict; how military organizations work and are structured; and expertise in the area of command and control. In this latter post, deployed to the Coalition Land Component HQ in Kuwait in 2002-03, leading a UK/US planning team. Also responsible for the British Army's subsequent analysis of the Iraq War and the subsequent Iraq insurgency.

Instructor at the UK's Joint Service Command and Staff College (2000-2001)

- Responsible for development of campaigning concepts. This included the development of ways to view the complex modern environment of both traditional and insurgent/terrorist threats, and determining the most appropriate military and non-military responses to such diverse threats. Promoted to Colonel.

Commanding Officer 1st Battalion King's Own Royal Border Regiment (1997-2000), Northern England

- Commanded an armored infantry battalion based in North England. Served in the Balkans twice, first in Bosnia; and then in Macedonia commanding the British military contingent supporting the Kosovo Verification Mission in 1998-99 which observed the guerrilla war waged between the Kosovo Liberation Army and the Serbian Army. Awarded OBE for service in Bosnia.

Staff Officer (1996-1997)

- Responsible for specifying acquisition requirements for infantry weapons.

Staff Officer (1994-1995), HQ Infantry Warmister, UK

- Responsible for infantry tactical doctrine where developing British peacekeeping doctrine.

Company Commander (1992-1993), Kenya

Major (1992-1993), Londonderry, Northern Ireland

- Worked 18 months on counter-insurgency operations.

Chief of Staff 33 Armored Brigade (1990-1991), Paderborn Germany

Operations Officer 39 Infantry Brigade (1986-1988), Northern Ireland

- Primary responsible for developing the counter-terrorist surveillance network in South Armagh. Transferred to the King's Own Royal Border Regiment, with whom he served with the UN in Cyprus; conducted an analysis of the 1950s EOKA terrorist campaign against the British Army.

Company Commander (1983-198), Oman

- On loan to Sultan of Oman's Land Forces

Troop Commander Royal Engineers (1980-1982), Osnabruck, Germany

EDUCATION

1995-1996 Attended US Army Staff College, Fort Leavenworth. Command and General Staff Course.
Studied the US experience of countering guerrilla war, in particular in Vietnam.

1988-1989 Attended Staff College, Camberley.
Studied British counter-insurgency doctrine and practice, including Malaya, Mau-Mau in Kenya, Aden, and Northern Ireland. Conducted an analysis of the Rhodesia-Zimbabwe conflict.

1983 Arabic language training.

1977-1980 Attended University of Cambridge, BA in Engineering.

1975-1976 Attended Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and Royal Engineer Young Officer Course in Chatham.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN DOCTRINE

Chairman NATO'S Land Operations Working Group (2002-2005). Responsible for development of all land doctrine for use by NATO nations, including capstone publication *Allied Joint Publication-3.2 Allied Land Operations*. This includes, for the first time, counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist doctrine in NATO operations.

Lead author and editor-in-chief of the British Army's top level doctrine publication *Army Doctrine Publication Land Operations*, including counter-insurgency operations.

Supervisor of publications. Overseeing the production of numerous other British Army doctrine publications, including *Army Field Manual Formation Tactics* and *The Military Contribution to Operations in the UK* (including counter-terrorist operations)

Led the British Army's analysis of the recent Iraq War and the subsequent Iraq Insurgency; published the official report of the UK's General Staff.

Developed new approach to campaign planning, incorporated into UK operational-level doctrine. Contributed to UK capstone joint doctrine, including *Joint Doctrine Publication 01 – Joint Operations*, specifically in the areas of how to understand complex and non-traditional enemies, such as insurgent and terrorist groups.

Various contributions to professional publications, including *Joint Force Quarterly* (USA) and the *British Army Review*, including articles on how to understand non-traditional types of enemy.